

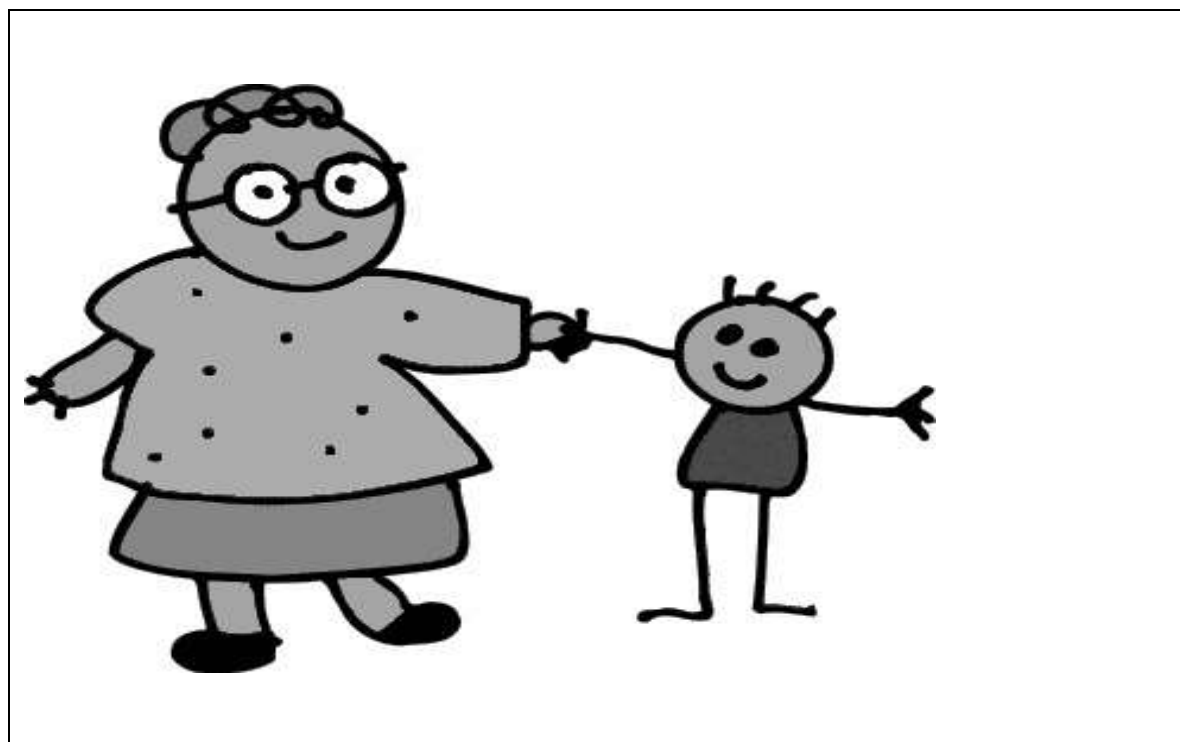


## **Set Rules and Improve Your Child's Behavior**

Griselle Phillips, LCSW

Your Children's abilities and skills to relate to others, start very early in life. It actually starts in infancy. Their first teacher is you, the parent(s). Modeling healthy behavior is a great start to helping them to learn to manage behavior. Helping your children using age appropriate discipline can play an important role in helping them develop good self-control and in turn, can help with how they treat and relate to others. Aside from the interactive coaching that will take place, below you will find modules that will demonstrate some age appropriate ways to help your child began to change their behavior.

### **Module 1 – Disciplining your 1-3 year old**



#### **Methods of Implementing Discipline (1 – 3 year old)**

All discipline should happen immediately after the unacceptable behavior occurs. You want to use positive discipline methods as much as possible. One good way, is to start with praise, especially with very young children.

##### **1) Praise:**

Example: When your toddler shares a piece of food (or anything) with his/her brother smile, clap, and tell him/her, "NICE job. I like the way you shared with your brother."

Praise whenever you catch your toddler doing good behavior.

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## Methods of Implementing Discipline (1- 3 year old continued)

### 2) Time Out:

**Do not** use timeout for crying/whining behavior. Use it for hitting or disobeying. Children between the ages of 1-3 years old, are not language savvy, therefore, time out is used to separate them from the situation, giving them time to regroup before returning to the situation, not to punish them. No more than 1-3 minutes for time out. One minute for each year of your child's age.

