

Behavior Tip of the Week

Children of all ability levels need to be taught good behavior so they can live and work well in society as they grow up. Good teaching includes rewards and attention for good behavior. Your child's age and developmental level should guide your choice of ways to teach. Some tips to help you teach your child are listed below.

DO:

- Encourage your child and give lots of affection.
- Reward good behavior. Praise your child and give extra attention when he or she does something right. Give a reward for good behavior, this may include a treat, a toy, or extra time with electronics.
- Your child will copy your actions and words. Be sure to act and speak the way you want your child to act and speak. You are modeling how they should behave.
- Be kind, but firm.
- Remove temptations (like breakable items) before children get into trouble. Preventing bad behavior is always easier than correcting a problem.
- Ignore some small problems or annoying behaviors. By giving them attention, you may increase them. You are also only stressing yourself by making a big deal out of them.
- Be consistent. Always treat a bad behavior the same way, or your child will learn that he or she can sometimes "get away with it."
- Correct your child soon after the bad behavior occurs, but wait until your anger has passed. Counting to 10 before you say something or do something may help reduce your anger so you are in control of yourself. Help your child engage in a more appropriate behavior.
- Make rules that are right for your child's age/developmental level. Use pictures to help your child understand the rules. Review them with your child daily.
- Use "time-out" for children. Time-out may help correct bad behaviors like tantrums, fighting, and arguing. To use time-out, put your child in a chair with no toys or TV. Don't speak to your child during time-out. Time-out should last approximately one minute. Your child should be quiet for at least 15 seconds before timeout ends.
- Correct older children by taking away things they like (TV or video games, or time with friends).