

Discipline Techniques

These tried and true simple discipline techniques still work today – put your own spin on them according to your child's preferences. Be sure that you will be able to follow through with your plan!

- Use distraction to get your child's attention away from inappropriate behaviors.
- Stop inappropriate behaviors with a firm 'no' while looking your child in the eyes.
- Physically move your child when s/he is misbehaving, especially if s/he didn't respond to your firm 'no.'
- Use extinction to remove attention from undesirable actions. As long as your child can't hurt him/herself, you can walk away and not give him/her attention or an audience for acting inappropriately, especially if s/he is having a temper tantrum. Giving too much attention to your child when s/he misbehaves can reinforce bad behaviors.
- Use natural consequences (rewards) to let your child learn the results or consequences of his actions. For example, if s/he throws a toy out the window, then s/he can't play with it anymore.
- Use logical consequences (rewards), for example, if s/he doesn't put away his bike, then you will do it, but s/he won't be able to ride it for the rest of the day. For older children, not filling the car with gas can have the consequence of not getting to use the car this week, etc.
- Use time-out to remove positive reinforcement or attention when s/he misbehaves.
- Withholding privileges is a very effective discipline technique, especially for older children. Find things that s/he likes or especially enjoys (playing video games, renting movies, going to the mall, talking on the phone), and then take it away as a consequence for misbehaving.