



Parenting Seminar
Toddlers
6 months - 3 years
Making the Twos Terrific



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Toddlers: 6 months - 3 years
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TODDLER PARENTING CLASS FOUNDATIONS

I. YOUR INSTRUCTORS

A. Background:

B. Christian Presuppositions:

1. There is a God who created everything
2. God has communicated through His creation, but more importantly in His word, the Bible
3. Adam willfully disobeyed God (sinned) and all humans have inherited that sin nature and display it in their own willful disobedience to God. All humans are therefore under God's just condemnation
4. Jesus is the second person of the triune Godhead (Father, Son & Holy Spirit) who became a man through the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, then willingly died as the substitute payment for man's sin on the cross of calvary. He then rose from the dead on the third day proving His claims and promises to be true, then ascended to heaven where He is preparing a place for His follower and interceded for them with the Father. He will return to earth one day to receive His followers to be with Him forever.
5. By God's grace through faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, a human can be redeemed, regenerated and adopted into God's family. The Holy Spirit will then indwell the believer enabling him to understand spiritual things and empower him to live according to God's will. God at work in the life of the Christian to change him to be more like Christ.
6. The Christian is responsible to seek to know God and His will better so that he may glorify Him by obedience to His commands (personal holiness) and in service to Him.

C. Parenting Presuppositions

1. The commands and principles in the Scriptures will benefit anyone that will follow them.
2. Due to the Holy Spirit, it is easier for Christian parents to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord - according to God's standards.
3. Parents are responsible for the training of their children, and the character of their children will be a reflection of that training.
4. There are no gimmicks or quick fixes.
5. No parent does everything correctly, so all parents benefit from humbly helping one another.
6. While psychological studies can provide some information helpful to parenting, the application of that information must be determined according to Scriptural principles. The reasoning and applications made by secular psychology are rejected since they are based on philosophical ideas that are contrary to Scripture.
7. All children are unique - that can never be an excuse. All children are trainable, and will be trained whether actively or by neglect.

D. Purpose and Goals

Our purpose is to glorify God by teaching Biblical principles of parenting so that families (and society) can be blessed by those following them. This will include the following:

- * Teach you your God given _____ and authority in raising your children
- * Teach you _____ upon which you will set the standard of skills and behavior to which you will train your 6 month to three year old children.
- * Teach you Biblical principles for discipline so that the correction of your children will amend their behavior and attitudes without exasperating them or causing them to lose heart.
- * Stress the importance of _____ since it is the foundation of skill and character development

E. Your Responsibilities

1. Strive to walk with Jesus Christ yourself
2. If married, strive to be a godly spouse. If not married, strive to work in harmony with the other parent for the best interest of the children.
3. List out the from what you learn today the things you will need to implement in your own family. Prioritize the list. Begin working on the first and second most important items on the list. Once those have been taught / trained / instituted, begin to work on the next item on the list. (You may want to post the list in a prominent place as a reminder - review your notes to help you put into practice what you have learned).
4. Read through the handouts after the seminar is over
5. Make friends with other parents who share your philosophy of parenting so that you may encourage each other in your practice - and if they have children of similar age, they will also help reinforce training with one another.

II. HUSBAND/WIFE PRIORITY (Genesis 2:24)

A. Husband and wife are the _____ social relationship and _____ in a series of social relationships

B. Husband and wife is the _____ relationship in the family. All other relationships are subject to it

C. Children are welcome members of the family - not the _____ of it.

Some Ramifications: _____

III. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 *You must know and love God your self and His commands, and then be diligent to teach them to your children that they may also know and love God.*

Ephesians 6:4 *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

Colossians 3:21 - *Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart*

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 - *parents are responsible to train their children, failure to do so may result in responsibility to bring civil punishment upon the son or daughter when they are older - and if the parents do not do it, then the Lord surely will - Proverbs 20:20; 30:17*

Moral Development verses Salvation _____

IV. BENEFITS OF ROUTINE

1 Corinthians 14:40 . . . *But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner*

Context: _____

Principle: _____

Fruit of the Spirit: _____

James 3:17-18 - Wisdom _____

A. Emotionally - Routine allows the development of _____

B. Physically - Routine allows the development of good _____ habits

C. Socially - Order brings _____ (a reflection of God) & allows child to develop favor with others

D. Spiritually - It begins the process to _____ self-gratification (hedonism)

Routine is what is normally done, but it is not rigid or legalistic. It is _____ to benefit all.

