

POSITIVE PARENTING



Presented by:



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Parenting is one of the most challenging jobs. All parents want their children to grow up to be healthy people and to reach their potential. However, children do not always understand, or do what their parents expect from them. The following tips can help parents strengthen their parent-child relationship, and enhance their parenting skills.

Although the information in this booklet is helpful for parenting a child of any age, parents should remember that children understand things differently at various ages. An older child will also be able to complete tasks and take on more responsibility than a younger child.



Part I: Communication

**** Often, letting your child know how you feel or what you expect of them is not always easy. Here are some ways to help you communicate effectively with a child.**

1. Give clear and consistent instructions.

Often, children are able to follow one or two instructions at a time.

Parents should consider :

- Using words that a child can understand when giving instructions or assigning tasks.
- Be clear with what you are expecting of the child.
- Avoid giving too many tasks or instructions at one time.

For Example: Instead of “Clean up your room”,

Try “Pick up your clothes off the floor and put them in the basket, then put your video games in the cabinet under the T.V.”

2. Listen to your child.

Parents should:

- Listen to a child when he or she tells you about their excitement, concerns, or problems.
- Do not interrupt a conversation.
- Let your child know that his or her point of views, ideas, and stories are important.
- Encourage a child to express his or her feelings

3. Physically put yourself on your child’s level.

Parents can communicate more effectively with a child when they are talking on the same physical level with a child.

Parents should:

- Keep their head at the same level as the child.
- Make eye contact.
- Kneel, squat, or sit so they are at a child’s eye level.
- Hold the child in your arms or on your lap.



4. Separate the behavior from the child.

Remember that the purpose of identifying the negative behavior of a child is to help them to improve their behavior. Avoid blaming the child, and instead focus on correcting the behavior.

Be clear with your child about:

- Behavior you do not agree with.
- Behavior that is against the family rules/values.
- What has occurred in the situation.
- Name the behavior you want your child to use instead.

For example: Parents can say, “Clean your face with water” instead of saying “You are a mess.”

5. Notice your body language.

Research shows that how a person looks and acts sends more messages than what is said.

Nonverbal language include:

- Facial expression.
- Body gesture and position.
- Tone of voice.
- Body movement.

Nonverbal behavior is powerful. Through their actions, parents can communicate to their child that they are parenting with love.



Part II: Behavior Guidelines and Effective Discipline

Discipline is the set of rules and expectations parents have for their children's behavior. Here are some helpful, and practical discipline techniques that will encourage positive behavior change in your child.

1. Rules

Rules are standards that are designed by parents or other adults, to let a child know what behavior is acceptable and what behavior is not acceptable.

Factors involved in establishing rules:

- Limit the number of rules
- Make them clear, predictable, and consistent.
- Rules should be appropriate for child's age and ability. For example, it is inappropriate to expect that a four year old child would have the ability clean and organize their bedroom the same way an adult would.
- The parent should explain to the child in simple language, why the rule is important.

For example: "You need to put your toys away before you leave the room because when toys are left on the floor people can trip on them and get hurt."

2. Consequences

Consequences are the results of behavior can occur in two ways when rules are broken:

1. Actions taken by parents or other adults in authority, when a child purposely breaks the rules or when a child displays unacceptable behaviors, such as hitting, or kicking.

For example: If a child leaves a toy outside, the parents will not allow a child to play with that toy the day after.

2. Can occur naturally as the result of a child's behavior.

For example: If a child leaves their coloring book outside in the rain, it will be destroyed.



3. Be a role model.

Children learn about behavior by watching you or other adults.

Parents Remember:

- Teach your child appropriate behaviors.
- Demonstrate the desired behavior with their children.
- Practice good behavior in front of children.

For example: Parents can teach positive social skills by using language in front of their children such as “Please”, and “Thank You”.

4. Paying attention to good behavior.

Most children repeat behaviors that get attention.

Parents Can:

- Give praise when a child behaves appropriately.
- Give good comments to a child when he or she is being good.

For example: “You did a terrific job paying attention.”

5. Charts and Rewards.

Rewards and charts are techniques to help a child improve their behavior.

