

ParentingClass.net
Parenting Your Child

Early Childhood

Introduction.....	2
Session 1	3
Noticing what the child does without criticism.	3
Exercise Session 1.....	3
Session 2	4
Learning to give directions	4
Exercise Session 2.....	5
Session 3	5
Catch them being good.	5
Exercise Session 3.....	5
Session 4	6
Discipline bad behavior	6
Conclusion	7



Early Childhood – Ages 2 – 6

Introduction

All parents need encouragement and support from time to time especially in this challenging age group. This ebook is intended to provide straightforward suggestions of things to do with your child to promote bonding.

These methods will require some consistent practice for short periods of time and can be done within the busy lifestyles of most parents today.

You might remember some of your rough spots in growing up and remember thinking to yourself: I am never going to do this to my kids.

Yet, as a parent, you find that you might be handling things exactly as your parents handled them when you were a kid. The point is not to blame anyone's parenting style, but to get you thinking about how to handle things differently or maybe better with your own child.

Get in touch with how it felt to be a kid growing up and how you might have wanted things to be handled differently. You couldn't change things as a kid, but you can change them now as a parent.

This little eBook deals with early childhood. Ages 2 – 6. Children have newfound power at this stage as they have developed motor skills and become more and more engaged in social interaction with people around them. They now must learn to achieve a balance between eagerness for more adventure and more responsibility, and learning to control impulses and childish fantasies.

If parents are encouraging, but consistent in discipline children will learn to accept without guilt when certain actions are not allowed. At the same time, they will not feel shame when using their imagination.

One question that we are often asked is: My child is a teenager. Is it too late to start being a good parent?

The answer is NO! It is never too late to start being a good parent. Many people realize that they have made mistakes, but don't start seeking help until they start having major problems with their teens. It is not too late to apply our methods.

By understanding the stages of your child's development you are more prepared to adjust the training to the appropriate age.

It is important to realize that we must control our own emotions in order to effectively get through to our children. We are trying to gain their trust and then guide them to the appropriate actions. If we fly off the handle or get upset with our child, the child cannot trust us – and will not follow our guidance.

ParentingClass.net offers a complete parenting class on our website. This class was designed to satisfy court requirements for divorcing parents, but will benefit all parents.

The following sessions will take a couple of minutes each day for several weeks. Within the first 2 weeks, if you will notice a changed attitude in your child. Patience and determination will bring you success.

Good luck!

Session 1

Noticing what the child does without criticism.

We often converse with our children in a series of questions and answers. Even the most well meaning question can often be misunderstood as an interrogation. Our goal in this session is to replace *questions* with *comments* on our children's activities.

At this stage in life, children are developing motor skills and becoming more engaged in social interaction with people around them. They now must learn to achieve a balance between eagerness for more adventure and more responsibility, and learning to control impulses and childish fantasies.

By commenting, we are allowing the child to lead the situation. We are observing and commenting (without criticism). We are showing the child that what they do is important. Later we will learn to guide them.

Exercise Session 1



Set aside 10 minutes everyday to sit down with your child. Use building blocks, legos, a coloring book, or any toy that your child enjoys. Just sit and observe your child at play. Make comments. If the child behaves badly, try to ignore it.

Some examples of comments might be:

'You're putting the red block on top of the blue block'

'You are coloring the sky blue'

'You're coloring the dress red'

Do:

Give the child your full attention
 Describe his good behavior
 You can also imitate your child

Don't:

Issue instructions
 Give suggestions
 Ask questions

Stay with the exercises in session 1 for several days. Our goal is to get the child to trust us – and to enjoy our time together.

Session 2

Learning to give directions

Children in this stage of life may not be able to understand any type of direction except the most basic. As they grow, they will certainly learn how to follow directions, but we need to start with basics.

We have spent a few days sitting with the child, commenting on the playing. Now we will start adding some direction. It is important to *not* get upset with your child for not understanding your directions. You must make sure you are delivering the directions in a way your child can understand.

How to issue directions:

- Get his attention and make eye contact
- Use a firm voice
- Give directions that are simple
- Use physical gestures when appropriate such as pointing to the toys
- Use "do" directions rather than "don't" directions

Ineffective directions

Chain direction - involves more than one step. - he may not remember what they all are.
 example: 'Put the red block here then put the green block over there'

Vague direction - unclear

example: 'Please be careful'

Question direction - which allows the option of saying "no"

example: 'Would you like to clean up now?'

Direction followed by a reason – giving a reason may distract him from complying. If you want to give a reason keep it short and give it *before* the instruction

Good examples of directions:

‘Hand me the red block’

‘Please sit beside me’

‘Because I need to set the table, please put your coloring book away’

Exercise Session 2

For the next few daily sessions, give the child simple directions while he/she plays. Make sure your directions are easy to follow. As in our first exercise, we do not want to ask questions. We want to give *clear* directions.

