



# BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PARENT

## 15 MONTH VISIT

Here are some suggestions from Bright Futures experts that may be of value to your family.

### TALKING AND FEELING

- Try to give choices. Allow your child to choose between 2 good options, such as a banana or an apple, or 2 favorite books.
- Know that it is normal for your child to be anxious around new people. Be sure to comfort your child.
- Take time for yourself and your partner.
- Get support from other parents.
- Show your child how to use words.
  - Use simple, clear phrases to talk to your child.
  - Use simple words to talk about a book's pictures when reading.
  - Use words to describe your child's feelings.
  - Describe your child's gestures with words.

### A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

- Put your child to bed at the same time every night. Early is better.
- Make the hour before bedtime loving and calm.
- Have a simple bedtime routine that includes a book.
- Try to tuck in your child when he is drowsy but still awake.
- Don't give your child a bottle in bed.
- Don't put a TV, computer, tablet, or smartphone in your child's bedroom.
- Avoid giving your child enjoyable attention if he wakes during the night. Use words to reassure and give a blanket or toy to hold for comfort.

### TANTRUMS AND DISCIPLINE

- Use distraction to stop tantrums when you can.
- Praise your child when she does what you ask her to do and for what she can accomplish.
- Set limits and use discipline to teach and protect your child, not to punish her.
- Limit the need to say "No!" by making your home and yard safe for play.
- Teach your child not to hit, bite, or hurt other people.
- Be a role model.

### HEALTHY TEETH

- Take your child for a first dental visit if you have not done so.
- Brush your child's teeth twice each day with a small smear of fluoridated toothpaste, no more than a grain of rice.
- Wean your child from the bottle.
- Brush your own teeth. Avoid sharing cups and spoons with your child. Don't clean her pacifier in your mouth.

**Helpful Resources:** Poison Help Line: 800-222-1222

Information About Car Safety Seats: [www.safercar.gov/parents](http://www.safercar.gov/parents) | Toll-free Auto Safety Hotline: 888-327-4236

# 15 MONTH VISIT—PARENT



## SAFETY

- Make sure your child's car safety seat is rear facing until he reaches the highest weight or height allowed by the car safety seat's manufacturer. In most cases, this will be well past the second birthday.
- Never put your child in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger airbag. The back seat is the safest.
- Everyone should wear a seat belt in the car.
- Keep poisons, medicines, and lawn and cleaning supplies in locked cabinets, out of your child's sight and reach.
- Put the Poison Help number into all phones, including cell phones. Call if you are worried your child has swallowed something harmful. Don't make your child vomit.
- Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Install operable window guards on windows at the second story and higher. Keep furniture away from windows.
- Turn pan handles toward the back of the stove.
- Don't leave hot liquids on tables with tablecloths that your child might pull down.
- Have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on every floor. Test them every month and change the batteries every year. Make a family escape plan in case of fire in your home.

## WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR CHILD'S 18 MONTH VISIT

### We will talk about

- Handling stranger anxiety, setting limits, and knowing when to start toilet training
- Supporting your child's speech and ability to communicate
- Talking, reading, and using tablets or smartphones with your child
- Eating healthy
- Keeping your child safe at home, outside, and in the car

Consistent with *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, 4th Edition

For more information, go to <https://brightfutures.aap.org>.

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# Your Child's Development

Your toddler is using all his new physical, thinking, and language skills to be a good problem-solver. He might push a stool to the counter and try to climb up as he points to the cookie jar and says something like *Mine!*

