



## POSITIVE DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES

*All parents want the best for their children and are concerned with fostering their self-esteem, However, when children tune us out, refuse to do what we ask, defy or ignore us, it is normal to become annoyed and frustrated.*

*Here are some **POSITIVE DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES** for encouraging kids to listen and cooperate. These are concrete alternatives to **threatening, bribing, yelling, punishing, commanding, attacking, name-calling, pleading, arguing, criticizing or spanking.***

### **1. BE BRIEF:**

**Say what you want in ONE WORD:** Rob, Jacket! or Jill, teeth! or Maria, shoes! This works a lot better than “How many times do I have to tell you...” or “Why can’t you remember your things?” or “Why don’t you listen when I talk to you?”

### **2. DESCRIBE:**

**Make an impersonal statement.** For example: Books belong on the shelves. The coat needs to be hung in the closet, not on the floor. The dishes have to be put in the dishwasher. It’s bath time now.

### **3. PUT IT IN WRITING:**

**Write a note or make a sign for your child.** For example: “Dear Jo, Just a reminder. Here is what has to be done before TV today. Clean clothes hung in closet. Dishes washed and dried. Dog fed and walked. Thank for your help. Love, Mom.” Children always read your notes and may even write you back!

**4. OFFER LIMITED CHOICES: Most children hate to be bossed around; giving choices helps them to feel some control—although not too much.** Do you prefer toast or a bagel? Would you like to read a story or play a game? Do you want a shower or a bath tonight? Which do you want to put away first, the blocks or the puzzle pieces?

**5. POINT OUT THE POSITIVE: Whenever a child does something helpful, caring, cooperative, or shows improvement, let them know you’ve noticed and give words of appreciation.** For example: “Thanks, Joey, I like the way you helped Amy put away her toys.” “Jesse, I was impressed with the way you solved your homework problem.” “Jonathan, Grammy was so touched by the get-well card you made for her.”

### **6. AND AN IMPORTANT TIP WHEN YOU ARE FEELING ANGRY OR FRUSTRATED:**

When you are furious at your child/ren, use **I** not **YOU**. **It is much better to say “I’M MAD” than “YOU’RE BAD”.** Talk about **YOUR** feelings; do **NOT** attack your child or tell her all the things that are wrong with her: For example: “I get mad when you are late and haven’t called.” “I won’t be spoken to like that.” “I am irate at the sight of this room.” “I’m leaving this room, so I can calm down.”

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*Many of these skills for parents, educators, counselors and others interested in positive discipline are more fully explained in Nancy Samalin’s books: **Loving Your Child Is Not Enough, Love & Anger: The Parental Dilemma, and Loving Without Spoiling.***