

DISCIPLINE: LOVE AND LIMITS

Discipline is simply teaching good behavior. It's something you do **for** and **with** a child not **to** a child.

Help your children learn to think for themselves. Because of individual differences, there is no one right way to teach good behavior. Here are some guidelines to help you build self-control in your child.

As a parent, you are your child's role model for behavior. Aim to be a consistent and good role model.

◆ Define Good Behavior.

Make sure the child understands what you expect. Decide ahead of time what the rules or limits will be. Keep the limits as few, as simple, and as consistent as possible.

◆ Set Reasonable Limits

Set the limits so that success is possible. Gradually raise these limits as the child's abilities mature.

◆ Positive Suggestions

Give commands and suggestions in a positive way. Say "If you want to be on the couch, you must sit on it" instead of "Don't jump on the couch." If you give suggestions in a positive way, your child will be more apt to cooperate with you.

◆ Give Choices

Making choices gives the child valuable experience in decision-making. Instead of "Do you want to get dressed now?", try "You need to get dressed now. You may wear the red or blue shirt. Which do you want?"

◆ Redirect Behavior

If your child is behaving in an unexceptable manner, give a positive alternative. If the child is restless or overactive in the house, suggest outdoor play to run off energy.