*How do you see your toddler figuring things out?*



What Your Toddler Can Do	What You Can Do
<p><b>I'm using my body to explore and learn.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am walking and may be running and climbing.</li> <li>• I can scribble with a crayon and build a block tower.</li> <li>• I can feed myself.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Encourage your child to use his fingers and hands to explore.</b> Let him scribble, tap a toy piano, or hold a bubble wand.</p> <p><b>Play "baby olympics."</b> Create some safe challenges—like climbing over a stack of pillows—for your child to master.</p>
<p><b>I'm using language to understand the world around me.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can understand simple questions and directions like <i>Kick the ball to me.</i></li> <li>• I communicate by combining sounds and actions—pointing to a cup and saying <i>wawa</i> for water.</li> <li>• By 18 months, I may say as many as 20 words.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ask your child questions:</b> <i>Would you like yogurt or a banana for snack?</i></p> <p><b>Put her gestures into words:</b> <i>You're pointing at the bird flying in the sky.</i></p> <p><b>Read, sing together, and make up rhymes and stories.</b> This builds a love of language and words.</p>
<p><b>I am beginning to understand my feelings and others' feelings too.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I may try to comfort someone who seems sad.</li> <li>• I repeat sounds and actions that make someone laugh.</li> <li>• My feelings can be hard for me to handle. I may start having tantrums and will need your help to calm down.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Read books that talk about feelings.</b> Connect what you are reading to your child's experiences: <i>That little boy in the book felt sad saying good-bye to his daddy, just like you do sometimes.</i></p> <p><b>Stay calm during tantrums.</b> Take deep breaths, count to 10, or whatever helps you to <i>not</i> react. Staying calm helps your child recover more quickly.</p>
<p><b>I'm becoming a good problem-solver.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I may do something over and over to figure out how it works.</li> <li>• I use objects the way they are supposed to be used—like talking on a toy telephone.</li> <li>• I imitate what I see others do—like trying to wipe the table with a sponge.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Let your child repeat the same activity, if he wants to.</b> It may be boring to you but is important practice for him.</p> <p><b>Once your child has learned a new skill, like throwing the ball, add a twist:</b> Set up a laundry basket for him to toss the ball into.</p>



As you use this resource, remember that your child may develop skills faster or slower than indicated here and still be growing just fine. Talk with your child's health care provider or other trusted professional if you have questions.

Your family's cultural beliefs and values are also important factors that shape your child's development.

For more information on parenting and child development, go to: [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

### What's on Your Mind

**My 16-month-old wants to do everything by himself, which just isn't possible sometimes. What can we do?**

**Be creative.** If he wants to feed himself but can't yet use a spoon, give him one spoon to hold while you feed him with another.

**Find an alternative.** Explain: *These sharp knives are for Mommy and Daddy to use.* Then show her how to use her hands or a blunt plastic knife to cut her food.

**Be his coach.** Offer just enough support so that he can achieve the goal himself. You might put your hand over his to help him zip his jacket.

**Let your child safely practice new skills.** She can practice pouring water out in the backyard or by using a small plastic pitcher in the bathtub.

### Did You Know...

Children begin to understand how others are feeling—to empathize—by 18 months.<sup>1</sup>

### What It Means for You:

At 18 months, children begin developing a sense of self-awareness—the knowledge that they are individuals with their own feelings, thoughts, likes, and dislikes. Next, they realize that other people have *their* own feelings, thoughts, and preferences, too. This helps children learn empathy. They can imagine how another person feels. To help your child develop empathy:

## Spotlight on Problem-Solving

**The ability to solve problems is very important for being successful in school and in life. When you see your toddler getting into everything, think of it as his way of problem-solving—figuring out how things work.**

Toddlers problem-solve by using their bodies and their minds to make a plan to reach their goals. For example, toddlers are solving a problem when they tip over their sippy cup to see how to make the liquid come out.

Toddlers are also solving problems by using their past experiences to help them understand new situations. For

example, your child may begin throwing everything into the trash—garbage or not. He is remembering that throwing his napkin out after lunch makes you happy. He just hasn't learned yet what *not* to toss out!

Children also learn how to solve problems by imitating what the people who care for them do. So when they see these adults staying calm and not giving up when they face a challenge, children learn to keep trying, too.

*How do you see your toddler solving problems?*

### What You Can Do

**Support your child in reaching her goal.** If her block tower keeps falling, suggest she add some more blocks on the bottom for support.

**Do chores together.** Pushing a broom, for example, helps children solve problems like how to get the crumbs into the dust pan.

**Teach your child to ask for help.** When you see him getting frustrated as he tries to solve a problem, you might say: *It can be hard to get that jack-in-the-box to pop up! Would you like some help? Let's try turning this knob together.*

**Talk about others' feelings.** *Kayla is feeling sad because you took her toy car. Let's give Kayla back her car and then choose another one for you.*

**Suggest how children can show empathy.** *Let's get Jason some ice for his boo-boo.*

**Empathize with your child.** *Are you feeling scared of that dog? He is a nice dog but he is barking really loud. That can be scary. I will hold you until he walks by.*



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[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

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1 - Repacholi, B.M., & Gopnik, A., 1997.

