



How To Handle Kids

Your Ultimate Manual To Handling Children

In our calm moments, if we're honest, we know we could handle any parenting moment, but in the storm of our anger, we feel righteously entitled to our fury.

How can this kid be so irresponsible, inconsiderate, and ungrateful? As parents/carers we need to work to respond rather than react to situations.



However, it is not about changing the child, it is about transforming them. Children are either born with defective traits or they have been nurtured this way. This is always the first step, is it just who they are, or are mummy and daddy gullible? Regardless of what, it's always beneficial to transform them (for the better or worse) than feeling change them.

Parents need to understand that the personality, hobbies and interests makes the child and it is the character, skills and attitude they need to hone. Have a read of my post on [Personality vs Character](#).



They say it takes a whole community to raise a child; that it takes more than one person to teach a child the ways of life. Often its experiences that will mould a child. One observation I have made is the power of role models. This doesn't have to be a celebrity, but that one uncle or aunt, the child looks up towards.



These people are advantageous in teaching morals, they have a distinct authority over the child where parents have complete authority, children can feel oppressed but Aunts, Uncles, Elder siblings and neighbours (who are usually extremely happy to see the child) have a different take on things.

Have a look at below on how to deal with some very common problems.

Behaviour You'd Like To Resolve:

My Child Is Very Spoilt

My Child Attention Seeks

My Child Has Tantrums

My Child Is Very Greedy

My Child Bullies Others

My Child Swears a lot

My Child Is Very Stubborn

My Child Has No Motivation

My Child Is Very Ungrateful

My Child Is Becoming Obese

Ultimate Tips and Reminders to Parenting

If you would like me to look at other behavioural aspects in children, leave a comment below.

Check out this exclusive post on [Punishment Vs Discipline](#)

My Child Is Very Spoilt



The Signs

- They resort to crying or yelling when they want something.
- They throw themselves on floor and won't get up.
- They constantly throw tantrums or even hit you when you punish them.
- They ignore you when you ask a question.
- They are rude to other adults and even to other children.
- They refuse to share with other children.
- They are show-offs and are constantly trying to one-up their peers to be the centre of attention.
- They always want whatever everyone else has. Once they have it, they want something new.
- They keep a messy room and never help out around the house despite your pleas for them to do so.
- They refuse to go to bed.

The Remedy

Your primary job as a parent is to prepare your child for how the world really works. In the real world, you don't always get what you want. You will be better able to deal with that as an adult if you've experienced it as a child. If your parent/child relationship is based on material goods, your child won't have the chance to experience unconditional love.

Be a good role model. "We're not the only influence in our kids' lives, so we better be the best influence," says Dr. Phil.

Be careful that you aren't teaching them that emotions can be healed by a trip to the mall. Commit yourself wholeheartedly to stop spoiling your children. For example, a parent who wants a child to start cleaning his room has to make sure that the job gets done right. "If they pick up one crayon and a piece of clothing and that's it, it isn't going to work," he says. A 10-year-old spoiled child does not need 10 years of reversal. Kids are smart and resilient and they want to grow right, so it's generally not too late.

Replace empty threats with clear, calm, concise instructions. "Kids hear their parents say, 'stop, no, it's the last time.' All the screaming and the counting to three and the threats -- we have trained them to ignore us for 11 hours because they know that in the 12th hour, they're going to get their way," Bromfield says. "I tell parents to say what you mean. If you just say the words and say what's going to happen and stick to it, that's what has the power -- the consequence. You don't even have to yell." Also, avoid the trap of over-explaining or haggling endlessly over routine matters, such as tooth-brushing, turning off the video game, or bedtime. Your child will only argue with you like a pint-sized lawyer, Bromfield says. Think about it, he says: Does your 11-year-old son really need hundreds of nightly reminders about the benefits of dental hygiene if he's smart enough to memorize 493 species of Pokemon?

Provide consistent discipline and consequences. Does he refuse to [pick] up his toys? Put them all away for a few days, period." At first, your child may whine and cry, but don't give in to tantrums. "Children need to grow used to handling reasonable limits without feeling devastated, rejected, and unloved. Ignore the child if it has tantrums. Most times children like this are prone to having temper tantrums if they don't get what they want. If the child does, just stand there and watch but don't give in. Sometimes (if you're lucky) they will see how foolish they are and stop.

