

# Positive and Productive Childcare While Kids not in Schools

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## Introduction to childcare and parenting in the home

- All parents know how to set limits of some sort already (eg. to ensure safety)
- Where is the boundary between free choice and limits?
  - Depends on maturity and judgement of child and age level
  - No right answer
- Rule of thumb: **need to get it right 51% of the time**-if do, this can shape behavior and enhance regulation of children
- No magical formula-gradual progress over time and over days

## Ten Ideas to Help -Specifics offered humbly and respectfully

- Nuggets of strategies-common sense for parents
- Reinforcing their good work

### 1. Be aware of where you are going as a parent.

- *You must know where you are going if you are to catch the right wind to take you there* (Seneca, Roman philosopher)
- So...Keep your end goals in mind each day
- Keep in mind to ensure you don't get blown around by circumstances and loose centering
- List some words you would use to describe your child or children when they are grown (You can't do all of these at once)
  - pick 2-4-focus on these and keep in mind even when things are difficult)
- Some examples to consider: compassionate, creative, curious, ethical, flexible, forgiving, grateful, hard worker, has integrity, healthy, honest, honorable, humble, independent, joyful
- Kind, loyal, moderate, persevering, polite, respectable, respectful, responsible, self-directed, self-discipline, spiritual, strong, thoughtful, thrifty

### 2. Recognize that misbehaviours drive every parent crazy.

- List some misbehaviours or attitudes that are most bothersome to you.
- Pick 1-4 behaviours most getting in the way of the home being the way you would like it.
- Some examples to consider: arguing, clingy, complaining, crying, daydreaming, demanding, disruptive, disrespectful, forgetful, fussy, I can't attitude, jealous, loud, manipulative, name calling, negotiating, procrastinator, refuses to follow directions, selfish, spoiled, stormy, talks all the time, tantrums, whiny, won't do chores, won't pay attention
- If have 4 kids, what is the most significant issues as if they were a collective (1-4 characteristics)
- If you have 1-2 kids pick the most significant 1-2 issues per child

### 3. Respond to preliminary and mild misbehavior with easy, commonsense procedures. Never use negative labels.

Utube link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUg4Vy\\_-4x0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUg4Vy_-4x0)

- Annoying, mild behaviours
- Correct gently and as quietly as possible
- Example: Saying “thank you”.
- Correction: “What do you say when something gives you something?” Don’t make a big deal.
- Arguing-define arguing and not arguing. Can say “I’ll talk to you when you are not arguing”.
- This is lower energy on you.
- Language above 3-4 years a needed. Talk about this in a calm neutral way. Not when you are emotionally escalated. “This is getting in the way of our family’s functioning.
- Emotional reaction used infrequently is acceptable (infrequent and respectful)
- Use humour-but not making fun of the child-use cautiously
- **Never use the category of the behavior as an accusation, “You’re so impolite!”, vs. “When you said..., that was impolite”. “You need to go and apologize to Aunt Marie. You’re a kind person!”**

#### **4. Clarify exactly how you want your child to behave in a specific setting (getting up, mealtime, during on-line sessions, bedtime, study time etc.)-Clear expectations.**

- Have a **conversation** to set up a **routine**: Conversation, “During on-line sessions time..... The activity is..... here’s what active participation looks like...and we are not going to argue -define what arguing looks like. Here’s what misbehavior will look like...”
- Give steps that are expected -do not change the steps to start
- Make sure you have **clarity**
- Draw on **positive focus** from #1: “Kindness requires you do the follow during this activity-it helps me when you listen to the teacher and stay on task.”

#### **5. Respond to chronic problems by setting limits, then calmly and consistently implement mild consequences. Never use negative labels.**

- Ex. Defiance, refusal to following directions-behaviours really getting in the way
- Ex timeout for younger children: ‘You need to go over and sit on the step.’ (Calmly state)
- Ex timeout for older children: Loss of positive reinforcement (movies, TV, iPhone)
- Time Owed: Put limit on screen time (You as parent chooses duration)
- If behavior is not done in time allocated, start stopwatch, “The time you take to begin required task, is the time you owe me and will loose from screen time”. Can loose it for the day. Idea is to not create a task for child to do.
- Loss of privilege
- Earlier curfew
- Planned ignoring-That’s arguing. I’ll speak to you when you speak politely”

#### **6. To move from misbehaviours to positive traits you value, spend time and pay attention. Engage in family supported (possibly child-directed) activities with limited screen time.**

- Talk to your kids-connect with others on-line
- Eat together! One of highest correlates of staying out of trouble.
- Do chores together
- Play games together-no screen time

- Make decisions together-age appropriate-plan meals
- Work on projects together
- Arrange special time with kids-apply as you are able-kids get to decide what we do-kids love to be in control

### 7. Provide attention and recognition to encourage positive traits.

- Praise (positive feedback)
  - Meaningful behaviours (if just started behavior)
  - Must be accurate praise
  - Be specific and descriptive about what was done correctly
  - Non-embarrassing-be aware of presence of others
  - Given in a manner that fits your style
- Interactions-15 minutes means a lot! Talk while cooking.
- Extra responsibilities-turn over to children as appropriate
- Special privileges

### 8. Be aware of ratios of interaction: sum total of positive interactions should be three times greater than other correcting interactions.

Are you paying more attention to the child when the child is misbehaving or when the child is behaving in the ways that will help him or her become a responsible adult?

- Sum total of positive interactions should be **three times greater** than other corrections.
- Catch them executing the desired behaviours and acknowledge. May prevent future misbehaviours.
- Increases motivation to increase behavior.
- Don't be too hard on yourself as parent but make note of negatives you tend to focus on.

### 9. Try to model the behaviours you want your children to develop.

- If you can't model the thing that you want, discuss with your child. (See #4)
- If you don't want your children to yell, don't yell at them.
- If you are a yeller and can't stop, discuss with your kids your hopes for them.

### 10. Monitor your children's activities.

- You need to know where they are, whom they are with, and what they are doing-both physically and digitally.
- Digital dangers are too high to leave 12-year-old unsupervised.
- This may drive them crazy, but it is our job as caregivers.
- Increase freedom and independence gradually, and it is earned.
- Tell your kids you love them to much. Use the 3-year-old example. We would not let the baby play on the highway-too dangerous.

#### Resources

1. **Parenting Through Tough Kid Moments** Authour: Dr. Bill Jensen
2. **Safeandcivlschools.com** Sessions for parents and families available