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# Positive Parenting Tips for Healthy Child Development

## Toddlers (1-2 years of age)

### Developmental Milestones

Skills such as taking a first step, smiling for the first time, and waving "bye-bye" are called developmental milestones. Developmental milestones are things most children can do by a certain age. Children reach milestones in how they play, learn, speak, behave, and move (like crawling, walking, or jumping).

During the second year, toddlers are moving around more, and are aware of themselves and their surroundings. Their desire to explore new objects and people also is increasing. During this stage, toddlers will show greater independence; begin to show defiant behavior; recognize themselves in pictures or a mirror; and imitate the behavior of others, especially adults and older children. Toddlers also should be able to recognize the names of familiar people and objects, form simple phrases and sentences, and follow simple instructions and directions.

*For more details on developmental milestones, warning signs of possible developmental delays, and information on how to help your child's development, visit the "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign website.*

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html>

### Positive Parenting Tips

**Following are some things you, as a parent, can do to help your toddler during this time:**

- Read to your toddler daily.
- Ask her to find objects for you or name body parts and objects.
- Play matching games with your toddler, like shape sorting and simple puzzles.
- Encourage him to explore and try new things.
- Help to develop your toddler's language by talking with her and adding to words she starts. For example, if your toddler says "baba", you can respond, "Yes, you are right—that is a *bottle*."
- Encourage your child's growing independence by letting him help with dressing himself and feeding himself.
- Respond to wanted behaviors more than you punish unwanted behaviors (use only very brief time outs). Always tell or show your child what she should do instead.
- Encourage your toddler's curiosity and ability to recognize common objects by taking field trips together to the park or going on a bus ride.



## Child Safety First

Because your child is moving around more, he will come across more dangers as well. Dangerous situations can happen quickly, so keep a close eye on your child. Here are a few tips to help keep your growing toddler safe:

- Do NOT leave your toddler near or around water (for example, bathtubs, pools, ponds, lakes, whirlpools, or the ocean) without someone watching her. Fence off backyard pools. Drowning is the leading cause of injury and death among this age group.
- Block off stairs with a small gate or fence. Lock doors to dangerous places such as the garage or basement.
- Ensure that your home is toddler proof by placing plug covers on all unused electrical outlets.
- Keep kitchen appliances, irons, and heaters out of reach of your toddler. Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove.
- Keep sharp objects such as scissors, knives, and pens in a safe place.
- Lock up medicines, household cleaners, and poisons.
- Do NOT leave your toddler alone in any vehicle (that means a car, truck, or van) even for a few moments.
- Store any guns in a safe place out of his reach.
- Keep your child's car seat rear-facing as long as possible. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, it's the best way to keep her safe. Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by the car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, she is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness.

## Healthy Bodies

- Give your child water and plain milk instead of sugary drinks. After the first year, when your nursing toddler is eating more and different solid foods, breast milk is still an ideal addition to his diet.
- Your toddler might become a very picky and erratic eater. Toddlers need less food because they don't grow as fast. It's best not to battle with him over this. Offer a selection of healthy foods and let him choose what she wants. Keep trying new foods; it might take time for him to learn to like them.
- Limit screen time. For children younger than 2 years of age, the AAP recommends that it's best if toddlers not watch any screen media.
- Your toddler will seem to be moving continually—running, kicking, climbing, or jumping. Let him be active—he's developing his coordination and becoming strong.

A pdf of this document for reprinting is available free of charge from

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/toddlers.html>

## **Additional Information:**

<http://www.cdc.gov/childdevelopment>

1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) <http://www.cdc.gov/info>

## Positive Parenting *by Karan Sims*

Most parents first experience their child's attempts at autonomy at about age two. It's the power struggle. They feel challenged and often a battle of wills begins that lasts throughout childhood and the teen years. Parents can turn these trying times into a rewarding growth period for them and their children by shifting their perspective concerning the child's behavior and by becoming clever and creative in responding to the child's perceived "headstrong, rebellious, stubborn, frustrating, negative" behavior.

### **Empowering not Overpowering**

Instead of viewing children's willful behavior as "bad" and reacting in a way that overpowers the child, parents can view this behavior as a healthy positive sign of their child's development and find ways to empower the child. From about the age of two, and at differing intervals in the developmental process, children are individuating from their parents and the world around them. This includes making decisions for themselves, exerting their power and will on persons and situations, getting their own way, declaring ownership and authority.