One way to teach children boundaries, he says, is to actually give them choices, beginning at 18 months old -- the age when people are capable of making simple decisions about right and wrong. Choices may involve things like "Do you want orange juice or tomato juice?" or "Do you want to wear this outfit or that one?" Give your child various responsibilities and chores; present them as opportunities to earn the things that he wants. Your child is more likely to appreciate his toys, games and electronics if he works to earn them on his own. A chore chart or using an allowance system helps your child learn that nothing is gained without effort. Consider rewarding your toddler with activities — like extra stories at bedtime this week or an extra-long trip to the park — rather than objects, so he doesn't automatically equate rewards with material things.

My Child Attention Seeks



The Signs

- Addicted to Attention - Always seek it
- They resort to crying or yelling when they want something.
- the most special child in the universe

The Remedy

The child needs all your attention, or to be the centre of attention, and can't stand to not be entertained. Parents have lavished the child with all the love, attention, time, and caring humanly possible, and now look what's happened! But some do have a legitimate need. Studies shows the average parent gives only 5 minutes of uninterrupted attention to their 5 year old. Some children are innately attention seekers, they desperately crave it, to us we think of them as attention seekers but there's an inner cry that may never be answered to its fullest.

The more attention a child wants, the more hugs he's in need. So your job is to remind the child just because you're not hugging as much or not giving the same attention you were a few months ago, it does not mean you hate them.

Give attention for appropriate behaviour. Look for opportunities to make a positive comment, to pat a child on the shoulder and to have a conversation. Show them it takes good credible behaviour for people to respect and notice them. Ignore any bad behaviour, the benefit of ignoring is that your son will learn that positive behaviour

has a powerful pay-off. Saying that be consistent. It's the only way children know we mean what we say.

Set aside special time. Even 10 mins of pure attention, work out what they want from you, what's been happening in the day. Make sure you don't leave without them without them boring content, you may need to catch up on 1 month of hugs!

The children seek attention coz they need it desperately. You need to challenge that and make them feel that you are present and paying attention.

My Child Has Tantrums



The Signs

- The child has random hissy fits
- Crying and moan in the most unexpected places without remorse or shame

The Remedy

The only people who find temper tantrums amusing are a child's grandparents because it's finally payback time as they watch their grown children struggle helplessly with their own little monsters. Unfortunately, tantrums are a fact of life for anyone with young children. They usually start before age two, when children experiment with different ways to communicate with others and to get what they want. Tantrums become more infrequent around age four, but some children continue to "throw fits" for years after that—even into adulthood (spoilt bratty women).

Remain calm enough to handle the tantrum properly. The worst thing parents can do is have a temper tantrum over their child's temper tantrum. Children need a calming influence, especially during a tantrum, and if you can't provide that, you can't expect them to calm down. Take a few deep breaths and wait at least a few seconds before deciding on a response.

Remember that your child's tantrum is NOT necessarily a way to "get his way", but could be the result of frustration, lack of needed attention from you, or even a physical problem, like low blood sugar, pain or digestive problems! Studies show The lack of a place to nap is a common cause of tantrums (Ever notice the amount of kids having them at 3pm, blood sugar level drops. Give them a snack.

Do not reward the tantrum. If the parents give in, tantrums become a launching point for the child—a way to deal with the world socially. If you allow yourself to be held hostage by tantrums, your child will continue to use them long past the age when they would otherwise cease.

Explain to the child that you will talk to him or her when he or she calms down. This will help your child to understand that you are ignoring her because her behavior is unacceptable, not because you don't care about her. When the child calms down, fulfil your part of the bargain by discussing the tantrum and the child's concerns

A lot of the time it is a tantrum based on emotions, not reasoning. If the child throws is certain circumstances then look for ways to control it specifically, say to him, If YOU manage to behave and stay quite you will get some flavoured gum. Look at him in the eyes. Avoid trying to reason with any child who is in the middle of a full-blown tantrum, especially in a public place. Give him or her time to vent. Instead, give the child phrases to express the emotions that they are experiencing. Say phrases like, "You must be really tired after such a long day," or, "You must feel frustrated that you can't have what you want right now." This not only will help the child verbalize this later, but shows empathy for their feelings without having to give in. Explain that the behaviour is unacceptable, but also make sure your child understands that you

love him or her regardless. Try to discover the cause of the tantrum if you haven't already, and take the opportunity to discuss better alternatives with your child.

So the main aim is to teach your child tantrums won't give them attention but only annoyed parents.

My Child Is Very Greedy



The Signs

- The child does not stop eating
- Child wants everything to himself – no sharing

The Remedy

How many times have you had a play date go something like this: little Joey comes over and sees your son's trucks. He reaches for the truck only to hear the shriek of your child screaming, "Mine!" You think to yourself that, technically, it is his. He's not wrong to want to keep it. But in order to be polite, you ask him to "share" the truck with Joey. He loses it, you find yourself getting more and more irritated with his behaviour, and the play date is over.

