

Firm, Fair & Consistent®

George Read Middle School

Guiding Students for School Success

Put positive power in your parenting

One day your child behaves almost perfectly. The next day he's a nightmare. What changed? Sometimes it isn't the child—it's the caregivers. For effective discipline, try this advice from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- **Choose rules carefully** and set guidelines you *know* you will enforce.
- **Set reasonable expectations** so that neither you nor your child will be disappointed.
- **Be consistent.** If your limits are unreliable, your child is more likely to test them.
- **Don't "reward" misbehavior** with attention and bribery.
- **Show understanding.** Recognize your child's feelings so he doesn't have to "act out" to display them.
- **Admit mistakes.** If you handle a discipline problem poorly, apologize and explain how you'll do better next time.
- **Give your child a say.** "Would you like peas or corn?" is more effective than "Eat your vegetables."
- **Make good behavior fun.** For example, "Let's see who can finish their chores first. One, two, three, go!"
- **Avoid trouble spots.** If your child always procrastinates about doing homework, don't nag. Work out a new study routine.
- **Compliment success!** When kids feel good about what they've done, they want to do it again.



Source: "Keys to Effective Discipline," American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org/pubed/ZZZLZ33YUSC.htm.

Tackle tough stuff first

Is your child facing a huge stack of homework? Have her tackle the toughest



assignment (or her least favorite subject) first—while she's still fresh.

If she knows that easier tasks are ahead, it may help her do better on her work and can also prevent a meltdown if her study session drags on.

Source: "Back-to-School Tips for Building Good Study Habits," National Association of Elementary School Principals, www.naesp.org/ContentLoad.do?contentId=1722.

It's a new year and time to review behavior.



Show support for your school by helping teachers make the most of learning time. Expect your child to:

- **Show respect** for her teachers and classmates.
- **Keep her hands** to herself.
- **Listen to her teachers** and follow directions.
- **Listen politely** while others are talking.
- **Use courteous language.**

Calm reactions can cool misbehavior

When your child develops frustrating habits, such as whining for more TV or video game time before homework, or begging for treats before dinner, it's hard to react calmly.

Instead of blowing up—or giving in—relax. Simply say, "Treats are for after dinner." Then don't discuss the subject further. This shows that misbehavior doesn't get attention and it doesn't get results. At first, your child may complain more. Be firm. Eventually he'll understand you mean business.

Source: Mark L. Batshaw, M.D., *When Your Child Has a Disability: The Complete Sourcebook of Daily and Medical Care*, ISBN: 1-55766-472-2 (Brookes Publishing Co., 1-800-638-3775, www.brookespublishing.com).

Good judgment leads to good behavior

A child with good judgment may avoid trouble more easily than a youngster with poor judgment. To help strengthen your child's good judgment:



- **Remind him to think** before he acts.
- **Help him see the difference** between facts and feelings. Just because something *feels* good doesn't mean it *is* good.
- **Teach him to consider** the consequences of his actions.

Source: "What Does 'Strong Character' Mean?—Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen," U.S. Department of Education, www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/citizen/part4.html#self.

Get help for discipline challenges

Discipline is one of the biggest challenges parents face. Sometimes the job not only feels overwhelming, it *is* overwhelming. But don't feel you need to tackle every situation alone. Seek help if you:

- *Can't solve a problem* and you run out of ideas.
- *Want more support* but have trouble finding it.
- *Worry about repeating* major discipline mistakes your parents made.
- *Fear that you may harm* your child.

Talk with a doctor, therapist or other trusted professional. Take pride in putting your child first and getting the support you need!



Source: "When to Get Help," FamilyFun.com, http://familyfun.go.com/parenting/child/skills/feature/FGP_discipline/FGP_discipline3.html.

Questions & Answers

Q: I assume my child is doing his homework, but it turns out he's just doodling or reading comics. I end up being furious; he ends up in tears. What should I do?

A: It's easy to see why you'd get upset. When your child ignores his homework, it causes stress for everyone—you, him and the school! To avoid homework-related headaches:

- *See if there's a specific problem.* Is the work too hard? Is there too much of it? If he's suddenly avoiding assignments, it may be that the work is overwhelming him. Talk to his teacher about finding a solution.
- *Be sympathetic.* Don't excuse your child's "homework-avoiding" behavior, but do show him that you understand. "I know social studies can be tough, but you just have to hang in there and get it done."
- *Adjust his homework schedule.* If your child hates hitting the books right after school, give him an hour to play first. If he's exhausted by dinnertime, have him finish his homework *before* you eat.
- *Don't shield him from the consequences.* You hate seeing your child get in trouble, but you're not doing him any favors if you rescue him when he messes up. If he doesn't finish his homework, he'll have to face the music at school.
- *Celebrate his efforts.* When your child finishes his work on time (and without whining), let him know how proud you are. It'll reinforce his good behavior and make him feel terrific!



Source: Jonathan Brush, M.D., Ph.D., "Good Kids, Bad Behavior," FamilyEducation.com, <http://life.familyeducation.com/behavior/bad-habits/29732.html?page=2&detoured=1>.

Inspire honesty in your child

George Washington couldn't tell a lie, but your child may be a different



story. If she often "fudges" the facts, it's time to nip this habit in the bud. Here's how:

- *Praise her* when she tells the truth.
- *Give her the benefit* of the doubt. Assume she's telling the truth—unless you know otherwise.
- *Don't lie yourself*—just to make things easier. If that shot at the doctor's office is going to hurt, don't say it'll be painless.

Source: Jeri Samson and Beth Keen, Ph.D., "Lying and Dishonesty," NotMYKid.org, www.notmykid.org/parentArticles/Lying.

Don't make life 'fair'

"It's not fair!" Children say this often—and they're right! Life isn't always fair. And sometimes parents think they can change this by trying to make everything equal.

Offer logical explanations instead: "Ryan gets to stay up later because he's older. You need more sleep. When you're older, you'll stay up too."

Source: "Sibling Rivalry," AskDrSears.com, www.askdrsears.com/html/6/T064200.asp.

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