

Positive Discipline

From Family Connect Zoom Meeting



Let's take a moment for us to visualize our children. Now visualize how you want your child to be twenty years from now, thirty years from now.

Consider what we want from discipline

We might consider do we want discipline to be a means to control them right now or a means to help them develop their character? We can use discipline as a tool that helps our children become internally motivated which results in less of a need to misbehave.

React vs. Respond

Because of the pandemic, we are in a heightened state of reactivity so it's important to respond to our children instead of react: Pause, Breathe then Respond.

For example what happens when a child causes a spill? Because children do not take in experiences the same as adults we are seeing the same thing, but experiencing it differently. Adults tend to live in the future or the past. A child lives in the present and very much in the moment. The adult is attaching many past and present aspects to the spill which can cause anger. The child is seeing the effects of gravity and noticing how the liquid is changing shape.



In this situation it is best to take a breath, look away if you must and then respond about the next step in the clean up process. To help you focus on just counting, try counting in a foreign language.

4 Things Children Need

1. Predictability
2. Flexibility
3. Connection
4. Empowerment

With loving guidance lay out their day or what the next hour will be like, describing the few things they can choose to do within the boundaries of the prepared environment that you've set up or that they have helped you set up.

Just a few things a prepared environment might include:

- Open shelving with limited toy choices at eye level, organized on trays or in baskets
- A mirror and artwork at eye level

- A cozy place to sit and look at books or take a break
- A daily schedule with pictures for the child who is not reading yet; check out <http://www.newburyportmontessori.org/preschool-online/#Daily-Schedule-Flow-Chart>.
- Anything a child might need to be independent should be stored where it can be easily reached; check out <http://www.newburyportmontessori.org/toddlers-online/#Montessori-at-Home>.

Children can help you with projects, or take on a task, however first consider:

- Age
- Ability
- Situation
- Perception

For example you might ask if they'd like to join you with folding a basket of laundry. If your child is under three years old, you may push a bunch of socks their way for which you have already determined all have matches. Have your child pair the socks. To guarantee your child's success, keep the pile to 4-5 pairs.



Children own OUR behavior

Sometimes children perceive that something beyond their control was their fault. As a result they often express anger inappropriately. Therefore it's important that they don't misinterpret our messages. When you say "I need to go for a walk" what message might they be hearing?

It's helpful to use a more passive voice:

Instead of "I need to go for a walk," try

"I need to get some fresh air into my lungs. I'll be right back and then I'll feel refreshed so we can build those LEGO's."

Instead of "Please be quiet so I can take a call," try

"I must take a call and I need for the house to be quiet"

The passive voices puts the object of an action into the subject of a sentence. You can use passive voice intentionally to gain more cooperation from your children. All you need to do is **tell them what needs to be done, instead of telling them what to do**. If you want to read further about using a passive voice, check out this article: <https://www.apparentlyparent.com/passive-voice>.