



# Positive Discipline

## Rules/Routines:

- **Clear and predictable:**
  - o Separations and reunions (say goodbye in the same way, set positive expectations about the day, and when you return show love and joy)
  - o Afterschool routine (hang up backpack, change clothes, get a snack)
  - o Bedtime routine (steps for getting ready for bed, positive caregiver-child time, and consistent bedtime)
  - o Household rules are non-negotiable, decided in advance, and should be focused on safety and aggression

## Limit Setting:

- **Reduce number of commands**
- **Commands should be clear, brief, and positive**
- **Limit the number of “nos” “stops” “don’ts”** (replace “stop running” with “please walk”)
- **Give choices when possible**
- **Give time for transitions and provide reminders/warnings when it is time to move on to the next task**
- **Use first-then commands** (“FIRST you pick up your toys THEN you can play outside”)
- **Avoid question commands** (“Don’t you want to put your toys away?”)
- **Avoid giving multiple commands/directions at once**

## Ignoring:

- **Minor misbehavior** (mild tantrum)
- **No eye contact, talking back and forth, or physical contact while ignoring**
- **Look for the first opportunity to have a positive interaction and praise**

## Time Out:

- **Use selectively** (aggressive, destructive, severe oppositional behavior)
- **Should be used as a calm down for both caregiver and child**
- **Look for the first opportunity to have a positive interaction and praise**
- **One minute for how old the child is or 5 minutes**

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## Natural/Logical Consequences:

- **Removal of a privilege for a brief period of time** (if the child left a room messy, electronics are removed for a brief period of time until the mess is picked up; if the child is playing too roughly with a toy, the toy is removed briefly)
- **Should increase child's sense of responsibility**

## Take Home Points:

- Children test the rules. This is a normal part of child development
- Caregivers need to teach, monitor, and model the behavior they want to see
- Too many commands and corrections will cause your child to be frustrated and limits healthy independence
- Use positive commands when possible ("Keep the crayons on the table.")
- Try to redirect attention to something more positive at the first sign your child is getting upset
- Stay calm when using positive discipline strategies
- Give more attention to positive behaviors and less attention to negative behaviors