Sharing is a difficult concept for most children, especially given the fact that our culture really doesn't promote sharing at all. Messages of wanting more, needing more and getting more are plastered throughout the community. Individualism and competition are highly regarded qualities. Children, of course, hear and follow these messages. So it's ironic that they're expected to know how to share at a young age when the rest of the world is telling them not to.

Toddlers live their life in the present, so when they are playing with a toy and it is ripped away, they think it's gone forever. They have no concept of time, and a sense of time is fundamental to a child's understanding and ability to share. This little person works to establish an identity separate from mother. "I do it myself!" and "mine!" scream the headlines in the toddler's tabloid. In fact, "mine" is one of the earliest words to come out of a toddler's mouth.

Karen Friedland-Brown, a parenting educator and child development specialist at The Parents Place in Palo Alto, CA, suggests a different approach: "I like to talk about taking turns, as opposed to sharing. Sharing implies two children using the same thing at once, which is very unusual. Even adults don't like to do that. But taking turns, and playing together side by side are good goals that we need to teach."

First, if you're having a play date at your house, put your child's special toys away. Ask your child to help you find something his friend can play with before he comes over. By bringing your child into the decision-making process, you give him some control. Take out and have ready some neutral play things such as paints, crayons, chalk or play-doh. This will encourage the children to play peacefully side-by-side. Suggest meeting in a park or museum, rather than at someone's house. And of course, don't force your child to give something up.

All children grow and develop at a different pace. If your child isn't sharing, don't fret. As Friedland-Brown says, "Just as children learn to walk, talk, and do other skills at varying ages, so it is the same with sharing. Temperament plays a huge role in when children can learn to take turns." Shouting and telling off never works as children feel told off, for playing with something that belongs to them. There is power in possession. To you, they're only toys. To a child, they're a valuable, prized collection. Instead, create attitudes and an environment that encourage your child to want to share.

Another tip is to use the idea of sharing with time, reading and playing, so 15 minutes for you to play then 15 minutes for me to clean. That way time is valued.

So the main aim is to give the child control and instil a sense of generosity in them. They have to share from their heart. Monkey see, monkey do. If big monkey shares, so will little monkey. When someone asks to borrow one of your "toys," make this a teachable moment: "Mommy is sharing her cookbook with her friend." Let your sharing shine. Share with your children: "Want some of my popcorn?" "Come sit with us — we'll make room for you." If you have several children, especially if they are close in age, there will be times when there isn't enough of you to go around. Two children can't have one hundred percent of one mommy or daddy. Do the best you can to divide your time fairly. "No fair" may be the single most frequently repeated complaint of childhood. Try to be an equal opportunity parent as much as possible, while teaching your children that other factors come into play in day-to-day life.

My Child Bullies Others



The Signs

- The child bullies other children
- Child is aggressive
- Child is passively aggressive

The Remedy

Your first reaction might be disbelief that your well-behaved son or daughter is being accused of bullying. But before you dismiss the thought out of hand, listen to what the school has to say about it. Parents rarely complain to a school at the outset of bullying, there's usually been a history of unhappiness. Sometimes the child being bullied is affected so much and has had to take time off school through fear and may be suffering such distress that they need to see a doctor.

You need to take what the school says seriously and work with staff on a solution. There are times when people are unjustly accused of being bullies but a thorough investigation should reveal this.

Have a look at this documentary on bullying, how about watching this with your child. It may develop a sense of responsibility and sympathy. Praise your child when they show compassion for others.

Research shows that children who resort to bullying often:

- Lack empathy and compassion for others' feelings
- May be expressing anger about events in their lives
- Want to be in control
- Have low self-esteem
- May be trying to impress their peers
- Come from families where parents or siblings bully
- Do not receive adequate parental attention or supervision
- Have parents that do not enforce discipline
- May be the victims of bullying and are trying to retaliate

Listen to what others have to say about your child's behavior. Then, listen to your child's side of the story. Try to understand what is behind the behaviour. Is your child being bullied? Are their friend's bullies?

Make your expectations clear. Let your child know that there will be consequences if the bullying continues and that you will not tolerate it. This on a parental level and school level. Children should know about potential consequences.

Model kindness. Remember that every child has to learn and grow. If you want your child to be considerate, make sure you're also modelling the right behaviours. This includes keeping the other child's feelings in mind when you speak about the situation with other parents or your child's friends.