When parents react by overpowering children, they cause them to feel powerless. Since all humans strive to feel powerful, the overpowered child may react to his or her feelings of powerlessness by either fight or flight - either giving in and letting others make all the decisions and maintain all control or fighting to seek power through rebellious and destructive behaviors. Parents who can shift to seeing their child's struggle for power as a positive sign can find useful ways for the child to feel powerful and valuable and deal with power struggles in ways that reduce fighting and create cooperative relationships that empower both the child and the parents.

### **The First Step is to Side-Step**

The first step to effectively and positively deal with power struggles is to side-step the power struggle - in other words, refuse to pick up the other end of the rope. A mother asked her two-year-old if she was ready for a nap. "NO" replied the child. Feeling challenged, the mother replied, "Do you want to walk to your bed or do you want me to carry you?" "I want you to carry me upside down and tickle me as we go." The mother realized that the "no" was an invitation to join a power struggle and by side-stepping it (neither fighting nor giving in) the mother created an ending that was happy, nurturing and loving rather than hateful and painful as nap time can often be. By side-stepping the power struggle, you send your child the message "I am not going to fight with you. I am not going to hurt you. I am not going to overpower you and I'm not going to give in, either."

### **Choices, Not Orders**

After side-stepping the power struggle, the next step is to give choices, not orders. A father, trying to change an 18-month-old's diaper, against the wishes of the child, offered the child a choice of which room to have the change made. The child chose a room, but once in the room, balked again at the diaper change. The father continued with his plan to empower the child and asked, "Which bed?" The child pointed to a bed, the diaper was changed and the ongoing power struggle about diaper changes was ended.

When giving children choices, parents must be sure that all choices are acceptable. Don't give your child the choice of either sitting down quietly or leaving the restaurant if you have no intention of leaving. Also be sure you don't give too many "autocratic" choices. Autocratic choices are choices that are so narrow the child senses no freedom at all. Young children benefit from having some choices narrowed, but try to give broad and open-ended choices whenever possible.

Choices should not represent a punishment as one alternative. For example, telling a child "You may either pick up the toys or take a time-out" creates fear and intimidation instead of empowerment.

### **Find Useful Ways for your Child to be Powerful**

Whenever you find yourself in the middle of a power struggle with your child, ask yourself, "How can I give my child more power in this situation?" One mother asked herself this question concerning an endless battle she was having with her son about buckling his seat belt. Her solution was that she made him boss of the seat belts - it became his job to see that everyone was safely secured. The power struggle ended.

### **Do the Unexpected**

One parent side-steps power struggles by announcing "let's go out for a treat" when she feels the situation is headed for a showdown. Her purpose is not to "reward" bad behavior, but to reestablish her relationship with her children and keep her end goal of a close, loving and cooperative atmosphere in mind.

### **Getting to Win-Win**

Power struggles often feel like someone has to win and someone has to lose. A win-win solution is where each party comes away feeling like they got what they wanted. Getting to win-win takes negotiation. Parents can assist their children by responding to a child's demands, "That sounds like a good way for you to win. And I want you to win. But I want to win, too. Can you think of a solution that works for both of us?"

### **Handling "NO"**

Parents often have the attitude that children should not say NO to or question authority. However, it is interesting that most of us parents buy into the media campaign of "Just Say No." It is best to hear a child's NO as a disagreement rather than a disrespectful response. Teach children to say NO, or disagree, respectfully and appropriately. Keep in mind that you want them to say NO when faced with peer pressure and inappropriate situations.

### **Powerlessness Creates Revenge**

Children who are overpowered, or who feel powerless, will often seek to gain power through revenge. They will seek to hurt others as they feel hurt and will often engage in behavior that ultimately hurts themselves. Revenge at age two and three looks like talking back and messy food spills. Revenge at age 16 or 17 looks like drug and alcohol abuse, pregnancy, failure, running away and suicide. When children act out in power struggles and revengeful behavior, they are most often feeling powerless and discouraged about a positive way to contribute and know that their actions count. Most parents' goals are to raise a child who becomes a self-reliant adult, can make good decisions and has the confidence to be whatever he or she chooses. Your child will see the future that future more clearly if you allow him or her to practice at being powerful in useful and appropriate ways.

*Karan Sims is a Redirecting Children's Behavior instructor for the International Network for Children and Families.*

*<https://www.positiveparenting.com/dealing-with-power-struggles/>*

## **Positive Parenting Basics**

### **Ten Keys to Successful Parenting**

Parenting is an important job and it's key that we discipline in a way that teaches responsibility by motivating our children internally, to build their self-esteem and make them feel loved. If our children are disciplined in this respect, they will not have a need to turn to gangs, drugs, or sex to feel powerful or belong.

