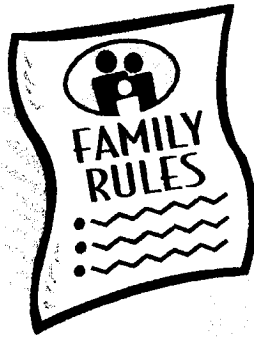


Are You Teaching Your Child to Respect Others?

Preschoolers need help learning to be respectful. Here's a quiz to see if you're teaching your child this skill. Give yourself five points for something you do often, zero points for something you never do—or any score in between.



How did you score?

Twenty points and above is good. Fifteen to 19 is average. Below 15? Try some of the ideas in the quiz to teach your child respect for others.

- ___ 1. **I help** my child think about others' feelings.
- ___ 2. **I teach** my child polite phrases, such as *please* and *thank you*.
- ___ 3. **I expect** my child to follow family rules.
- ___ 4. **I encourage** my child to apologize for mistakes.
- ___ 5. **I set** a good example by being respectful.

"The more we shelter children from ever / disappointment, the more devastating future disappointments will be."
— Fred G. Gosman



Are You Teaching Your Child to Use Good Manners?

You can't expect perfect manners from toddlers and preschoolers. But this is the time learning manners must start.

Take this quiz to find out if you're beginning to teach your child to think of and share with others. Give yourself five points for something you do often, zero points for something you never do—or any score in between.

- ___ 1. **I model good manners.** (I say please and thank you to my child and others.)
- ___ 2. **I encourage my child** to say "please," "thank you," "may I" and "excuse me."
- ___ 3. **I rephrase things** my child says that are less-than-polite. ("You hate that green stuff? I'd like to hear you say, 'I don't care for spinach.'")
- ___ 4. **I gently promote** the use of forks and spoons during mealtime.
- ___ 5. **I point out** other people's kindness. ("Doesn't it make you happy when grandma shares her apple with you?")

How did you score?

A score of 20 points and above means your child is on his way to becoming polite and considerate. Fifteen to 19 is average. Below 15 might mean you need to focus more on teaching manners.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Which Rewards Really Work?



Q: *I know I should reward my child's good behavior. But what kinds of rewards should I use?*

A: The word "reward" can be confusing. There are all kinds of rewards, from praise to toys to privileges. Here are some suggestions on how to use different rewards:

- **Praise.** Use praise more than any other reward. It helps children feel good about doing the right thing and makes them want to do it again. Give specific compliments, such as "I'm proud that you gave Lucy a turn with your toy."
- **Natural consequences.** Often, children are naturally rewarded by good behavior. For example, they feel proud when they finish a difficult task.
Point out natural rewards to your child: "You made your bed! You must be proud of yourself!"
- **Privileges.** When kids behave responsibly, they earn parents' trust. Giving privileges is a way to show this. For example, "You take such good care of your books. Let's check out a new one."

BUILDING RESPONSIBILITY

Teach Children 'School Manners'

How can parents teach their children "school manners"? Emphasize these manners at home. Go beyond the basics, such as saying *please* and *thank you*. Here are some things to focus on:

- **Raising hands.** A teacher who has 30 students all trying to say something at the same time can't conduct class. Discuss with your child why raising hands is so important in school.
- **Paying attention.** A teacher who has to repeat an assignment because one child wasn't listening has less time to help students learn. Discuss and practice ways to listen carefully, such as tuning out distractions and making eye contact.
- **Disagreeing politely.** A teacher who has students talk back to her has to use class time to maintain discipline. Talk to your child about speaking respectfully to teachers.



Source: Joan Leonard, *What to Do to Improve Your Child's Manners*, 1998, Reader's Digest Books.

What Are Natural and Logical Consequences?

One of the most effective ways to learn is by making mistakes. Parents can make sure children learn the most from their mistakes by making sure they experience the consequences of their actions.

Sometimes, a parent doesn't need to do anything for the child to experience the consequence. If your child spent his allowance on the first day and now has no money to go to a movie with friends, he is experiencing the *natural* consequences of his decision.

Other times, a parent must pick a consequence. It should be related to the mistake (*logical*). If your child says something rude to someone, you could make sure he apologizes to that person.



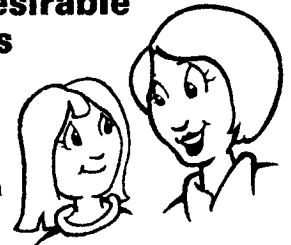
Teach Behaviors in Positive Ways

Tell your child what you *want* him to do, not what you don't want him to do. "Keep your hands to yourself" is the rule you want him to remember, not just "Don't hit your sister."

Adapted from: Jane L. Williams, *Discipline That Works*, National Education Association, <http://www.nea.org/helpfrom/connecting/tools/disc.html>.

Praise Desirable Behaviors

Some parents only pay attention to their kids when they are misbehaving. That can cause children to act out just to get some attention. Make sure you are looking out for the behaviors you want to see and praising your child for them. She'll want to keep doing what you want.



What if I Don't Like His Friends?

Q: My son has a new best friend. I don't like him much. He is disrespectful to my son and me. He never says "please" or "thank you." He even swears. I don't want my child picking up this behavior. What can I do?



A: You are still the most important influence on your child. The values and actions he sees at home every day will have much more impact on his behavior than something he sees or hears from his friend.

Set the rules for your house. Be gentle but firm. "Jonathan, we don't use those words in our house. If you swear again, I'll have to take you home."

Help your son think about his friend's behavior. Ask him casually, "How did you feel when Jonathan talked to you that way?"

If you feel the other child is truly a bad influence, you may have to limit contact. "I'm sorry, but Jonathan always tries to get you to do things that are against the rules. I just can't have him in the house any more."

You might try to find ways to introduce your child to other children. As he makes new friends, his friendship with the bad influence may fade.

Children Need Limits

Parents often use baby gates keep babies in areas that are safe for them.

Older children need limits on their behavior for the same reason. They feel lost when they don't know where the limits are, so they test them to find out.

When you establish routines and set limits, you're giving him the safety and confidence to succeed at home.



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