INTRODUCTION INTO TODDLER TRAINING

I. WHY TRAIN THEM?

A. You train either by _____ or by diligence

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 or Proverbs 29:b (*a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother*)

Proverbs 16:25 - *There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*

"You either start at the playpen or end up at the state pen"

B. It is easier to _____ than retrain

C. They understand _____ than you think

Listening vocabulary is gained before speaking vocabulary

Repetition with consistent phrases builds understanding - keep it simple

D. Conflict is an _____ for growth

James 1, Romans 5; Hebrews 12 - God teaches us through adversity.

E. Waiting allows the heart to grow _____

Ecclesiastes 8:11- *Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil.*

Proverbs 29:5 - *The rod and reproof give wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.*

1 Kings 1:5-6 - David *"never crossed [Adonijah his son] at any time by asking "Why have you done so?"*

"It is better to build children than to repair men."

II. THE NATURE OF A CHILD: Childishness, foolishness & Wisdom

A. Childishness

Definition: *That which a child does due to immaturity, naivety, ignorance, lack of instruction, and uncoordinated motor skills -lack of physical ability*

Examples: *Spilling milk *Accidents *Putting things in their mouth
*Wandering away * Playing with dangerous things
*Silly, funny (embarrassing) questions and statements - lack of discretion

Correction Needed

_____ to give them understanding
_____ to solidify understanding, develop skills / ability & make it a habit
_____ to give positive reinforcement and train the heart

(Proverbs 25:11 - *"Like apples of gold in settings of silver Is a word spoken in right circumstances."* Proverbs 16:24 - *"Pleasant words are a honeycomb, Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones."*

After training and physical ability is demonstrated, a child that continues wrong behavior has moved from childishness to foolishness.

B. Foolishness

Definition: *The actions and attitudes of a child done in defiance of authority and in disregard for the consequences.*

Psalm 14:1 - *The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.*

Correction needed: *Be sure to determine if it is childishness or foolishness before correcting!*

A young child is trained to first time obedience _____

Proverbs 22:15 - *Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.*

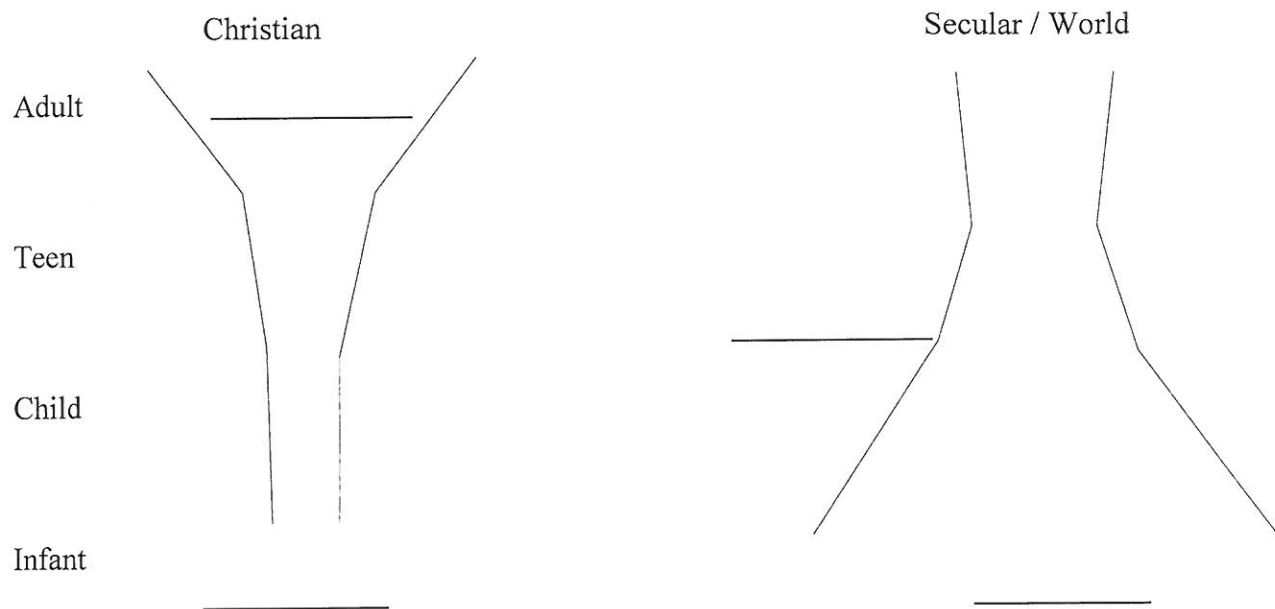
Proverbs 23:13-14 - *Do not hold back discipline from the child, Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die. 14 You shall strike him with the rod And rescue his soul from Sheol.*

Proverbs 13:24 - *He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.*

Hebrews 12:4-13 - *We follow God's example of fatherhood. He disciplines those He loves - and though the discipline is not joyful at the time, its long term benefits are more than worth it.*

C. Wisdom: Romans 16:19 - *For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.*

The Funnel Illustration



A young child has limited understanding and self-control, so freedom must be constrained. As the child grows in wisdom and self-control, freedoms are expanded to match their abilities to handle the corresponding responsibilities. In the teen years, the goal is to bring all the training to fruition as they take on adult responsibilities - and freedoms are given to correspond.