Parents Try:

- Using charts for one behavior at a time.
- Keep chart simple.
- Use rewards to reinforce positive behaviors.
- Decrease the reward to a child over time as the child demonstrates responsibility for changing behavior.
- Use charts that are appropriate to the age and ability of the child.

Types of rewards:

Rewards reinforce positive behavior change. It is important to make sure the child understands the reward is connected to the behavior change.

1. Rewards can be tangible, such as allowances or privileges.
2. Rewards can be intangible such as positive responses, praise and hugs to a child that practices good behavior.

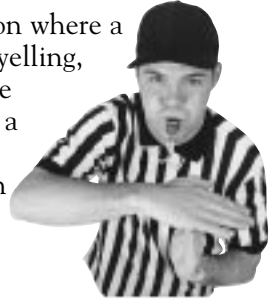
For example: parents could give a sticker to a child when a child cleans his or her room or give a child extra time to play outside.



6. Time out.

Time out involves removing a child from a situation where a child is displaying unacceptable behavior, such as yelling, kicking, or hitting. A good rule to remember is one minute of time out per one year of age. Therefore, a four year old would have a maximum of four minutes of time out. Time out can benefit children by giving them time to:

- Calm down
- Change his or her behavior.
- Gain self-control



7. Use “I-Messages”.

When Parents use “I-message”, it will help a child learn what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Parents state things in terms of how a child’s behavior is affecting you or others.

“I-message” should consist:

- The child’s behavior.
- The effects the behavior has on you or other people.

For example: “When you set the volume of TV that loud, I get upset because I can not hear what you say.”



Part III: Helping a Child Develop Self-Esteem

****Self-esteem is the way a child thinks, acts, and feels about him or herself. A child's sense of self-worth affects how a child will achieve goals in life. Helping your child feel happy, accepted, and to build self-confidence will help your child grow and develop to their fullest potential.**

1. Compliment, praise and encourage.

Parents need to help their child build positive self-esteem by setting realistic expectations, giving praise, and encouragement.

Parent should:

- Applaud when a child makes progress or succeeds in doing something.
- Praise a child's effort for trying a new thing or new experience despite the outcome.
- Let a child know that you are proud of a child's talents, interests, and efforts.

For example: "You did a marvelous job in presenting your science project" or "I am proud of you for having an interest in trying out for the school soccer team."



2. Don't call a child names or label them with critical words.

Parents or caregivers need to express comments in constructive and positive ways to help children feel good about themselves.

Parents should:

- Avoid using put down words to children, such as "stupid", "ugly", "bad", or "dumb".
- Help a child learn from his or her mistakes

For example: "You can learn how to improve on your test from your mistakes".

3. Appreciate the uniqueness in your child.

This means parents need to avoid comparing their child to other children. Cherish the child's individuality.

- Let a child know that you love him or her no matter what.
- Let your child know that they are good just the way they are.

4. Expect your child to do his/her best; don't expect perfection.

It is normal for the child to be not perfect in everything.

Parents should:

- Be supportive
- Give praise and encouragement.

For example: "I still love you when you do not get an "A" in class."

great
grades

5. Spend time with your children.

Make time to be with your child to help a child feel accepted, secured, and loved.

Parents should:

- Go places with their children.
- Show up at the child's games, or events.
- Play with their children.
- Read aloud with your children.
- Have fun together.



6. Believe in your child.

Parents should allow children to do things that they can do on their own. This will make them feel confident and capable.

Parents should:

- Trust a child's ability to handle problems.
- Allow a child to make choices, or decisions that are appropriate for their age.
- Believe in a child.
- Ask for a child's opinion.

7. Show your affection.

Affection is often shown nonverbally.

Parents should:

- Give hugs.
- Give plenty of smiles.
- Use gentle touch.
- Be available.
- Keep promises.





MISSION STATEMENT



The Worcester County Fathers and Family Network is made up of community organizations, professionals and fathers who promote responsible fatherhood, with an emphasis on improving parenting, self awareness, and expanding opportunities for training and employment necessary to carry out financial responsibilities of caring for children.