Example: Your toddler walks over to his sister and slaps her in her face. You then say, "No. Hitting is not nice." Place your toddler in a safe place where you can supervise him/her. Place your toddler in a crib, high chair, or a portable playard, for 1-2 minutes. Allow him/her to settle down. After he/she calms down, place your toddler back in the situation.

### 3) Rules:

Toddlers are still developing language skills and would have a hard time understanding complicated rules, therefore, keep rules very simple and to the point. When implementing rules, kneel down until both you and your child's eyes meet, while you are telling tell him the rule in a calm voice. **Avoid** hitting or yelling.

Example: You might say, "Don't Hit," "Play nicely," or "Stay out of the kitchen."

Those are examples of rules that are to the point. No need for drawn out explanations, because that would only confuse your toddler.

### 4) Consistency:

Children of all ages benefit well from consistency. Toddlers certainly need a parent to be consistent in order to begin following rules. Both parents need to be in agreement with the rules and when the rules are implemented. If you give your child a timeout as a result of hitting, you must be consistent another day by giving a timeout for that same unacceptable behavior.

Example: If dad says, "Don't hit", then mom should be on board with the same rule. If mom says, "Stay out of the kitchen", then dad should be on board with the same rule. If for any reason both parents don't agree, discuss the rule when your toddler is not around and come up with a rule that both agree to implement.

*\*Think of a rule you have for your child. How would you use consistency and timeout to reinforce it? \_\_\_\_\_*

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## Module 2 – Disciplining your 3-7 year old.



### Methods of Implementing Discipline (3 – 7 year old)

#### 1) Rules Again:

Starting at 3 years old many children began to comprehend language better. You can now begin to make rules that they are capable of understanding and following. You can now give simple explanations for the rules.

Example: You may tell your child, as a rule, not to jump on the bed. Whenever your child is going into her/his room to play, you can remind her/him not to jump on the bed, with an explanation. Don't forget to kneel until you meet your child's eyes. You can say, "Janie, you can play in the room, but do not jump on your bed, because you can get hurt." Keep the explanation brief.

#### 2) Consistency Again:

Remember that the same rule will apply to the same behavior no matter the situation. Both parents, a babysitter and others who care for your child, should be included in helping your child follow the same rules. Consistency will help your child internalize the target behavior.

Example: If you tell your child, "No hitting" at home, then, you should tell your child, "No hitting" even at the playground, at the grocery store, or at the church and so on.

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### Methods of Implementing Discipline (3 – 7 year old continued)

#### 3) Patience First:

Children, especially young children, require patience because they are still grasping the meaning of language and trying to understand the world around them. In their learning process they will test out what they can and can not get away with. This behavior is normal and healthy for children. It is your job as a parent to help them to understand language and the world around them in the most patient way possible.

Example: After you state a rule, such as, “Don’t hit”, at this stage, you will tell your child, patiently and to the point, with a bit longer explanation”, “...because when you hit you can hurt your sister. No one likes to be hit”.

You can then ask your child to repeat what you said to her. Usually a child may not use your exact words, but if what she tells you mean the same as what you said to her, that’s fine.

Just be patient if your child seems not to clearly understand the “why”. Perhaps, wait another 6 months to a year or more for the very young child to mature, and then try explaining again. To implement rules takes patience. Take 5 very slow breathes, in your nose and out your mouth or count to 10 backwards to calm yourself.

*\*Name 3 other methods you can use to calm yourself so you can be patient.*

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4) Don’t Give In:

Parenting can be a tough job. It requires you to hang in there and invest your time in helping your child develop a healthy sense of self and to be able to interact healthily with others.

Example: While watching a Netflix movie with her brother, your daughter throws a toy at him, hitting him in the arm. You have her sit away from the situation (in another area) and say, “Amanda, don’t throw anything at your brother, you could hurt him. I want you to sit and think of a nicer way to treat your brother,” “You can only get up when I tell you.” She can sit for 5 minutes if she is 5 years old (3 minutes if she is 3 years old etc.).

\*Likely, the 5 to 7 year old can think of a nicer way to treat her brother, under 5 may still have a hard time with thinking of alternative ways to behave.

Your job as the parent is to keep your word. If 5 year old Amanda gets up before 5 minutes, you have to tell her to sit back down for the remainder of the time. **Don’t Give In.** To help yourself from giving in, you can sit away from your child and hum your favorite song in your head for the 5 minutes.

