

Positive Discipline Parenting Tools

1. Be firm *and* kind at the same time
2. Decide what *you* will do
3. Follow through (remember to be kind and firm)
4. Encourage effort and progress, not just results
5. Positive time out
6. Listen. Then listen some more.
7. Create routines (get children involved)
8. Take time for training
9. Use discipline to *teach* attitudes and skills, not to punish
10. Focus on *solutions* rather than blame or consequences
11. "What" and "how" questions (with an attitude of curiosity)
12. Offer limited choices
13. Check perceptions
14. Use ten words or less
15. Stop yelling
16. Active/reflective listening
17. Invite cooperation (home or classroom job chart)
18. Have regular family meetings
19. Ask for help
20. Spend special time
21. Remember that mistakes are wonderful opportunities to learn
22. Take care of yourself
23. Hugs, hugs, hugs!

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THE GOALS OF MISBEHAVIOR

Child's Goal	Parent's Feeling and Reaction	Alternatives for Parents
ATTENTION	Feeling: Annoyed Reaction: Tendency to remind and coax (nag)	Ignore misbehaviour when possible. Give attention for positive behaviour when child is not making a bid for it. 5:1
POWER	Feeling: Angry, provoked as if one's authority is threatened	Withdraw from conflict. Help child see how to use power constructively by appealing for child's help and enlisting cooperation. Realize that fighting or giving in only increases child's desire for power. Choices
REVENGE	Feeling: Deeply hurt Reaction: Tendency to retaliate and get even	Avoid feeling hurt. Avoid punishment and retaliation. Build trusting relationship; convince child that he or she is loved. Validate

Rudolf Dreikurs

Positive Discipline

Misbehaviour can be thought of as an opportunity for teaching new behaviour. Another way of looking at misbehaviour is that child is communicating the need for help in directing her behaviour. When parents can ask themselves, "What can I teach my child?" or "How can I guide or help my child with his behaviour?" they adopt an attitude of respect, which they will receive back from the child when he is older.

How to help your child behave appropriately?

- ⊗ **"Do as I do."** The most powerful teaching skill is modeling the behaviour that is expected from the child. Children have always imitated the adults in their lives. They will copy manner, tone of voice, language, and actions, both appropriate and inappropriate. Setting a good example is critical in parenting.

- ⊗ **Talk respectfully.** Communicating with a child cannot be done effectively from a distance. The time spent talking to a child and making eye contact with her is quality time. Parents who remember to talk to their children as they do to their friends discover that their children pay closer attention to what they say.

- ⊗ **Tell them what you want.** Children respond better to being told what to do rather than what not to do. For example;

Instead of...	Say...
"Don't hit the kitty."	"Touch the kitty gently."
"Stop kicking the table."	"Keep your feet on the floor."

- ⊗ **Make some rules.** A few necessary, clear, and reasonable limits that are enforced consistently give children the security that parents are helping them behave. Too many rules set everyone up for failure because they cannot be remembered and they cannot be enforced with consistency. Rules are for protecting the health, safety, and property rights of the child and others.

- ⊗ **Give chances to choose.** Giving a child choices allows him some appropriate power over his life and encourages decision-making. The choices offered must be within acceptable limits and the child's developmental and temperamental abilities. The parent may say the rule and then the choice. For example: "It's bedtime. Do you want one story or two?" or "It's time to go to the car. Do you want to walk with giant steps or baby steps?" As children grow older, they may be offered a wider variety of choices and allowed to accept the consequences of their choices.

- ⊗ **Pay attention.** Most children spend a great percentage of the time behaving appropriately, and parents need to notice. Positive behaviour will

increase if we give it attention. "You shared your snack with your sister," "Thank you for putting your toys away", "You got dressed all by yourself".

- ⓧ **Make an investment.** Each child needs some individual attention every day —talking, playing singing, reading, etc. It's the best investment a parent can make!

How to handle misbehaviour

In spite of the best planning and positive parenting, there will still be some misbehaviour. Some helpful responses include:

- ⓧ **Ignoring.** This works best with a new, annoying but not harmful behaviour like bad language or tantrums. Effective ignoring involves not talking to or looking at the child or using any body language that indicates attention.
- ⓧ **Redirecting.** This approach involves helping the child find an alternative activity that is similar to what he was doing. "I can't let you throw your truck, but may throw your ball outside" or "You may not kick the door, but you may kick this ball or plastic milk jug."
- ⓧ **Cooling off.** Hurtful behaviour or an angry outburst can sometimes be helped by a cooling off period. A cooling off period is not used as a punishment. The child can be sent to a calming place to rest, read, or do something pleasant until he gains control of himself and changes his behaviour. A cooling off period is also a good way for adults to calm down before taking action and to demonstrate an acceptable way of handling anger.
- ⓧ **Allowing consequences.** A favourite jacket left outdoors is rained on and can't be worn to school, or riding a tricycle into the street means having to go indoors for a while. We help children learn to be responsible when we allow them to experience the consequences of their choices.

Remember: The goal of discipline is not to control children and make them obey but to give them skills for making decisions, gradually gaining self-control, and being responsible for their own behaviour.

Source: <http://www.health.state.ok.us/program/mchccd/posdisc.html>