Positive Behavior Management At Home
From a Mom’s Perspective
First Their Sweet then Their Sour
A Survival Guide for Parents

Theresa Maxwell
What is Behavior?

- Behavior is anything we say, do, think, or feel.
- It is how we react to our environment.
- Behaviors are learned and continue because they have a purpose or function.
- We engage in behavior because we have learned a desired outcome occurs.
Functions of Behavior

• Why is it important for us to know the function of behavior?
  • So we can understand why the behavior is occurring
  • To find an appropriate replacement behavior
  • To develop the best behavior support plan
1. “Be a parent, not a friend. This means you cannot be afraid to be the bad guy. Your child might be angry with you sometimes. Deal with it. The alternative is having an obnoxious kid. Let him fail sometimes. If you don’t, how do you expect him to ever learn how to cope with life’s ups and downs? Nobody is successful at everything. Sometimes, you have to fail in order to succeed.”

- Lori Freson, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
2. “Do not name call or hit: Kids learn from you, being abusive or hitting just teaches them to handle conflict with aggression and meanness. If you feel super angry in the moment, take a time out and walk away, come back later and have a plan for discipline. If you lose your cool, explain that you did and make clear you wish you had not. A firm and even angry but measured tone is much more effective than sounding out of control and vindictive.”

-Dr. Gail Saltz, Psychiatrist, Psychoanalyst, Bestselling Author and Television Commentator
Parenting Tips from 10 Parenting Experts

3. “Once your child hits the teen years, don't get lost in the details by focusing too much on the day to day behaviors and moods of your child. At this point, frequently remind yourself that your teenager will soon be able to leave the house and will have the power to decide how emotionally connected he or she wants to remain with you for the rest of your lives. The more you focus on building a democratic relationship during the teen years, the more your soon-to-be grown child will like and appreciate you for years to come.”

-Seth Meyers, Psychologist
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4. “If you have to tell your child the same thing repeatedly before they respond, then you are training them to ignore you.”

-David Johnson, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
5. "Use natural consequences if possible. Parents may feel they have to punish kids for mistakes or misbehavior rather than letting real life take its course. If your child refuses to put on his coat, let him get cold. If he fails to clean his room, let his toys get lost. It’s tempting to engineer other consequences, like taking away video games or TV time, because we don’t always trust that natural consequences will work. But over time they do have a way of shaping behavior."

-Heidi Smith Luedtke, Personality Psychologist and Author of "Detachment Parenting: 33 Ways to Keep Your Cool When Kids Melt Down"
6. "Problem solving is what must replace punishment in order to develop responsible, respectful behavior in children and adults. Punishment is a coercive manipulative tactic used to get children to do what we want. It does nothing to develop character and empathy. In fact it is what is part of creating bullies. Children do not learn through fear and force. Their unacceptable behavior is meant to tell us that they are having a problem, not being a problem."

-Bonnie Harris, Parenting Educator and Director of Connective Parenting
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7. "Understand the meaning of the word discipline. It's all about teaching and education - not punishment, threats, and training! Think of yourself as a teacher and show your child you respect them by explaining WHY the limit needs to be set. Help them understand it's for their own good and the benefits to them. Respect is a gateway to your child's cooperation!"

- **Tom Limbert**, Parenting Coach and Author of "Dad’s Playbook: Wisdom for Fathers from the Greatest Coaches of All Time"
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8. "It may seem hard to believe when you're struggling with your kids, but children really do want to please their parents. Nothing makes a child happier than the pride they feel when receiving praise from their mother or father. This desire to please our parents is so strong that it lasts right into adulthood."

-Dana Obleman, Author of "Kids: the Manual"
Parenting Tips from 10 Parenting Experts

9. "Be consistent--inconsistent discipline can actually reinforce negative behaviors because your child will keep trying in the hopes that this time he won't get in trouble."

-Susan Bartell, Psychologist and Author of "Top 50 Questions Kids Ask"
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10. "The child's problem is there is something that he needs and wants and doesn't know how else to get other than misbehaving. A parent often has a problem with the child's behavior. Unfortunately the parent usually starts by trying to solve her problem and never gets around to solving the child's problem."

-Nancy Buck, Developmental Psychologist and Creator of Peaceful Parenting Inc.
8 Ideas That Work

1. Limit TV and screen time.
2. Regular chores
3. Find activities that fit your child's interests and needs.
4. Discourage Sibling fighting
5. Find a fallback activities you can do together
6. Mix it up
7. Get your child into a reading program.
8. Avoid senseless power struggles

DON'T SAY

"Pick up your toys."

"Be good." or "Don't fool around."

SAY

"Please pick up your toys and put them in the toy box."

"When you're on the school bus, remember to keep your hands to yourself and stay in your seat."
2. Be calm. Keep a positive or neutral tone in your voice when you give a prompt.

DON'T SAY

"Put your dish in the sink!"

SAY

"Please put your dish in the sink when you are done,"
3. Be close. Go up to your child when you talk and make eye contact

DON'T SAY
"Suzy, go tell your brother to hurry up with his shoes.'

SAY
"Johnny, please put your shoes on in the next minute or so, ' so I can help you with your coat."
SOUR THEN SWEET.
Tips for Parenting During the Teen Years
• Educate Yourself
• Talk to Your Child Early Enough
• Put Yourself in Your Child's Place
• Pick Your Battles
• Set Expectations
• Inform Your Teen - and Stay Informed Yourself
• Respect Kids' Privacy
• Monitor What Kids See and Read
• Make Appropriate Rules
Know the Warning Signs

- Extreme weight gain or loss
- Sleep problems
- Rapid, drastic changes in personality
- Sudden change in friends
- Skipping school continually
- Falling grades
- Talk or even jokes about suicide
- Signs of tobacco, alcohol, or drug use
- Run-ins with the law
1. Establish a Set of House Rules
2. Use Praise to Your Advantage
3. Develop a Firm and Serious Tone of Voice
4. Set Boundaries
5. Redirect/Separate
6. Ignore It
7. Time Out
8. Loss of Privileges
9. Natural Consequences
10. Behavior Modification