My Child Swears A lot



The Signs

- The child reacts by swearing
- Foul language can be heard constantly

The Remedy

“Kids say the darnedest things” is a saying that we’ve all heard. And if you’re a parent, you know just how true it is. But when they utter expletives, it can be rather shocking. These days, few kids get through childhood without saying a single curse word. When kids get a little older, they often begin to realize that curse words are viewed as offensive. This is why many children who swear when they are young quit swearing during the preschool or early elementary years. But some keep those swear words filed away for future use. They bring them out when they are feeling frustrated or want to hurt others. And there are some kids who use curse words just to show off in front of their peers.

Some parents carefully watch every word that comes out of their mouths. Others let a curse word slip from time to time. But no matter which category you fall into, hearing your child curse isn’t a pleasant experience.

When very young children swear, it’s usually a matter of repeating things they’ve heard. They are just learning to use language to communicate, so they mimic any word they can. They are not trying to hurt or offend anyone, they’re just developing verbal skills. Whereas older children swear for a number of reasons. If it’s a word they don’t hear often, they may be using it because they do not realize that it is offensive. They might just think it’s a cool new word to try. When adults say swear words they tend to emphasize them, which makes them all the more appealing to youngsters.

Kids may also use swear words in an effort to get attention. As a parent, it usually takes us by surprise when our children use such language. It’s not easy to ignore it, especially when it comes out of the blue. So we get upset, or perhaps we laugh. Either way, the child receives attention. Our kids pick up on this, and the next time they’re craving attention, they remember the word that got them attention before. Unfortunately, this often happens at the most inopportune times, such as when waiting in a busy checkout line at the grocery store.

Don’t overreact. If you make a big scene when your child utters a dirty word, there’s a good chance that it will reinforce the behaviour. He could use the word again when he craves attention, or he might decide that it’s a good word to use when he wants to get under your skin. Avoid confronting your child about swearing when he does it when angry or upset. This will only add fuel to the fire in most cases. Work through the problem at hand, and discuss the bad language at a calmer time.

When your child swears, don't take it too hard. As long as you make it clear that such words are unacceptable, the chances of your little angel developing an incurable potty mouth are very slim.

Watch your own language a little more closely. Kids often pick up curse words at home, and if you use them frequently, they are more likely to think it's acceptable to do so themselves.

Take your child's age into consideration. Children who are just learning to talk usually do not realize that swear words are bad. So scolding them when they use them serves little purpose. In many cases, if you just ignore it, they won't say it again. If your child has more developed language skills, a calm and simple explanation of why they shouldn't swear will often solve the problem. If you tell them that a word is not nice, there's a good chance that they will cease to use it.

But older children who know that swear-words are bad may need to be disciplined when they use them. Depending on their age and the circumstances, time out, suspension of certain privileges or grounding may be appropriate.

The main aim is to avert attention from swearing, do this by being a role model, explaining or simply just ignoring it.

My Child Is Very Stubborn



The Signs

- The child has their way or no way
- Child doesn't listen to anyone including parent

The Remedy

Stubbornness is considered the "showing dogged determination not to change one's attitude or position on something" per dictionary.com. They rely on their inner wisdom, what I call intuitive intelligence versus outside authorities. In other words, these highly sensitive boys and girls cannot be cajoled by people outside of them – they are inwardly motivated and when they want to do something, they will.

Work with them – So often parents and other adults tell children what to do versus partnering with them. This is a problem. Highly sensitive children are sensitive to your words, demeanour, tone, atmosphere and overall attitude towards them so they'll do what they know how to do – defy, talk back, sass, refuse and other outward displays of anger and frustration. You need to change your approach and partner with them even if it's hard, challenging, the last thing you want to do ... it will eventually save you time, energy and frustration.

Negotiate – One thing I have learned is that children that are "acting out" need something they are not getting. So ask questions like: What's going on? How can I help you? Why are you upset? What do you need now? And yes, I also am a proponent of negotiating with children – it sends the right message. You are basically saying, "Yes, I realize you are a powerful being and let's make a deal." Again, it is another form of partnering with kids so they win and you win. There's nothing wrong with this!!!

Our highly sensitive children aren't just sensitive. They are a collective of highly capable, intelligent, gifted and yes, stubborn beings who were born to do great things. I realize these also aren't the easiest kids to parent, teach and counsel however they hold within them the potential to be great. Not just good but truly great. Of course, a lot of this rests on our shoulders and how we nurture their greatness, support their unique gifts and help them channel their stubbornness in productive ways.

