



YOUR SOURCE Balancing Work, Family & Life

POSITIVE PARENTING:

Help Develop their Picture!

Children get a picture of themselves through the messages they hear. No one has a greater impact on those messages than you as a parent. In this issue of *Your Source*, find out more about positive parenting skills and how children's exposure to constructive feedback helps them develop a healthier outlook.

Click It! to access *Positive Parenting* in the *Spotlight* section. Check out the parenting and self esteem assessment tools as well as find tips on keeping positive communications in focus.

Podcast: "Forget the Negatives: Raising Positive Kids"

Tune in to our podcast for practical ideas on framing the feedback you give your kids in a positive light. This podcast is available on the website under *Tools, On Demand Learning, Webinar Recordings and Podcasts*.

Log on to check it out online

Log on to your program's website to access *Positive Parenting* and other helpful resources in the *Spotlight* section.

Remember, if your kids get the right picture of themselves through helpful communications, they will have the confidence and self-esteem to shine throughout their lives.



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Believe it or not, the answer is D! The result is kids are becoming "parent-deaf," which hurts parent/child communication. Try making a request once. If ignored, follow up with an appropriate action (example: "Please pick up your toys or I'll need to turn the TV off." No response? Turn off the TV!). Simple enough and you'll love the results!

About how many things do we ask our children to do in a day?

- a. 10
- b. 120
- c. 750
- d. 2,000

Check your answer on the bottom.

Now That's an Idea!

Eliminate the Negatives

Try eliminating "don't" when giving your children direction. You will be a more positive parent as a result and your child is more likely to listen. Here are some ideas:

- "Don't talk back." becomes "Speak in a respectful tone, please."
- "Don't eat that snack before dinner." Becomes "Save your appetite for tonight's dinner."
- "Don't pick on your brother." becomes "Show me how nicely you can play with your brother."
- "Don't leave that mess there." becomes "Pick up your toys before going out to play, please."
- "Don't yell." becomes "Lower your voice, please."



Focus on Disciplining through a Positive Lens

Children need limits. It's how children learn acceptable behavior. Try these tips to refocus the way you discipline by teaching responsibility while, at the same time, providing a sense of well-being and security:

- **Separate the deed from the 'deed-doer.'** Telling a child he is bad damages his self-esteem. Help your child recognize that it's the behavior that you are unwilling to tolerate. For a child to have healthy self-esteem, he must know that he is loved no matter what he does.
- **Give kids appropriate ways to feel powerful.** If you don't, they will find their own ways to feel powerful, which may not be the right ones. Ask their advice, give them choices or let them help you with cooking or shopping.
- **Use logical consequences.** Consequences need to be related to the negative behavior to be effective. For example, if your child forgets to return a DVD, grounding her for a week probably won't teach the related lesson. Instead, return the DVD and deduct the late fee from her allowance. Your child will be more likely to learn from your discipline.
- **Withdraw from conflict.** If your child is throwing a tantrum or speaking disrespectfully, it's often best to leave the room and tell the child to come see you when he or she is ready to try again. Do not respond with more anger.
- **Be consistent and follow through.** Your child will learn to respect you more if you say what you mean and mean what you say.

"There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One of these is roots, the other, wings."

– Hodding Carter

The Close-up on Conversation

Raising positive kids means making time in your hectic day to hear about what's new with them at school and with friends, and finding out more about their worries, successes and their challenges. Here are some ways to frame the conversation:

- **Be sure to really listen.** No matter what their age, talking with your kids and really listening to what they have to say is one of the most important things you can do to help them grow up confident and secure.
- **Value your children's answers.** Don't use your talks as a chance to criticize or blame. That will end any conversation pronto. If your children believe their thoughts, feelings and ideas are valued, they will be more likely to talk openly.
- **Tell family stories.** Tell your children stories about when they were younger so they know how much they are valued. And tell stories about when you were a child. This helps them connect the generations and shows where they fit in the family. It also shows by example how families can work, play, make mistakes and celebrate successes together.