Freedoms > self-control = developmental confusion

Freedoms < self-control = developmental frustration & immaturity

Freedoms = self-control = developmental harmony & appropriate maturity

III. THE BASICS OF GOOD TRAINING

A. Models What is Right

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 / Luke 6:40 - *"A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher."*

You cannot teach what you do not model

The result of a good example: 2 Kings 15:3 - _____

The result of bad examples: Jeremiah 9:14 - _____

2Kings 15:9 - _____

B. Continually Teaches - Deuteronomy 6:6-9

Make use of _____ situation of life: when you sit down, lie down, rise up, walk on the way

The fallacy of the "quality" time _____

C. Consistent in Practice

No Contradiction in the Home

You are the parent - you set the standards by which your family will live.

* _____ the standard

* _____ by the standard

* _____ to the standard

* _____ to the standard

No Confusing Influences from the Outside: Be on guard for sources of influence from outside the home that promote ideas that are contradictory to the Bible / Biblical morality

D. Promotes Holiness, Opposes Sin

_____ holiness is the quest - 1 Peter 1:15-16, *but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."*

Sin is _____ and so there must be serious effort to oppose it. - Romans 6:16 - *Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?*

E. Gives Clear Commands

Colossians 3:21 - do not exasperate your child. Be careful that your commands are clear and not unclear due to muddled speech, lacking instructions, uncertainty in what is required, changing requirements, inconsistency.

* Say what you mean, and mean what you say. - Matt. 5:37 & James 5:12

* When you require them to obey your instructions - Give _____, not suggestions or questions. Expect an answer to your commands - "yes sir," "no mommy" etc.

* Be authoritative using the proper tone of voice

* Make eye contact

F. Teaches Principles

A specific command is good for the moment - a principle is good for a lifetime in many diverse situations. You are striving to train the heart, so go beyond the specific commands and teach the moral reason / principle for what you are commanding.

Example: _____

Example: _____

IV. GAINING BEHAVIORAL CONTROL

A. EXTERNAL BOUNDARIES 6-12 MONTHS

Crawling, reaching & walking: With each phase of development come new skills, abilities and privileges - for which they become responsible and accountable.

Reaching: _____

Crawling & Walking: _____

Modern Baby-proofing : Safety requires some common sense such as child-proof catches on the cabinet with dangerous cleaners / chemicals in it - modern baby-proofing is done in order to avoid conflict with a child who given free reign.

Biblical Baby-proofing:

Proverbs 22:15 *Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.*

Proverbs 13:24 *He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.*

Proverbs 23:13-14 *Do not hold back discipline from the child, Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die. You shall strike him with the rod And rescue his soul from Sheol.*

Method: teach / train / practice / encourage / correct

Practice: Leave non-injurious (and non-expensive unbreakable) items within reach of the child for training purposes. Say "No" firmly when the child reaches for them. Begin with a gentle hand slap when they do reach for it (the hand is the source of the offensive action). Increase the "sting" of the slap as needed to gain compliance. The pain of correction must be greater than the pleasure of the sin.

Cautions:

- 1) Do not injure the baby! It is a gentle slap that increases to a firm slap that causes a sting - never a "hit"
- 2) Remove injurious items, expensive articles, objects that are easily breakable

B. FIRST TIME OBEDIENCE. Eph. 6:1 - *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*

What it means: Obey right away, all the way, with a happy face

Why its important

A) _____ obedience is disobedience

B) It removes confusion from what is commanded and what is expected - the child does not have to wonder if the parent is serious or not (say what you mean, mean what you say)

C) _____ requires it - "Stop!" going into the street. "Don't touch" - reaching for stove

How to gain it

Instruction - *explain what you want and demonstrate as needed until they understand*
Come to mommy / daddy when called - make a game out of it

Encouragement: Verbal praise when they obey _____

Reward with hugs, affection. _____

Correction

In training: _____ correction, admonishment

After training: _____ (_____)

Cautions:

- 1) You must be _____.
- 2) Do not delay or chastize without enough pain to amend the defiant behavior (lack of behavior).
- 3) Do not exasperate the child by requiring more than the child can do developmentally (childishness) - or by talking too much about it.
- 4) Do not chastize while you are angry (James 1:20).
- 5) Do not Blame the child for your failure.

