



Child Care Answers "Parents in the Know"

Keeping the sanity!

Have you ever wondered how such a sweet, adorable child can make you feel both blessed and stressed at the same time? As each of you are aware, a delightful moment can turn into a major melt down sometimes without any notice! Children are notorious for testing limits. Let me tell you that if you have felt that—you are not alone! The day to day caring for children of any and all ages can be challenging to say the least. There is no doubt that being a parent is the hardest yet most rewarding job anyone will ever have in their lifetime. Trying to find the balance of calm and stress can be a daily task. Here are some ideas that can help as you navigate those testing times.

- ◆ Never assume that the children understand what you are wanting them to do. Be sure to speak to them in a simple, honest and direct way. Children need to understand what is expected of them. Be sure to be consistent about expectations and consequences. Have the children repeat what you have said to make sure the understanding is the same for both parties.
- ◆ Be sure to really listen with your full attention when your children talk. Look them in the eyes and listen carefully to their thoughts and feelings. This shows not only respect but love to the child. What they have to say is important to you.
- ◆ Most adults have heard the saying; "do as I say and not as I do". This does not work with children. Be sure to exhibit the behaviors you expect from children. Be a positive role model with both what you say and what you do. Keep in mind that they are always watching and listening!
- ◆ Nobody wants to hear only negative feedback. Children need to have praise for their accom-

- ◆ Children are greatly affected by their environment. The key is to know what and how that environment affects your child. If you keep this in mind, you may be able to prevent misbehavior by altering the environment.
- ◆ Help children develop their skills they'll need to succeed. This will help build on their positive self confidence.
- ◆ Create a safe atmosphere for children to express their anger or frustration. Try not to get angry yourself. Staying calm can prevent hurt feelings. Help the children to learn that feelings are important to all of us.

Parenting is a lot of trial and error. It is vital that you stay open to learning and improving your parenting skills daily.

Show them love and respect and you will receive it back in full.

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