*\*Name, at least, 3 more things you can do to help stop you from giving into your child.*

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_

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## Methods of Implementing Discipline (3 – 7 year old continued)

### 5) Distraction Works Too:

Distraction works nicely for children 6 months and up to 5 years old. Turn your child's attention to something positive when he is behaving in an unacceptable manner.

Example: If your child is touching a set of glass bowls in a store, you can turn his attention to the try-me toys and say, "William, look! You can try these toys out."

**\*Please avoid giving your child a cell phone or an electronic device as distraction.**

Distractions will help your child learn how to refocus his own attention to more productive, proactive activity, rather than destructive activity.

***\*Think of a negative behavior that your child did. Then, think of one way you can distract your child to change her behavior in that moment.***

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### 6) Time-out is Still an Option:

Remember, the length of time for time out is the same amount as your child's age. (If she's 4, then time out is 4 minutes). Time out still works for children up to approximately 7 years old. Use your discretion and figure out what works best for your child. How to use time out?

Example:

a) Time-out should be implemented when your child breaks a rule or has done something that is risky or dangerous. For children older than 3, this time is for her to reflect about what she has done wrong in her age appropriate way.

b) Choose a time-out space that has no distractions. Make sure your child is away from other children, television, computer and other technology devices (cell phones, tablets, game systems, MP-3's). **Giving your child your cell phone to play with during time-out is NOT a real time-out.**

c) While your child is in time-out, don't acknowledge him until the time-out is finished. If you have something to explain to your child wait it out until time-out is finished. Don't allow for her to get up until time is up, even if she cries, pouts, or screams, don't give in.

***\*Imagine your child is 3 years old. How many minutes is his time out and where would you sit him for time out?***

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## Methods of Implementing Discipline (3 – 7 year old continued)

### 7) Praise and Rewarding Good Behavior is Still an Option:

Praise and rewarding good behavior still can work for children at older ages between 3 and 7 years old. To help children internalize good behavior, use praise as one of the ways to encourage the good behavior.

Example: Praise your child when he shares his toy with his sibling, especially when he has made the decision to share without being told to do so. You can give praise to your child by saying, “You are amazing for sharing” or you can reward by giving him extra time to watch his favorite show. Stick to your promise and give the reward as close as you can to the time your child did the behavior.

*\*Think of 3 Praises you can give your child.*

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Think of a reward you can give your child for his good behavior.*

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### 8) Privileges can be Taken Away:

Here is another way to give a consequence. At ages 4 to 5, your child’s privileges can be removed. **Do not** remove things like daily meals, educational activities, and club participation. Those are things that are healthy and add enrichment to your child’s life. Removing them is neglectful. Before you remove your child’s privileges, calmly explain to him that if he wants to keep the privileges, he would need to correct his behavior.

Example: If your child throws a ball at his sister, you can say, “If you wish to continue playing with this ball you are not to throw it at your sister. For now, I will take the ball away from you.” Take the ball immediately. Children, especially younger ones, need immediate consequences. Don’t take away the privilege for too long because young children don’t have the long-term concept of time as do older children and adults. Perhaps, return the ball to him within a half hour to an hour. At least give it back within that same day. If child is capable, have her explain how she will use the ball.

*\*Think of a privilege that you can take away that will help your child correct her behavior.*

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## Methods of Implementing Discipline (3-7 year old continued)

### 9) Natural Consequences:

Natural Consequences teach children to take responsibility for their own behavior and to practice having better judgment.

Example: If you tell your child to pick up his favorite T-shirt off the floor that he desires to wear to the outing tomorrow, and he doesn't do it, allow for natural consequences. If the T-shirt ends up with dirty foot prints on it the next morning, he will not be able to wear it. You are not to clean the shirt for him that morning. You can instruct your child to throw that T-shirt in the hamper and request that he gets another clean shirt. Hang in there, do not give in. He needs to learn through natural consequences.

*\*Think of a behavior your child has done where you can use natural consequence to address it. Name what the natural consequence would be.*

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### 10) A Few Extra Tips:

As you are implementing consequences the following would be helpful.

- a) Have reasonable expectations of your child based on her age and maturity.
- b) If your child has not learned a skill or behavior, don't expect him to know the skill or behavior. That will only frustrate you and your child.

Example: If your 3 year old child knocks over his plate, you may have him clean it up, but, because of his age and lack of skill to do a thorough job, you can help him - "Let us clean this up."

