



## Ways for Parents to Encourage Discipline

Involve children in setting rules. Identify family rules, but listen to and include your child's thoughts when determining rules. This will create a feeling of respect and value for their opinions. They will feel like they are part of the decision making process at home, and in return they will be more likely to behave better. Set rules for bedtime, house chores, school attendance, TV viewing, homework, and study time.

Enforce rules consistently. Involve your child in deciding what consequences they will face if a rule is broken. Consequences should be set when rules are set and must be clear to avoid arguments. For example, a rule might be that curfew time is 9:00 pm; if this rule is broken the consequence should be the child cannot go out on the weekend. Rules should not be violated and all broken rules should have a consequence. To be effective, consequences must be enforced every time a rule is broken.

Cool down before disciplining your children. Try to count to 10 or walk away to calm down when you are upset with your children. This will allow you to think of ways to handle a situation without exploding. When you are calm, sit down with your child and discuss the problem. Try not to scream, offend, hit or embarrass your children.

Listen to your child's needs and concerns. Listening to your child's worries and desires helps build a stronger and more trusting relationship between you and your child. Developing good communication will help you deal with problems or differences more effectively. Do not consistently repeat demands to you children when you want them to do something. Expect them to be responsible and follow through on your requests.

Be positive and acknowledge improvement. Children need to know when they are doing better and they also need positive reinforcement. Make sure you praise and acknowledge good and improved behavior. When you are correcting your child, make sure he/she understands what they did wrong, how they should have acted, and the consequences of their behavior.

