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Offer Children Positive Discipline

Parents use a variety of discipline methods, with varying degrees of success. But the goal is the same: obedient, safe children who can internalize right from wrong. Experts say that no matter children's age, development, or behavior, the key to disciplining them is understanding their heart and finding out what makes them "tick." If you can look beyond the symptoms of misbehavior and ask "Why is this child behaving this way?" then you can make a positive change.

Creating a clear discipline policy is vital to shepherding your family. Here are some tips to get started:

Keep It Simple. If you set too many rules, no one can keep them straight. Ensure that children understand by having them act out each rule (for example, "Hang up your coat when you come home").



Keep It Consistent. Consistency makes it easier for children to remember expectations for the long haul. Don't ignore misbehavior just because you're too tired to deal with it at the time.

Keep It Fair. You can still tailor consequences to a child's age or personality. For example, a guideline for "timeouts" is one minute for every year of a child's age. Just be sure to apply rules to everyone.

Keep It Fresh. Post expectations where everyone can see them. Take the time to review rules regularly with children, but also equip kids to follow them. Adapt discipline methods as children develop.

Most-Used Discipline Methods

In a survey, more than 1,500 parents revealed what discipline looks like in their homes. Parents from 27 states, Canada, and Puerto Rico said they most often discipline with these strategies:

- Timeouts: 42%
- Removing privileges: 41%
- Yelling: 13%
- Spanking: 9%
- Sending kids to their bedroom: 27%

PowerSource



Ask God:

1. To help you lovingly correct and guide your children.
2. To help you set and stick to firm, reasonable limits.
3. To give your children a spirit of willful obedience.

Parenting Insights

It's tempting to use rewards or bribes to make children behave. But Larry Shallenberger, writing in *Children's Ministry Magazine*, says rewards are actually harmful to children's emotional and spiritual development.

1. **Rewards distort children's values.** When prizes are the focus, children's interest in the desired behavior is diminished. We send the message that obedience is unnatural.
2. **Rewards distort character development.** Promises of prizes get children focused on "working the system." They also promote dependence and lead to "me-focused" kids.
3. **Rewards create a faulty image of God.** When you bribe children to attend church or learn Bible verses, they're less likely to build a friendship with God. They may view him as an impersonal dispenser and withholder of rewards.

OpenTheBook

**"For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.... God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness."
Hebrews 12:6, 10**

Discipline is a positive way to teach self-control. God molds and shapes Christians all their lives. He lovingly corrects us so we can be more like him.

Teachable Moments

1. Rule Roulette—Play cards or board games as a family, but take turns setting new rules. Talk about what it's like to remember the changing instructions. Then share some reasons that rules need to stay constant.



2. Simon Says—With younger children, play Simon Says, giving everyone a chance to be Simon. Then discuss what it's like to give orders and be "obeyed." Also talk about what makes following instructions easy or difficult.

3. Three Strikes—Attend a local athletic event as a family, and look for ways players follow or break the rules. Afterward, talk about misbehavior and its consequences in sports and life. Share ways that athletes—and other people—learn and grow from their mistakes.



"So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are ON THE ROAD, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up." Deuteronomy 11:18-19, NLT

Children comply more readily when they participate in family decisions, especially ones involving rules and consequences. Start a discussion about the necessity and goals of discipline:

1. Why is it important to have rules in a family, in school, and in society? How do rules help us?
2. What makes you want to obey God? What makes you want to obey your parents?
3. Why is it hard to obey at times? What helps you obey?
4. If you could change one rule, what would it be, and why?

Family Experience: Cook Up the Right Recipe

Spend time together in the kitchen exploring what the Bible says about loving obedience.