- c) Creating schedules for your child is quite helpful. Having a regular time for different activities helps to create consistency. Consistency helps children develop a sense of discipline and relieves you, the parent, of stress.

Example: Plan bedtimes based on your child's age and sleep needs. Plan when your child will wake up and have breakfast. Plan a lunch time. Plan a dinner time at a time that you can consistently keep.

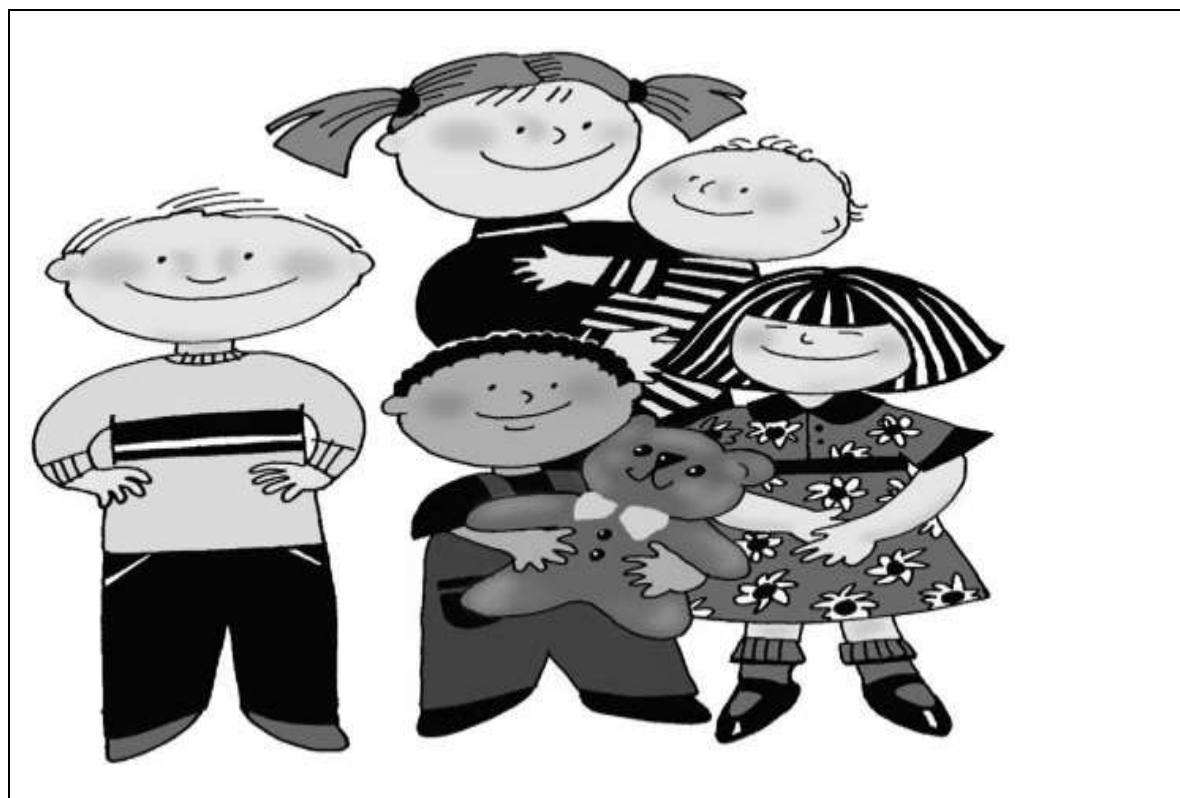
- d) Be patient and don't take your child's behavior personally. Children don't typically misbehave to hurt you. Challenges in their family, school, or any place where they spend time may be affecting their behavior.

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### Module 3 – Disciplining your 8-13 year old



#### Methods of Implementing Discipline (8 – 13 year old):

Please feel free to look back on previous modules to be reminded of methods of implementing discipline. This section is for ages 8-13 year olds. All discipline methods cross over and are used for various aged children. However, for each age you have to vary the implementation slightly. In this module we build on much of what you have learned. At this age, your child has developed language competency. You can talk and implement rules on a more sophisticated level.

#### Keep a Healthy Connection With Your Child:

Example:

- 1) When talking to your child, maintain good eye contact and don't be afraid to smile at her. Ask your child about her day. Find out how was school. Ask her who are her friends and how she likes being with them. Ask her what she enjoyed about her day? Ask her what she disliked about her day? (Don't punish her for things she didn't like, give her an ear, not a solution – listen. Only problem solve if she tells you something that truly threatens her safety).

