

Tipsheet: Positive Discipline—Tips for Parents

When you discipline your children, you are teaching them what behavior you expect and what is appropriate. The ultimate goal of discipline is to teach a child self discipline. The keys to effective discipline are setting limits for children and communicating those expectations.

1. **Distract the child.**
Redirect the child and ignore undesired behavior.
2. **Ignore the misbehavior.**
Continue doing what you are doing without any verbal or physical indications to acknowledge the misbehavior.
3. **Structure the environment.**
Arrange objects and spaces to help children learn self-control and respect for property.
4. **Control the situation, not the child.**
Set guidelines or limits and give the child choices within your limits.
5. **Involve the child through choices and consequences.**
Giving children choices empowers them and helps them develop independence and cooperation
6. **Let your child do things.**
Show confidence in your child's ability to make choices and handle challenges that are appropriate to his or her age.
7. **Be consistent.**
Treating the misbehavior the same way each time helps your child learn what to expect when he or she misbehaves.
8. **Praise positive behavior.**
Notice and comment on positive or desired behavior. Try to say yes more than no.
9. **Time-outs.**
Use time outs as a last resort when a child needs to calm down and regain control of himself or herself.
10. **The rewards of discipline.**
Remember, you are teaching your children when you discipline them. Using positive discipline is a challenge, but well worth the effort. Always keep in mind the true meaning of discipline – to guide children and provide positive models for dealing with problems.

Source: Jewish Family Service of St. Paul, 651-698-0767, www.jfssp.org

Resources: [United Way 2-1-1™](http://www.2-1-1.org) is a free and confidential, 24-hour information/referral line that can connect you to helpful programs and resources in our community. Just dial 2-1-1 or 651-291-0211.