

## Child Education

The initial state of happiness about an own child is often overcome with annoyance after even a short period of time. Children quickly grow an own personality, and it's the most vital task of the parents to help develop it and give it a shape. Otherwise, the little angel can turn into a little devil adding considerably to the stress in life you already have.

Like everything else in life, child education is a tightrope walk between strictness and letting loose. Drifting off either way causes more problems than it solves. But of course what sounds clear and obvious in theory is much harder to actually apply practically.

The suggestions here are no rules to follow, they're mere guidelines and should animate own thoughts and ideas. After all, it's up to you what you think is best.

### 1. Discipline

During the first six month of its life, a baby won't yet be able to understand the connection between "bad behaviour" and punishment. What it really needs during that time is care and loving, to tighten the emotional bounds to its parents.

Nevertheless, even a baby that small is fully capable of repeating actions that lead to a pleasant result. So if any sob makes you appear immediately on the cradle, you'll find that you have a miniature dictator soon who keeps you up and running with joy.

Between seven and fourteen months, children normally start testing their limits. This results from a growth in both mobility and stubbornness, so what's being put on test are the parents' patience with keeping their little ones from exploring, often eating and probably destroying the reachable parts of the household and for how long they can get away with it.

Babies at that age start challenging their parents by stubborn disobedience, but that should not lead to punishment. Be firm and persistent in telling and showing them what they're not supposed to do, but don't be rude or harsh. Their concentration usually doesn't last, so distraction is a great weapon. They still need a lot of love, and your reward will be a happy time with a sometimes annoying, but mostly very cute baby.

Going towards an age of two years, the obstinacy takes often a negative direction: "No" is the preferred answer to all "propositions" ranging from eating and choice of toys to taking a bath and going to sleep.

Discipline can become considerably harder to apply, but is vital to steer the course of your child's further development. It has to learn that the authority and decision is with the parents. Still, love and forgiveness is of even importance. Especially the father's role as an authority for the child and support for his wife can make this period a lot easier.

With increasing mobility, skill and curiosity a child between two and three years can keep its mother constantly busy, taking every moment of silence as an indication of a new disaster involving eating things, messing around with things and getting stuck in things.

This can really add to the load of stress parents already have, and the explosive emotional or even physical reaction might ease the moment, but on the long term increases the problem. So be as relaxed as possible and make sure you've got all valuable pieces of household equipment properly secured. When children receive a bump or scratch that's no drama - turning it into one will just make you and your child over-frightened in the future. Still, with all calmness, don't miss to tell your child when it did wrong and discipline when it's overdoing it.

In the following years, the focus of education should be on the child's character and attitudes. The influence of trends, friends and media is strong, and the temptation to try new things is high. At the same time, the control parents have over their children's activities is reduced, and especially when it comes to trends parents often lack understanding for the things that are "in".

So even though your child becomes more independent, it's important that you have time together and show interest in its experiences, interests and problems. Offer to talk about things, but don't urge. Show understanding and always be there as someone your child can talk to without fear - remember the days when you were in that age, and your feelings at that time.

And, most important: Be a paradigm to your child. You cannot expect it to do something you don't have the power or courage to do yourself. Respect is nothing that can be taught, but has to be earned, even by parents.

## 2. Rules of thumb

### - Be just!

Don't expect your child to behave according to rules you haven't set. Especially young children often can't distinguish between right and wrong. So even if something is clearly a stupid idea for you, it might seem a brilliant one to it.

### - Be firm!

If you give in to your child's defiant reaction, maybe because you're just tired of the whole thing, you lose much more than that fight. You give away authority and respect.

### - Forgive!

After a confrontation is settled, reassure your child of your love and show that you're not resentful.

### - Don't ask for the impossible!

No matter what your means of education are like, you can't expect a child to behave like an adult. Children sometimes behave irresponsibly - that's built-in.

### - Don't forget the love!

In the end, no matter how much trouble you might have with each other, don't forget to show that you love your child. And when it comes to decide how to educate, how to reward and how to discipline, listen to your heart what's the right thing to do.

## About the Author

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