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## Methods of Implementing Discipline (8 – 13 year old continued)

Example:

- 2) Play a board game or an electronic game with your child. Take them out to a park, a walk to the pet shop, have them help you plan a simple picnic day and keep your promise to do that plan. Remember, always maintain good eye contact and, don't forget, a smile helps.

Example:

- 3) Modeling behavior is always important. Children are truly like sponges. If you tend to get into physical fights to settle differences, so might your child. If you curse, so might your child. If you are socially withdrawn, your child might copy that behavior. Be a conscious model for your child. Get in touch with your positive and negative behavior, then, you have a chance at determining why your child does some of what he does.

***\*Think of 3 ways you can stay connected and bond with your child.***

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Rules, Again:**

Now your child is older and is starting to show some independence between 8 – 13 years old. Because of his more sophisticated ability to understand language you now have to change some rules to match his age and development. Before you create rules, get an idea of what others, with children your children's ages, are permitting their children to do. After you do that, use your clear judgment and figure out what rules are reasonable.

Example:

- 1) If your child has a bedtime, consider changing the bedtime to match her age. If your child used to have a 7:30PM bedtime at 5 years old, at age 8 consider having her bedtime set for 8:30PM.
- 2) You will still need to continue supervising your child. However, consider giving her some freedom that is appropriate for her age. When your child was 5 years old, maybe your child was not permitted to stay in her room alone. At age 8, maybe you can now permit your child to spend time in her room alone. And at age 12, maybe you will allow your child to spend time in her room alone and can partially close the door. You see the progression.
- 3) At 8 – 12 years old, your child can understand the rules better and are also able to take part in determining what is reasonable. Be thoughtful and really think about what is reasonable and consider changing the rule if your child has a fair dispute.
- 4) Be sure the punishment fits the offense. If your 12 year old fails to wash the dishes, you might ask him to wash dishes at the very time that you first discovered that they are still dirty, even if he has began doing something he enjoys. Stay appropriate and hang in there.

***\*Think of one rule that you can make for your child that clearly relates to the behavior you want him to stop.***

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## Methods of Implementing Discipline (8 – 13 year old continued)

### **Keep Your Cool:**

When you feel revved up, take a moment to calm down. Stop, go in a separate room and take 5 very slow deep breathes in your nose and out of your mouth or count backwards from ten. After you feel calm, then address your child. Eliminate words of shame and talk to your child about the broken rule in privacy. It is important to remember that the goal is to address your child's behavior, not to attack her character. Beginning as early as 8 years old, your child may begin to exhibit pubescent behavior, moodiness, argue over rules, and talking back in general. This is normal and, remember, it's not personal. When your child says insulting statements to you when you are disciplining, it's not personal; stick with your goal. If you have any concern about your child's behavior, get a professional opinion from your doctor or a therapist.

Example: If your child just lied to you that can send your anger from zero to ten. At that point, stop; go in a separate space in the house and do breathing or counting techniques mentioned above. Do whatever calms you. When you return to talk to your child, remember to speak calmly, use eye contact and state the behavior. Work on a solution with your child. Determine if you need to give a consequence or not. Remember, to stick to whatever decision you make and be sure the consequence fits the offense.

*\*Think of 1 time this week when you kept your cool in a stressful situation. What did you do to keep your cool? Or what can you do to keep your cool, if you haven't kept your cool when stressed?*

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### **Don't Forget to Reward Positive Behavior:**

If your child is showing respect, kindness and any good behavior, take the time to immediately let him know that you notice. Consider allowing him a privilege.

Example:

- 1) If your child is 8 years old, praise him, "How responsible of you this week to wash your own dishes after eating!" and consider rewarding him at the end of the week. Maybe, take him for ice cream at the end of the week. Keep your promise or your child will not take you seriously.
- 2) If your child is 12 years old, praise her, "How thoughtful of you to clean the kitchen this week without me having to tell you!" and consider rewarding her at the end of the week. Perhaps, give her extra time to watch television at the end of the week. Again, keep your promise or your child will not take you seriously.

*\*Name 1 way you can reward your child's behavior.*

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### **Methods of Implementing Discipline (8 – 13 year old continued)**

#### **Natural Consequences are a Good Way to Learn a Lasting Lesson:**

Sometimes natural consequences are referred to as “tough love”. Please allow your child to experience natural consequences. The only time you may help your child avoid natural consequences is if there is danger involved, such as you would not allow your child to jump on a train track to get his phone, just so he will learn his lesson if a train comes.