My Child Has No Motivation



The Signs

- The child is lazy
- Child can't be bothered to do anything
- Child is not doing well at school and does not care

The Remedy

The words "I don't care" empower them. When they start feeling anxious about their place in life, it soothes them to say it doesn't matter. Frankly, you can't make your child care. Let's be honest, the old saying, "You can bring a horse to water, but you can't make him drink" is true. But understand that while we can't make our kids drink, we can certainly try to make them thirsty.

Motivation begins with interest. Interest leads to exploration and learning, and to the development of projects. Projects then become ambitions and goals. Like all of us, children want to do what they are "good at." They want to shine and feel proud. And, again, they want us to be proud of them.

A child's motivation is also sustained by ideals. Children want to become like, to learn from, and to earn the respect of the people they admire. Too often, we overlook this fundamental aspect of children's motivation and emotional development. We do not stop often enough, I believe, to consider our idealization in the eyes of our children - how children look to us and look up to us - and how we remain for our children, throughout life, sources of affirmation and emotional support.

Rewards and punishments have some short-term effect on children's effort. We are all motivated, to some extent, to earn rewards and avoid punishment. But rewards and punishments cannot create interests or goals.

I sometimes think of children's motivation in the form of equations:

Motivation = interest + a sense of one's competence + relevance + ideals

Motivation = interest + confidence (the anticipation of success) + the anticipation of recognition (praise or appreciation) for our effort

Motivation = having a goal + feeling that we can achieve it

Look at What Your Child Likes: Look for things that can be used as rewards for your child. he'll tell you he doesn't care about anything; that "nothing matters." But look at his actions—if he watches a lot of TV, plays on the computer, if he likes video games or texting, you know what he likes. Have Conversations about What Your Child Wants: When times are good, I think you should talk to your child about what he would like to have some day. Try to sneak in different ideas to get your child to think about how he will achieve what he wants in life.

Make Sure everything is Earned Each Day: Make sure everything is earned. Life for these guys should be one day at a time. They should have to earn video games every day. And how do they earn them? By doing their homework and chores.

Don't Shout, Argue, Beg or Plead: If you're shouting, you're just showing your frustration—and letting your child know that he's in control. Here's the truth: when people start shouting, it means they've run out of solutions. With kids who are underperforming, I think you have to be very cool. Arguing, pleading, and trying to get your teen to talk about how they feel is not very effective when they're using withholding as a relationship strategy.

Stop Doing Your Child's Tasks for Him: "Learned helplessness" is when people learn that if they don't do something, someone will step in and do it for them—and it's a very destructive pattern. When kids and teens use this shortcut, they don't learn independence. In fact, in families where this occurs, many times you'll find that the kids weren't allowed to be independent very much. Perhaps they had to do things a certain way and all the choices were made for them. Eventually, they gave up; they surrendered.

Set Deadlines and Use Structure: Tell your child clearly when to do chores and schoolwork—and when you want them done by. I think it's important to schedule these kids, to give them structure. "Do your chores from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., and then you'll have free time until dinner. And during free time, you can do whatever you want to do." There are other ways to motivate your child by saying, "If you can accomplish this in X amount of time, we'll go to your cousin's house on Saturday" or

"I'll take you to the boat show this weekend." Remember, not everything that your child likes to do costs money, so add those activities into the equation.

My Child Is Very Ungrateful



The Signs

- The child has many material items and wants more
- Child is demanding
- Child doesn't consider other things but possessions.

The Remedy

It seems that today's world has gone mad in consumerism and materialism. Parents give their kids presents on all kinds of occasions where presents didn't use to be given, like random holidays throughout the year, and name days, and half-birthdays, school-end and school-start, and so on. Stores sell Christmas candy and decorations in September! After that, it's not even New Year yet and the stores are gearing up for Easter.

However, there is a reason we give gifts: it strengthens our relationships, there is much pleasure to be gained in the giving, probably more than in the receiving. Why would we want to restrict spreading happiness?

When they do receive gifts, especially homemade ones, be sure to comment on the thought and consideration that must have gone into it. Value handmade gifts over ones that are purchased and explain why they are more special to you. This will help counteract thoughtless consumerism, which seems to be your major concern and teach them to be gracious recipients.

At around four, start giving a little spending money now and again. Particularly for a set time and place like at the fair, so she can see how much she has and spend it on something she likes but can also afford. Then, when she wants the next thing, but no longer has the spending money, she learns why she needs to think through purchases more fully.

Take your children out to do some volunteering, this can be at the garden centre, old people's home, soup kitchen. And if they are too young... Take them to a place where they can observe others doing the same.

