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*Listening, learning,
and living together:
it's the science of life.*

Positive Discipline¹

*Suzanna Smith*²

Sometimes, children challenge or test parents and other adults. Sometimes they misbehave to get something, like attention, an object, or peer approval. Children learn right from wrong and what is acceptable and what is not in their family and society through discipline and guidance they get from parents and caregivers.

Child development experts advise that positive discipline works best. Positive discipline helps children learn to control their behavior, protects their self-esteem, and keeps the parent-child relationship strong. With positive discipline, children are on their way to becoming responsible adults. These techniques avoid some of the problems that come with a common form of discipline: spanking.

No one disciplinary technique will work in all situations, so a wise parent learns several options that can be used in different situations. One important way is to show, or model, how you want a child to behave. Children learn more about how to act from watching adults than any other way. Of course this means that parents will need to monitor their own behavior! For example, they will need to watch their language if they don't want their child to use certain words.

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Another approach is to encourage your child. Support the child's work, even if it's not perfect, and value her or his views. A third way is to give attention when children do something you like—in other words, to catch your child being good!

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To listen to the radio broadcast:

http://www.radiosource.net/radio_stories/posdis.mp3

http://www.radiosource.net/radio_stories/posdis.wav

Resources

Child Welfare League of America Discipline Techniques

<http://www.cwla.org/positiveparenting/tipsdiscipline.htm>