

## Grade 1 Week 27

### Tips for more effective discipline

Parents sometimes wonder about more effective discipline strategies. Here are ten tips:

- Focus on only one behavior or misbehavior at a time instead of bringing up old grievances.
- Make sure your child knows what behavior you expect.
- Make direct statements ("You spilled sugar on the floor") instead of unclear statements ("Remember, I want you always to be a good girl").
- Be as specific as you can ("Don't hit your brother") while avoiding vague directives ("Didn't I just tell you to be nice to your brother?").
- Be as brief as possible.
- Focus on the here and now instead of dragging up past history ("Haven't I told you a thousand times before...?").
- Be consistent in what you say as opposed to disciplining your child because you are in a bad mood.
- Keep your emotions under control. Never take your anger out on a child.
- Keep the tone of your voice as calm as possible without yelling or screaming at your child.
- Let your child know you love her even when you dislike her misbehavior instead of using sarcasm or disparaging remarks ("You're a dummy"). She needs your love.

### Agile thinking

"What if?" is a thinking exercise to help develop an agile mind.

Ask your child to recall a story and predict the outcome if the circumstances were different. For example, read *Jack in the Beanstalk* and then ask "What if...."

...Someone cut down the beanstalk while Jack was still in the giant's castle?

...Jack sold the cow just as mother told him to and brought her the money?

You and your child will have a few laughs and you will be surprised at how agile her thinking already is.



*"You cannot teach a child to take care of herself unless you will let her try to take care of herself. She will make mistakes; and out of these mistakes will come her wisdom."*

—Henry Ward Beecher—

### "I've told you three times!"

"I've told you three times to pick up your things!"

Does that sound familiar? With a certain tone of voice and on the third time you probably get action, even though it is accompanied by a bit of grouching and a dirty look. She's normal!

Many children, especially first graders, need to be reminded of a thing two or three times before it sinks in enough to spark a response.

You think she can't hear you? She heard. But it takes a repetition or two for the request (or sound) to register and penetrate the active, multi-faceted, disorganized processing going on continually in her brain.

Try this. Go to your child. Gently touch her so that she looks as well as listens to you. Make your requests quietly and politely.

Remember, her response may vary with her mood. A sharp demand may arouse the tyrant in her. Whatever the age, most people respond quicker to a request than a demand.