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Christine made little changes that changed everything

“When I began spending the time with my son it made a huge difference.
Only 15 minutes a night made all the difference... [learn more](#)”

Getting Started!

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DEALING WITH INTERRUPTIONS

As parents we all know that young children need lots of time and attention. But what about when parents need time to talk on the phone without interruption?

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Discipline Debate Misses The Point

There is nothing to be gained from yet another impassioned debate about methods of discipline and whether to apply them or not.

Children need discipline, just like adults need discipline.

The challenge for our society is to focus our attention on parents and families and use the existing knowledge base about why humans do the things they do to bring about effective change.

Parents need to be empowered to make informed decisions about raising their kids. They need confidence in their own judgment about deciding what form of discipline will be effective and the values and beliefs they wish their children to grow up with.

Children need to be given much more positive attention for the things they do right and taught the skills to handle potentially difficult situations in socially appropriate ways. Too much argument on the best way to stop children doing things ignores ample opportunities to encourage "pro- social" behavior.

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So how does this translate into action? What should parents do when faced with willful disobedience?

As a clinical psychologist specializing in family concerns and a parent to my two children one piece of simple advice I can offer is to always try and remain calm in the line of fire. It is important to break the cycle of escalation that often occurs when a single disobedient act builds into a battle of wills between child and parent.

Discipline for children must involve clear, fair, age-appropriate rules and consequences that are carried out in a predictable family environment. It is no good changing tactics one day because you don't feel up to the challenge.

When your child breaks a house rule that they know about, make sure you have an effective consequence for that transgression. Removing a favorite toy, banning the use of a bike, or turning off the television are all viable consequences of misbehavior.

Being "pro social" with your children involves changing the ratio of negative and positive attention to shift the balance toward more positives. For example, if your children are fighting over a toy, you might tell them to stop fighting and then teach them about the importance of sharing and then show them how to go about sharing.

If your child is being loud and interruptive, they should learn the importance of politeness and how to gain mom or dad's attention in a more acceptable fashion.

Of course, the way you discipline your child always depends on their age and personality. While teenagers deserve a reasonable discussion about certain rules and behaviors, it is useless to sit down in front of your three-year- old and try and negotiate an appropriate bedtime.

This sort of parenting advice and support doesn't require draconian legislation or governmental intervention to take away the rights of parents. Rather it is about ensuring all parents have access to practical, proven skills that lead to happier stable families, giving both parents and children the best chance to fulfill their own potential in life.

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