Your child is beginning to feel in control and more secure with his/her abilities.

Session 3

Catch them being good.

Your child has learned to follow simple directions – and you have learned to deliver them in a way he/she can easily understand. Your child knows that he/she is in control of the situation and is developing a good self esteem.

We want to start nurturing the child’s self esteem early on. We want to encourage the child to trust his/her inner self. By placing the basic knowledge of self worth in the child; it forms a base for the child to build his/her own self esteem.

In the following exercise, we will simply catch them being good – and point it out. This plants the basis of *self esteem* in the child.

Exercise Session 3

Start using praise in your play sessions. Keep the praise *focused on the task*. Keep the praise simple.

Examples of praise might be:

“You picked the green block to put on the red block. They are pretty together.”

“I think you picked a pretty color for her dress.”

Do:

Keep the praise simple

Praise only for good actions

Give short directions and praise when they

Don’t

Overdo it. Even children sense when praise

is unbelievable. You want them to believe

your praise – not doubt it.

are followed

By now we should be applying what we have learned to all aspects of daily life. You should start issuing simple directions to your child throughout the day.

Examples:

“Please hang your coat on the hook.”

“Please put your dirty clothes in the hamper.”

Also praise your child when you catch them being good (even if you have to issue a direction to get them to do the desirable action).

Examples:

“I see that you hung your coat on the hook. Thank you.”

“I see that you put your dirty clothes in the hamper. Your room looks clean.”

Remember to spend time *each day* focusing on your child. Your learned parenting skills need to be consistent throughout the day.

Your child is beginning to trust you and to want to make you happy.

Session 4

Discipline bad behavior

It is important to understand the difference between punishment and discipline. Punishment inflicts pain, discipline demonstrates love and caring. While many of us were raised with punishment, you will be happily surprised to learn that *discipline* is much more effective.

There are many ways to discipline a child without inflicting physical or emotional pain. Disciplining your child means that you teach and guide your child through the rough times of childhood. Discipline isn't simply about getting your child to behave and conform to the rules. Discipline is a process of you being the teacher giving positive instruction. You teach your child values and rules of living in a family structure.

In the process of disciplining, you are teaching your child to use his/her own ability to think and make the right choices in life.

One type of discipline that works well for children in this stage is commonly called “time out”. Time outs serve a two fold purpose. A time out gets the child away from the bad behavior and it takes the child away from you so that you too can calm down from the situation. Not only does your child get a chance to think about the situation, but you too can think up new ways of approaching the situation and solving the differences.

An effective time out should last as long as it takes for your child to calm down, think and talk about what he could have done differently. It is very important the child be aware of the behaviors that are causing the time out.

Your job, after a temporary time out is to help the child re enter the family structure with acceptance and guidance. Coming back from a time out might open up a conversation such as, “what did you think about when you were alone? Did you think of a better way to behave if this happens again?” Encourage good thoughts, positive behavior and acceptance.

- Choose a place for time out’s. A good place would be somewhere there are no distractions – like a hallway or the kitchen table.
- Make sure the child understand the reason for the time out. “because you did not pick up your toys when I asked, you have to take time out” “because you hit your sister, you must have a time out”.
- Lead him to time out without lecturing scolding or arguing
- Ignore shouting protesting and promising to comply. You want to train your child to follow directions without arguing.
- Tell him to sit in the time out chair
- Set a timer (no more than 5 minutes)
- When his time is over, return to the chair and re-state the original direction
- Implement the time out again if he does not comply
- When he complies give him/her praise for a good job

There are many things that can happen when you first start issuing time outs. Here are a list of a few things and what you should do to counteract them:

Refusing to sit in the chair - *do not start time out until he is seated.*

Leaving chair or moving - *stop the timer.*

Insulting you verbally - *ignore*

Yelling and crying - *ignore*

Refusing to leave the time out - *start the time out again*

Sibling interaction during time out - *put the sibling in time out in another location*

Conclusion

In this article you have learned to show your child they are special by setting aside a few minutes every day to give them your undivided attention. We started by simply sitting with the child and observing them play and then worked our way into training your child to follow simple directions effectively.

You learned to praise your child’s actions. You may have noticed a marked change in your child’s attitude in the first week of practicing this lesson. Children want to please.

While we taught *them* how to please, we were teaching *ourselves* how to interact with them.

Finally we learned how to discipline. We learned that effective discipline does not include threats or hitting or yelling. Once our children learn what is expected and what will happen if our directions are not followed, they quickly adapt their behavior to what we want.

But, do not try to jump straight to the discipline session without bothering to go through the first three sessions. Discipline will not be effective if your child does not trust you. Spend a couple of weeks building their trust before you try to discipline them.

For a complete parenting class, please visit <http://www.parentingclass.net/>
You can learn to raise a child who is self sufficient, confident and successful. We can help.