My Child Is Becoming Obese



The Signs

- The child is becoming fat

The Remedy

One of the best ways to instil good habits in your child is for you to be a good role model. Children learn by example. One of the most powerful ways to encourage your child to be active and eat well is to do so yourself.

Set a good example by going for a walk or bike ride instead of watching TV or surfing the internet. Playing in the park or swimming with your children shows them being active is fun, and it's a great way for you all to spend time together. Overweight children don't need to do more exercise than slimmer children.

Their extra body weight means they will naturally burn more calories for the same activity.

All children need about 60 minutes of physical activity a day for good health, but it doesn't need to be all at once. Several short 10-minute or even five-minute bursts of activity throughout the day can be just as good as an hour-long stretch.

For younger children, it can take the form of active play, such as ball games, chasing games like "it" and "tag", riding a scooter, and using playground swings, climbing frames and see-saws. For older children it could include riding a bike, skateboarding, walking to school, skipping, swimming, dancing and martial arts. Walking or cycling short distances instead of using the car or bus is a great way to be active together as a family – and you'll save money, too.

Try to avoid feeding your child oversized portions. There's very little official guidance on precisely how much food children require, so you'll need to use your own judgement.

A good rule of thumb is to start meals with small servings and let your child ask for more if they're still hungry. Try not to make your child finish everything on the plate or eat more than they want to. And avoid using adult-size plates for younger children as it encourages them to eat oversized portions.

It may also help if you encourage your child to eat slowly and have set mealtimes. You can use mealtimes as an opportunity to catch up on what's happened during the day.

Children, just like adults, should aim to eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables every day. They're a great source of fibre and vitamins and minerals. Almost all fruit and vegetables count towards your child's 5 A DAY, including fresh, tinned, frozen, and dried. Juices, smoothies, beans and pulses also count.

For example, if they have two glasses of fruit juice and a smoothie in one day, that still only counts as one portion.

Discourage your child from having sugary or high-fat foods like sweets, cakes, biscuits, some sugary cereals, and sugar-sweetened soft and fizzy drinks. These foods and drinks tend to be high in calories and low in nutrients.

It also helps children stay trim if they sleep well. It's been shown that children who don't have the recommended amount of sleep are more likely to be overweight. The less children sleep, the greater the risk of them becoming obese. Lack of sleep can also affect their mood and behaviour.

Ultimate Tips and Reminders to Parenting

Put parenting first. This is hard to do in a world with so many competing demands. Good parents consciously plan and devote time to parenting. They make developing their child's character their top priority. Once you're a parent, you have to learn to put your priorities below your children's, and to make the sacrifice to spending more of your day caring for them than you do caring for yourself. Of course, you shouldn't neglect yourself completely, but you should get accustomed to the idea of putting your child's needs first. When you plan your weekly routine, your child's needs should be your primary focus.

Read to your child every day. Your 15 year old will particularly appreciate this. Helping to nurture a love for the written word will help your child to develop a love for reading later on. Set a time for reading for your child every day -- typically around bedtime or nap time. Spend at least half an hour to an hour reading to your child each day, if not more. Not only will your child develop a love for words, but your child will have a better chance of both academic and behavioural success. Studies show that children that were read to on a daily basis demonstrate less bad behaviour in school.

Once your child starts learning to read or write, let your child take over. Don't correct his or her mistakes every two seconds, or your child will get discouraged.

Eat dinner as a family. One of the most dangerous trends in the modern family is the dying of the family meal. The dinner table is not only a place of sustenance and family business but also a place for the teaching and passing on of our values. Manners and rules are subtly absorbed over the table. Family mealtime should communicate and sustain ideals that children will draw on throughout their lives.

If your child is a picky eater, don't spend dinner time criticizing your child's eating habits and watching what he or she doesn't eat like a hawk. This will lead your child to have a negative association with family meals.

Get your child involved in the meal. Dinner will be more fun if your child "helps" you pick out food at the grocery store or helps you set up the table or to do small food-related tasks, such as washing the vegetables you will cook. An older child can obviously handle more than vegetable washing. Involve all the family in menu planning for the family.

Keep dinner conversation open and light. Don't give your child the third-degree. Simply ask, "How was your day?"

Set a strict bedtime routine. Though your child doesn't have to go to bed during the same five-minute stretch every single night, you should set a bedtime routine that your child can follow and stick to it. Studies show that children's cognitive

abilities can drop two full grade levels after just one missed hour of sleep, so it's important that they get as much rest as they can before you send them to school.

