

Middle Parent Forum.....14 March 2007

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### *Parenting Pieces*

#### Parenting Tips

- State expectations
- Explain consequences
- Let child make decision

Choose your battles: Try not to nag or set limits that are not necessary.

- Determine if issue is worth making an issue of
- Is the behavior illegal, unsafe, age appropriate, immoral or just annoying

Both parents on same page with regards to discipline:

- Children quick to identify the weaker parent
- Children learn to manipulate the situation
- Parents need to work as a team

Back up your words with action

- Children are quick to learn that if parents do not follow through with consequences, you are essentially telling them you have no authority over them. They will learn to tune you out.

Discipline - do not over-react:

- Punishment should fit the crime
- Example: grounding a child for a month for coming home a little late can work against purpose of discipline. Better to have child lose T.V. rights for an evening.

Consequences should be immediate:

- Both parents should give a consequence on an equal basis - no waiting for one parent to come home later to enforce the discipline decision.

Consequence should be unpleasant, but never harmful or demeaning:

- 30 minute to room for isolation may not work if child plays video games or talking on phone.

Whenever possible, tie in the feeling with your child's behavior:

- Ask them how they felt when they acted the way they did
- Ask them how they think others might have felt
- Important to help children identify their feeling - build empathy

5 Good Ideas for Parents:

Catch kids being good - try to stop saying 'No'.

One study reports that children are told 'No' every 9 minutes - they quickly learn to tune parents out.

- Add some boredom -
- Need to get kids involved in physical and mental activities that allow them to think puzzles, exercise, meditation
- Read to kids every night
- Laugh
- Plan adult time- strengthens the marriage. Kids want their parents to be happy together

Powerful Parent Tool - The Family Meeting:

Builder of better family relationships and communication:

Topics

- Beliefs
- Values
- Wishes

- Complaints
- Plans
- Questions
- Suggestions
- Rules

#### Guidelines for Family Meetings:

- Meet at a regularly scheduled time.
- Treat all members as equals. Let everyone be heard.
- Be sure to listen and encourage members to express their feeling and beliefs clearly.
- Pinpoint the real issues. Avoid being sidetracked by other issues.
- Encourage members to recognize the good things that are happening in the family.
- Remember to plan for family fun and recreation.
- Agree upon the length of the meeting and hold to the limits established.
- Record plans and decisions made. Post the record as a reminder.

#### Pitfalls to Avoid:

- Meetings only to handle crises; skipping meeting; changing meeting times.
- Dominating by members who believe they have more rights.
- Failing to listen to and encourage each other.
- Dealing with symptoms (such as bickering and quarreling) instead of the purposes of the behavior.
- Focusing on complaints and criticisms.
- Limiting the meetings to job distribution and discipline.
- Ignoring established time limits.
- Failing to put agreements into action.

*GOAL* of Parenting: To raise an independent human being - adulthood

Some Barriers to this Goal:

- Over-protection - do too much for the child
- Assuming kids can not solve their problems on their own
- Not letting children fail
- Not allowing children to experience the consequences of their own actions/decisions
- Making difficult decisions for children

Resources:

[www.parentcoachplan.com](http://www.parentcoachplan.com)

[www.medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com)

[www.positiveparenting.com](http://www.positiveparenting.com)