

Positive Parenting

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Many of us who have children sometimes feel we have "had enough" of them on occasion. So, what if they are getting on your nerves and are starting to misbehave? Before you do or say anything, calm yourself and think. Most of your children's misbehaviors do not require a fast response, so take a deep breath and think before you act.

Here are some tactics to use in response to misbehaving.

IGNORE Misbehaviors that will not harm anyone or anything can be ignored. These behaviors are often only meant to irritate or gain attention; they can be bothersome, but if you ignore them, it will take away the audience or attention your child is seeking.

RE-DIRECT If the behavior is a problem, have the child pay attention to something or someone else.

NATURAL CONSEQUENCES Allow the natural consequences of the act to be the discipline. For example, if the child throws a toy--the toy is taken away. For older children, if they stay out later than agreed upon, the next day they must be home earlier.

SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES A child might lose a privilege to do something or have something that they like. Be certain though, to match the loss as closely as possible to the misbehavior. This will often result in the change in behavior you want to occur.

REVIEW OF THE RULES/LIMITS Sometimes all children need is a reminder of the limits/rules you have set. A short, non-angry talk about the rules will let the child know what is expected.

EXTRA CHORES For children 8 or older, a child may be asked to do extra chores to make up for the time they may have taken away from a chore the parent would do when they are disciplining the child.

RECOVERY TIME Often, in the past, this was called a **TIME OUT**. It allows the child, and quite often the parent the chance to calm down. Make sure the child is away from the "action", when they are calmed down they can go back what they were doing before the misbehavior occurred. Sometimes just 2 -3 minutes is enough. When the time is over, give them a hug or another show of affection and send them back to whatever they were doing without any further discussion.

RE-ARRANGE SPACE OR PLACE Sometimes, as parents, we need to realize that the things in our home can be arranged or re-arranged so that they are not enticing to the child and cause misbehavior.

Adapted from tips from the Parent Helpline. For further information you can call (414) 671-0566.

Finally, pray about your child-raising responsibilities and ask that God will help you and bless you as you do the wonderful, yet tiring work of being a parent or grandparent.