Your routine should include some winding-down time. Turn off the TV, music, or any electronics, and either talk to your child softly in bed or read to him. Don't give your child sugary snacks right before bed or it'll be harder to get him to sleep.

Encourage your child to develop skills each week. Though you don't have to sign your child up for ten different activities each week, you should find at least one or two activities that your child loves to do and incorporate them into your child's weekly routine. This can be anything from soccer to art class -- it really doesn't matter, as long as your child shows a talent or a love for something. Tell your child what a great job he's doing and encourage him to keep going.

Taking your child to different lessons will also help him or her socialize with other children. Don't get lazy. If your child complains that she doesn't want to go to piano lessons, but you know she likes it deep down, don't give in just because you don't feel like driving over there.

Give your child enough play time every day. "Play time" does not mean having your child sit in front of the TV and suck on a building block while you do the dishes. "Play time" means letting your child sit in his room or play area and to actively engage with stimulating toys while you help him explore their possibilities. Though you may be tired, it's important that you show your child the benefits of playing with his toys so he gets the stimulation he needs and so he learns to play with them on his own.

It doesn't matter if you don't have 80 million toys for your child to play with. It's the quality, not the quantity of the toys that counts. And you may find that your child's favourite toy of the month is an empty toilet paper roll.

Learn to listen to your children. Influencing their lives is one of the greatest things you can do. It is easy to tune out our children, and a miss an opportunity for meaningful guidance. If you never listen to your children and spend all of your time barking orders at them, they won't feel respected or cared for.

Encourage your children to talk. Helping them express themselves early on can help them communicate successfully in the future.

Treat your child with respect. Don't ever forget that your child is a living, breathing human being who has needs and wants just like the rest of us. If your child is a picky eater, don't nag him constantly at the dinner table; if he's slow to potty train, don't embarrass him by talking about it in public; if you promised your child you'd take him to the movies if he was good, don't take back your promise because you're too tired. If you respect your child, then it's much more likely that your child will respect you back.

Know that you can never love your child too much. It's a myth that loving your child "too much," praising your child "too much," or showering your child with "too much" affection can make your child spoiled rotten. Giving your child love, affection, and attention will positively encourage your child to develop as a human being. Giving your child toys instead of love, or not reprimanding your child for bad behaviour is what will lead you to spoil your child.

Tell your child how much you love him at least once a day -- but preferably, as often as you can.

Be involved in your child's daily life. It will take effort and strength to be there for your child every day, but if you want to encourage your child to develop his own interests and character, you have to create a strong support system for him. This doesn't mean you have to follow your child around every second of the day, but it does mean that you have to be there for all of the little moments, from his first soccer game to family time at the beach.

Once your child starts school, you should know what classes he's taking and the names of his teachers. Go over your child's homework with him and help him with any difficult tasks, but do not do it for him.

As your child gets older, you can start pulling back a bit, and encouraging your child to explore his interests without you by his side all the time.

Encourage independence. You can still be there for your child while encouraging him to explore his own interests. Don't tell your child which lessons to take; let him pick from a variety of options. You can help dress your child, but go clothes shopping together with your child, so he has some say in his appearance. And if your child wants to play with his friends or to play with his toys by himself without you there, let him build his own identity from time to time.

If you encourage independence early on, your child will be much more likely to think for himself as an adult.

Know that children need limits. They will ignore these limits on occasion. Reasonable punishment is one of the ways human beings have always learned. Children must understand what punishment is for and know that its source is parental love.

As a parent, you will need cognitive tools if you are to adjust unwanted behaviours. Instead of making up a confusing, non-related punishment like, "If you ride your tricycle into the street, you will have to balance this book on your head," withdraw a privilege. The child must naturally connect the privilege withdrawal with the behaviour: "If you ride your tricycle into the street, you lose the use of your tricycle for the rest of the day."

Don't use violent forms of punishment, such as spanking or hitting. Children who are spanked or hit aren't any more likely to listen. Parents should never hit a child, under any circumstances. Children who are spanked, hit, or slapped are more prone to fighting with other children. They are more likely to be bullies and more likely to use aggression to solve disputes with others. Children exposed to family violence are also more likely to develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Reward your child for good behaviour. Rewarding your child for good behaviour is even more important than punishing your child for bad behaviour. Letting your child know when he or she is doing something right will encourage the behaviour in the future. If your child behaved well, from sharing his toys at a play date to being patient during a car ride, then let him know you noticed his good behaviour; don't just say nothing when your child behaves well and punish him when he does not.