The following ten keys will help parents use methods that have been proven to provide children with a sense of well-being and security.

#### **1 – Use Genuine Encounter Moments (GEMS)**

Your child's self-esteem is greatly influenced by the quality of time you spend with him-not the amount of time that you spend. With our busy lives, we are often thinking about the next thing that we have to do, instead of putting 100% focused attention on what our child is saying to us. We often pretend to listen or ignore our child's attempts to communicate with us. If we don't give our child GEMS throughout the day, he will often start to misbehave. Negative attention in a child's mind is better than being ignored.

It is also important to recognize that feelings are neither right nor wrong. They just are. So when your child says to you, "Mommy, you never spend time with me" (even though you just played with her) she is expressing what she feels. It is best at these times just to validate her feelings by saying, "Yeah, I bet it does feel like a long time since we spent time together."

#### **2 – Use Action, Not Words**

Statistics say that we give our children over 2000 compliance requests a day! No wonder our children become "parent deaf!" Instead of nagging or yelling, ask yourself, "What action could I take?" For example, if you have nagged your child about unrolling his socks when he takes them off, then only wash socks that are unrolled. Action speaks louder than words.

#### **3 – Give Children Appropriate Ways to Feel Powerful**

If you don't, they will find inappropriate ways to feel their power. Ways to help them feel powerful and valuable are to ask their advice, give them choices, let them help you balance your check book, cook all our part of a meal, or help you shop. A two-year-old can wash plastic dishes, wash vegetables, or put silverware away. Often we do the job for them because we can do it with less hassle, but the result is they feel unimportant.

#### **4 – Use Natural Consequences**

Ask yourself what would happen if I didn't interfere in this situation? If we interfere when we don't need to, we rob children of the chance to learn from the consequences of their actions. By allowing consequences to do the talking, we avoid disturbing our relationships by nagging or reminding too much. For example, if your child forgets her lunch, you don't bring it to her. Allow her to find a solution and learn the importance of remembering.

## **5 – Use Logical Consequences**

Often the consequences are too far in the future to practically use a natural consequence. When that is the case, logical consequences are effective. A consequence for the child must be logically related to the behavior in order for it to work. For example, if your child forgets to return his video and you ground him for a week, that punishment will only create resentment within your child. However, if you return the video for him and either deduct the amount from his allowance or allow him to work off the money owed, then your child can see the logic to your discipline.

## **6 – Withdraw from Conflict**

If your child is testing you through a temper tantrum, or being angry or speaking disrespectfully to you, it is best if you leave the room or tell the child you will be in the next room if he wants to “Try again.” Do not leave in anger or defeat.

## **7 – Separate the Deed from the Doer**

Never tell a child that he is bad. That tears at his self-esteem. Help your child recognize that it isn't that you don't like him, but it is his behavior that you are unwilling to tolerate. In order for a child to have healthy self-esteem, he must know that he is loved unconditionally no matter what he does. Do not motivate your child by withdrawing your love from him. When in doubt, ask yourself, did my discipline build my child's self-esteem?

## **8 – Be Kind and Firm at the Same Time**

Suppose you have told your five-year-old child that if she isn't dressed by the time the timer goes off, you will pick her up and take her to the car. She has been told she can either get dressed either in the car or at school. Make sure that you are loving when you pick her up, yet firm by picking her up as soon as the timer goes off without any more nagging. If in doubt, ask yourself, did I motivate through love or fear?

## **9 – Parent with the End in Mind**

Most of us parent with the mindset to get the situation under control as soon as possible. We are looking for the expedient solution. This often results in children who feel overpowered. But if we parent in a way that keeps in mind how we want our child to be as an adult, we will be more thoughtful in the way we parent. For example, if we spank our child, he will learn to use acts of aggression to get what he wants when he grows up.

## **10 – Be Consistent, Follow Through**

If you have made an agreement that your child cannot buy candy when she gets to the store, do not give in to her pleas, tears, demands or pouting. Your child will learn to respect you more if you mean what you say.

# 9 Things to do Instead of Spanking

By Kathryn Kvols

Research confirms what many parents instinctively feel when they don't like to spank their children, but they don't know what else to do. The latest research from Dr. Murray Straus at the Family Research Laboratory affirms that spanking teaches children to use acts of violence to solve their problems. It only teaches and perpetuates more violence, the very thing our society is so concerned about. This research further shows that children who have been spanked are more prone to low self-esteem, depression and accept lower paying jobs as adults. So, what do you do instead.?