Example of safe, constructive, natural consequence:

1) If your child breaks her game system as a result of careless behavior, then let her know that she will not have anything on which to play her digital games.

Don't give in. Allow her to experience the results of not having her game. No need for you to keep reminding her of her issue, give her time to think through what she has done and how it has affected her own life. If you go out and immediately buy her a new game, she will repeat the same or similar careless behavior.

2) At some point, make a cooperative effort to come up with ways or methods your child can use to avoid her same behavior. Allow your child to take an active part in deciding some ways she can avoid the same behavior or any other destructive behavior. Maybe she could have organized the table on which her game system was placed so that it would not have fallen off the edge in the first place.

3) Keep a good bond and show that you care by finding out if there is anyway that you could help your child so that he can avoid destructive or negative behavior.

***\*Name 1 way you can help your child experience a lasting lesson after experiencing natural consequences.***

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#### **You Can Help Your Child Manage His or Her Own Behavior:**

By 10 – 13 years old, knowing that you have provided discipline when your child was younger, you can now talk to your child and verbally tell them their negative actions and help them to see why and how they need to change it. Help him reason out the issue.

Example:

If your child is too slow getting ready for school in the morning, you may, firstly, help your child to recognize his behavior. Perhaps, you can say, “It is 7:30 (A.M.) and you are not dressed. Usually you are fully dressed by 7:30. Do you think you will make it to the bus on time?” Then, while you stay quiet, allow for your child to have a moment to absorb what you said. You might then go on to say, “How do you plan to be on time today? Do you need me (or any other supportive family member) to help you?”

***\*If your child often neglects to sweep the kitchen floor, what are some questions you can ask him to help him to pinpoint his behavior?***

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***\*Name 1 question you can ask your child to help him consider changing his behavior.***

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This is the end of the 3 modules. Please continue to work with your coach and practice implementing these parenting skills.

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### 64 Praises to Tell Your Child

<b>Great!</b>	<b>Superb!</b>	<b>Brilliant!</b>	<b>Amazing!</b>
<b>Beautiful!</b>	<b>Gorgeous!</b>	<b>Handsome!</b>	<b>Creative!</b>
<b>Good!</b>	<b>Courageous!</b>	<b>Smart!</b>	<b>Energetic!</b>
<b>Incredible!</b>	<b>Cute!</b>	<b>Polite!</b>	<b>Loving!</b>
<b>Likable!</b>	<b>Brave!</b>	<b>Helpful!</b>	<b>Sincere!</b>
<b>Motivated!</b>	<b>Fun!</b>	<b>Assertive!</b>	<b>Intelligent!</b>
<b>Skillful!</b>	<b>Kind!</b>	<b>Happy!</b>	<b>Thoughtful!</b>
<b>Charming!</b>	<b>Wonderful!</b>	<b>Grateful!</b>	<b>Cheerful!</b>
<b>Willful!</b>	<b>Strong!</b>	<b>Competent!</b>	<b>Bright!</b>
<b>Inquisitive!</b>	<b>Delightful!</b>	<b>Pleasurable!</b>	<b>Courteous!</b>
<b>Adorable!</b>	<b>Efficient!</b>	<b>Fabulous!</b>	<b>Funny!</b>
<b>Loyal!</b>	<b>Friendly!</b>	<b>Respectful!</b>	<b>Nice!</b>
<b>Resourceful!</b>	<b>Talented!</b>	<b>Mannerable!</b>	<b>Thorough!</b>
<b>Caring!</b>	<b>Perceptive!</b>	<b>Ambitious!</b>	<b>Special!</b>
<b>Carefree!</b>	<b>Unique!</b>	<b>Empathetic!</b>	<b>Sympathetic!</b>
<b>Well-rounded!</b>	<b>Articulate!</b>	<b>Innovative!</b>	<b>Resilient!</b>

Please feel free to add more praise words: \_\_\_\_\_ .

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## Resolving Conflict

- 1) Make rules for resolving the conflict, such as No hitting, no name calling, no put downs, no bossing, no bullying, no blaming, and no getting even.
- 2) Pinpoint the problem.
- 3) The problem is the problem, not the person. Attack the problem, not the person.
- 4) Quietly listen to what each other has to say.
- 5) Please respect each others feelings.
- 6) Take responsibility for what you do and say.