Don't underestimate the importance of praising your child for good behaviour. Saying, "I'm so proud of you for..." can make your child feel that his good behaviour is really appreciated.

You can give your child toys or treats from time to time, but don't make your child think that he deserves a toy any time he does something good.

Be consistent. If you want to discipline your child effectively, then you have to be consistent. You can't punish your child for doing something one day, and then give him candy to stop doing it another day, or even say nothing because you're too tired to put up a fight. And if your child does something good, like using the bathroom correctly during potty training, make sure you praise your child every time. Consistency is what reinforces good and bad behaviour.

If you and a spouse are raising your child together, then you should be a united front against your children, using the same disciplinary methods. There should be no "good cop, bad cop" routine in your home.

Explain your rules. If you really want your child to recognize your disciplinary methods, then you have to be able to explain why your child can't do certain things. Do not just tell him not to be mean to other children, or to clean up his toys; tell him why this behaviour will be good for him, for you, and for society at large. Making a connection between your child's actions and what they mean will help your child understand your decision-making process.

Teach your child to take responsibility for his actions. This is an important part of disciplining your child and building his character. If he does something wrong, like throwing his food on the ground, make sure he owns up to the behaviour and explains why he did it, instead of blaming it on someone else or even denying it. After your child does something naughty, have a conversation about why it happened.

It's important for your child to know that everyone makes mistakes. The mistake isn't as important as the way your child reacts to it.

Do not reduce character education to words alone. We gain virtue through practice. Parents should help children by promoting moral action through self-discipline, good work habits, kind and considerate behaviour to others, and community service. The bottom line in character development is behaviour--their behaviour. If your child is too young for real humanitarian behaviour, you can always teach your child to be kind toward others, no matter his age.

Be a good role model. Face it: human beings learn primarily through modelling. In fact, you can't avoid being an example to your children, whether good or bad. Being a good example, then, is probably your most important job. If you yell at your child and then tell her never to yell, kick the wall when you're angry, or make mean comments about your neighbours, your child will think that this behaviour is okay.

Start being a good role model from day one. Your child will be aware of your moods and behaviour earlier than you think.

Develop an ear and an eye for what your children are absorbing. Children are like sponges. Much of what they take in has to do with moral values and character. Books, songs, TV, the Internet, and films are continually delivering messages—moral and immoral—to our children. As parents we must control the flow of ideas and images that are influencing our children.

If you and your child see something upsetting, such as two people in an argument at the grocery store or a clip about violence on the news, don't miss the opportunity to talk about it with your child.

Teach good manners. Teaching your child to say "Thank you," and "please," and to treat others with a baseline of respect will go a long way in helping them succeed in the future. Don't underestimate the power of teaching your child to be kind to adults, to respect their elders, and to avoid fighting with or picking on other children. Good manners will follow your children for the rest of their lives, and you should start modelling it as soon as possible.

One crucial aspect of good manners is cleaning up after yourself. Teach your child to clean up after his own toys when he's three, and he'll make a great house guest when he's twenty-three.

Only use the words you want your children to use. Though you may feel the urge to curse, complain, or say negative things about a person you know in front of your child, even if you're just talking on the phone, remember that your child is always paying attention. And if you're having a heated argument with your spouse, it's better to do it behind closed doors so your child can't mimic your negative behaviour.

If you do use a bad word and your child notices it, don't pretend like it did not happen. Apologize and say it won't happen again. If you say nothing, then your child will think these words are okay.

Teach your children to have empathy for others. Empathy is an important skill and one that you can never teach too early. If your child knows how to have empathy for others, then he'll be able to see the world from a more judgment-free perspective and will be able to put himself in someone else's shoes. Let's say your child comes home and tells you that his friend Jimmy was mean to him; try to talk about what happened and see if you can figure out how Jimmy might be feeling and what led to the negative behaviour. Or, if a waitress forgets your order in a restaurant, don't tell your child that she's lazy or stupid; instead, point out how tired she must be after spending all day on her feet.

Teach your children to be grateful. Teaching your child to be truly grateful is different than forcing your child to say "thank you" all the time. To truly teach your child to be grateful, you have to say "thank you" all the time yourself, so your child sees the good behaviour. If your child complains that everyone in school has a new toy that you won't let her get, remind her how many people are less fortunate than she is

Expose her to people of all walks of life so she understands how privileged she is, even if that means she won't be getting a Nintendo DS for Christmas.

Saying, "I didn't hear you say thank you..." after your child misses this point won't actually get the message across as much as saying "thank you" yourself and making sure your child hears you.