- **Taste Test**—Bake three variations of a simple biscuit recipe. For the first batch, follow the instructions correctly. For the other two batches, leave out a different key ingredient. Have family members taste a biscuit from each batch. Ask: "How did the biscuits taste different from one another? Which one tasted best?" Identify the ingredients missing from each batch, and talk about the effects. For example, biscuits made without baking powder are flat and dense. Read 2 Peter 1:2-7. Ask: "What are the ingredients God wants us to have? What's a person like who has all these ingredients? Read verse 8. Say: "God has a recipe for each of us. Which ingredient do you need to add to your life this week?"
- **Eggstra Soft Hearts**—You'll need six hard-boiled eggs and six raw eggs in an egg carton, as well as a clear bowl. Have family members take turns selecting and cracking an egg into the bowl. Continue until at least one raw and one hard-boiled egg have been cracked. Say: "When you boil an egg, a change happens inside to make it harden. We couldn't make cookies with the hard-boiled eggs." Read Hebrews 3:7-12. Say: "When we read the Bible but ignore what God says, our hearts harden. We turn away from God. But when we listen to God, he can do sweet things through us." Close by praying for God to make all your hearts soft and obedient.



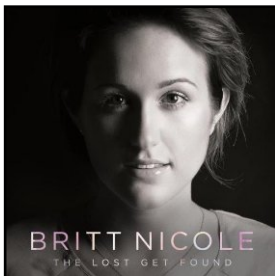


What's Playing at the Movies

Movie: *G-Force* (July 24)
Genre: 3-D action comedy
Rating: PG (for some mild action and rude humor)
Cast: Will Arnett, Sam Rockwell, Penélope Cruz, Tracy Morgan, Nicholas Cage
Synopsis: A team of trained secret-agent guinea pigs tries to stop an evil billionaire from destroying the world with household appliances. When the government shuts down the guinea pigs' mission, they're sent to a pet shop. The wannabe heroes must plan an escape so they can end the threat and save the world.
Discussion Questions: How does God "train" us to go out and serve him? In what ways do you feel prepared or unprepared to do this? What type of "mission" might God have in mind for you? Would you rather be a hero or a servant, and why?



What Music Is Releasing



Artist: Britt Nicole
Album: *The Lost Get Found* (August 11)
Artist Info: Britt Nicole (Brittany Nicole Wadell) began singing at her North Carolina church at age 3. She turned down a college scholarship to launch a music career. Hits from her first album, *Say It*, included "You" and "Believe." Now 24, Britt Nicole is releasing her sophomore album.
Summary: Britt Nicole's high-energy pop songs

contain catchy hooks and lyrics geared toward young people. In her new album's title track, she encourages listeners to follow God's nudge to share their faith: "Don't let your lights go down. Don't let your fire burn out.... Don't be afraid to stand out. That's how the lost get found."
Discussion Questions: When have you felt like God was encouraging you to tell someone about him? What happened? Read Matthew 5: 14-16. How brightly is your "light" shining right now? In what ways do you "stand out" for God?

What Games Are Out

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Wallace & Gromit's Grand Adventures</i>	In five episodes and a variety of puzzles, gamers follow the strange adventures of a strange man and his even-stranger dog.	E; PC, Xbox 360
<i>Treasure World</i>	Similar to the hobby of geocaching, this game sends you into the real world, seeking wi-fi hotspots to unlock virtual prizes.	E; Nintendo DS
<i>Tales of Monkey Island</i>	This adventure series has five episodes on PC and continues on the Wii. Guybrush goes on a quest to end the spread of a pox.	Rating pending; PC, Wii

GAME RATINGS KEY: EC=Early Childhood, E=Everyone (ages 6+), E10+ (ages 10+), T=Teen (ages 13+)



Culture & Trends

What's happening right now that may affect your children and family:

- Researchers have identified a "warrior gene" that is linked to aggression in boys. It may make them more likely to join gangs and use weapons. (msnbc.com)



- Daytime naps offer more than just rest. For 4- and 5-year-olds, taking a siesta may help reduce hyperactivity, anxiety, and depression. (American Academy of Sleep Medicine)

Quick Stats

- In a national poll, 20% of parents say they've left their preteens home alone for an entire day. (C.S. Mott Children's Hospital)
- Cheerleading accounts for two-thirds of injuries to female athletes. The other most dangerous sports for girls are gymnastics and track. (sciencedaily.com; msnbc.com)

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