

## A WORD OF CAUTION\*

A toddler will sometimes break his parents most important rules. When this happens, the parent or other caregiver should let him know they are unhappy by the look on their face and the sound of their voice. Then move him to a different place. Sometimes this will be enough, but just as often, other measures may be needed. It is best for parents to decide how they will respond now while their child is still young. Plan how you will respond to misbehavior BEFORE the misbehavior occurs.

Parents should never use punishments that physically or emotionally hurt their child. While they need to let their child know that he has done something wrong, this does not mean they have to inflict pain. Spanking, slapping, beating and screaming at children of any age does more harm than good. Here are some of the main reasons why:

- ♥ Physical punishment can seriously hurt or injure a child, both physically and/or emotionally.
- ♥ Physical punishment makes the child angry at the parent. Instead of learning self-discipline the child is more likely to try to get back at the parent by continuing to misbehave.
- ♥ Physical punishment does not help a child learn self-discipline. Instead it teaches children to use aggression to solve problems.

*\*Taken from Safe Babies and Effective Parents.*

For more information on using positive discipline, the following books are recommended:

- 📖 *Active Parenting* by Michael Popkin
- 📖 *Discipline Without Shouting or Spanking* by Jerry Wyckoff and Barbara Unell
- 📖 *What to Expect the Toddler Years* by Arlene Eisenberg, Heidi Murkoff, and Sandee Hathaway
- 📖 *How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish
- 📖 *Positive Discipline* by Jane Nelsen
- 📖 *Setting Limits: How to Raise Responsible, Independent Children by Providing Reasonable Boundaries* by Robert MacKenzie
- 📖 *Without Spanking or Spoiling: A Practical Approach to Toddler and Preschool Guidance* by Elizabeth Crary
- 📖 *Your Baby and Child: From Birth to Age Five* by Penelope Leach

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## Simple and Practical Steps to Using Positive Discipline With Young Children



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## 6 TO 12 MONTH OLD

Babies want to touch, taste, and play with everything they can get their hands on. This curiosity is vital to their overall development and should be encouraged. But they should not be allowed to hurt themselves or damage things.



Techniques that really work include:

- ♥ **Distraction.** Look for something that will attract your baby's attention and offer it to him. When he becomes interested, remove the other object. For example, if your baby begins playing with an electric cord, say "no" and remove her from the situation and interest her in another activity.
- ♥ **Redirect** your child to a new activity.
- ♥ **Be consistent** each and every time your baby does something that you don't want her to.
- ♥ **Timing** is important! As soon as you see your baby getting into trouble you need to react. Your baby's memory is short at this age. If you wait to discipline, they won't understand.
- ♥ **Praise.** Respond in a positive way to your baby's good behavior. Praise helps your baby learn self-control. Much of our baby's good behavior will come from trying to please you.

Punishing babies does **not** work. They do not understand cause and effect and their brains are not developed enough to understand things such as time-out.

## 12 TO 24 MONTH OLD BABY

At this age a toddler does not understand "good" and "bad" or rules and warnings. He acts on impulse. A toddler needs encouragement to become independent, but also needs guidance and discipline. It will take years of firm but gentle guidance before he understands what you expect from him and has the self control to meet those expectations.

♥ **Distraction** and **redirection** works well with toddlers.



♥ **Ignore** your child's temper tantrums – except where your child's safety is an issue.

♥ **Use routines** to teach your children what you expect. For example, prepare for bedtime using the same predictable order each night

(bath, brush teeth, story, then lights out). Predictable routines are comforting to children.

- ♥ **Use "transition warnings."** This lets your child know that they will need to end their activity soon, rather than having an abrupt ending.
- ♥ Children begin to understand family rules around the age of 2. **Use simple words** to explain what your rules are and why you have them.
- ♥ At age 2 you can begin to use a **time-out**, one minute per age of child. Have your child sit in a quiet, non-scary place. End the time out with explaining what to do instead.
- ♥ Use **praise** often when you see your child using good behavior.

## THE 2 TO 5 YEAR OLD

The young child continues to need a lot of guidance and discipline. It is important to keep in mind that children of this age experience a lot of frustrations as they seek to be more independent. Temper tantrums are common and are often the result of being overtired or frustrated.



♥ **Use time-outs** as a way to help your child regain self-control.

♥ Continue to use **redirection**. "You cannot do X, but you can do Y."

♥ **Use Grandma's Rule.** "When you have done XXX, then you can do YYY."

♥ **Beat the clock.** For example, set a timer, and ask your child if they can pick up all their toys before the timer rings.

♥ **"1, 2, 3, Move."** Let your child know they need to begin doing what you have asked them to be "3." If the child fails to do this give a time-out and then request they do what you asked them to.

♥ **Catch your child being good**, and praise them for what you see. Praise them everyday.

♥ Warn your child that if such and such behavior continues, they will **lose the privilege of \_\_\_\_\_**. Keep the lost privilege realistic and one you can live with.

♥ **Use "consequences."** For example, if a child continues to throw blocks, put the blocks up for a day.

♥ **"Try it again"**. Parents give children the opportunity to try it again using more appropriate behavior.