## 1. Get Calm

First, if you feel angry and out of control and you want to spank or slap your child, leave the situation if you can. Calm down and get quiet. In that quiet time you will often find an alternative or solution to the problem. Sometimes parents lose it because they are under a lot of stress. Dinner is boiling over, the kids are fighting, the phone is ringing and your child drops the can of peas and you lose it. If you can't leave the situation, then mentally step back and count to ten.

## 2. Take Time for Yourself

Parents are more prone to use spanking when they haven't had any time to themselves and they feel depleted and hurried. So, it is important for parents to take some time for themselves to exercise, read, take a walk or pray.

## 3. Be Kind but Firm

Another frustrating situation where parents tend to spank is when your child hasn't listened to your repeated requests to behave. Finally, you spank to get your child to act appropriately. Another solution in these situations is to get down on your child's level, make eye contact, touch him gently and tell him, in a short, kind but firm phrase, what it is you want him to do. For example, I want you to play quietly.

## 4. Give Choices

Giving your child a choice is an effective alternative to spanking. If she is playing with her food at the table ask, Would you like to stop playing with your food or would you like to leave the table?! If the child continues to play with her food, you use kind but firm action by helping her down from the table. Then tell her that she can return to the table when she is ready to eat her food without playing in it.

## 5. Use Logical Consequences

Consequences that are logically related to the behavior help teach children responsibility. For example, your child breaks a neighbor's window and you punish him by spanking him. What does he learn about the situation? He may learn to never do that again, but he also learns that he needs to hide his mistakes, blame it on someone else, lie, or simply not get caught. He may decide that he is bad or feel anger and revenge toward the parent who spanked him. When you spank a child, he may behave because he is afraid to get hit again. However, do you want your child to behave because he is afraid of you or because he respects you?

Compare that situation to a child who breaks a neighbor's window and his parent says, I see you've broken the window, what will you do to repair it?! using a kind but firm tone of voice. The child decides to mow the neighbor's lawn and wash his car several times to repay the cost of breaking the window. What does the child learn in this situation? That mistakes are an inevitable part of life and it isn't so important that he made the mistake but that he takes responsibility to repair the mistake. The focus is taken off the mistake and put on taking responsibility for repairing it. The child feels no anger or revenge toward his parent. And most importantly the child's self-esteem is not damaged.

#### 6. Do Make Ups

When children break agreements, parents tend to want to punish them. An alternative is to have your child do a make-up. A make-up is something that people do to put themselves back into integrity with the person they broke the agreement with. For example, several boys were at a sleep-over at Larry's home. His father requested that they not leave the house after midnight. The boys broke their agreement. The father was angry and punished them by telling them they couldn't have a sleep-over for two months. Larry and his friends became angry, sullen and uncooperative as a result of the punishment. The father realized what he had done. He apologized for punishing them and told them how betrayed he felt and discussed the importance of keeping their word. He then asked the boys for a make-up. They decided to cut the lumber that the father needed to have cut in their backyard. The boys became excited and enthusiastic about the project and later kept their word on future sleep-overs.

#### 7. Withdraw from Conflict

Children who sass back at parents may provoke a parent to slap. In this situation, it is best if you withdraw from the situation immediately. Do not leave the room in anger or defeat. Calmly say, I'll be in the next room when you want to talk more respectfully.

#### 8. Use kind but firm action

Instead of smacking an infant's hand or bottom when she touches something she isn't supposed to, kindly but firmly pick her up and take her to the next room. Offer her a toy or another item to distract her and say, You can try again later.! You may have to take her out several times if she is persistent.

#### 9. Inform Children Ahead of Time

A child's temper tantrum can easily set a parent off. Children frequently throw tantrums when they feel uninformed or powerless in a situation. Instead of telling your child he has to leave his friend's house at a moment's notice, tell him that you will be leaving in five minutes. This allows the child to complete what he was in the process of doing. Aggression is an obvious form of perpetuating violence in society. A more subtle form of this is spanking because it takes its toll on a child's self-esteem, dampening his enthusiasm and causing him to be rebellious and uncooperative. Consider for a moment the vision of a family that knows how to win cooperation and creatively solve their problems without using force or violence. The alternatives are limitless and the results are calmer parents who feel more supported.

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