V. INSTILLING WISDOM & MOLDING THE HEART

Romans 16:19b - *but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.*

Romans 6:17 - *But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,*

A. TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY

Instruction: teach / explain / demonstrate / practice -

Encouragement: Verbal Praise

Reward: Physical affection (hug, pat on head, etc.),

If done without prompting, an occasional special treat (must not become a bribe)

Correction

If direct defiance, then chastize

If they forgot, then they lose the privilege

As the child get older (15-18months +) then correction is also given for the expression of bad attitudes - loss of privilege or chasten (slap on the buttocks)

B. TEACHING SOCIAL GRACES

Instruction: teach / explain / demonstrate / practice - "please" "Thank you"

Encouragement: _____ Praise - good boy to say "please" "thank you" "to ask nicely for more"

Reward: Physical affection -hug, pat on head, etc.

Correction:

In training phase: Verbal _____ with a stern look and voice

After training: Remove them to a place of _____ such as a playpen without toys

Remember: Children learn by repetition, so keep at it and do not lose heart

VI. PUTTING IT ALL INTO PRACTICE

Guideline Questions to Ask Yourself

Is it acceptable? The parent have the right to decide when, where and what your child does.

Examples _____

Is it good stewardship? 1 Corinthians 4:2 - we are stewards and will be held accountable.

This is proper use of both our own property (which ultimately belongs to God) and others.

Examples _____

Do I want it to continue if I let it begin now? What you allow now maybe minor, but could become a big problem later.

Examples _____

Is it respectful of the authority and feelings of others? Eph. 6:1; Eph. 4:29; Prov. 30:11

First time obedience is the first step in training them to be less selfish and more thoughtful of others. To not require obedience is to teach them to sin. This will also include manners.

Example _____

Is it potentially enslaving? Has it or will it become something the child must have?

1 Corinthians 6:12b - *All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.*

Examples _____

Is it dangerous?

Examples _____

Remember: Lack of manual dexterity / mental awareness will make things dangerous for a small child that will be safe when they are older.

Examples _____

Is it social acceptable? Proper manners are an aspect of love in treating others with brotherly kindness. Be careful of tolerating generally offensive behavior at home that should not be done elsewhere.

Examples _____

Will it work in multiples? Can you continue this practice with more than one child?

Examples _____

Is it necessary? Desire does not constitute need. 1 Corinthians 10:23 - *All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify.*

Examples _____

These question are designed to help you think through the standards you need to set for your home - which everyone in the home should follow in order to model it to the children.

DEVELOPING GODLY CHARACTER THROUGH GOOD HABITS

A. GODLY CHARACTER AND EATING HABITS (See Handout: *Toddler Challenges at Mealtime*)

Promptness & Thoroughness:

Children eat when the parent _____ that it is time to eat

Avoid snacks until a child has an acceptable eating routine

Be flexible with this when child's feedings are being stretched and when sick.

Set a reasonable limit on the time allowed to eat the meal

Do not allow play until after the meal

Good Manners

Teach them to show _____ (be quite, put hands together) while you thank God for the food.

As they learn to communicate, they can give thanks too!

Teach them to communicate by signing / "Please" & "Thank you" - ask for more, etc.

Bottles / cups / utensils, etc. - are not play toys or throwing objects.

Hands - teach them to keep their hands out of their mouth while you are feeding him.

Food is not for play, throwing or dropping on the floor - this becomes very important when you introduce finger foods

_____ is not an acceptable form of communication - you can help by 1) avoid being distracted while feeding the child. 2) Use the time to talk to your child - name the foods he is eating so he can name it himself as he develops. 3) If they do whine, say "No" and mimic the sound. Demonstrate how they should ask. Withhold what they want until they can ask properly or at least not whine.

High Chair - they are to stay in it until excused (older children will attempt to climb out)

Utensils - teach them to use utensils correctly. This will take time as they gain the necessary skills. Example: Use an unbreakable plate instead of putting food on high chair tray. As dexterity develops (18 months - 2 years), teach child to use a spoon - not hands. Etc.

Mouth usage: no rude noises, no spitting, no screaming or excessive crying (these could result in being removed and isolated without any additional food). Older children (15+ mo) chew with mouth closed, no talking while food in mouth.

Patience: *Use meals to teach patience (begin with infant feeding - burping, switching breasts, etc.)

*When solids are introduced, they should eat at a reasonable pace - learn to chew.

*A child that can sit in a high chair can _____ a short time until you pray, then give him food

*Teach him to sit and wait with food in front of him while you pray. A child in a high chair can also be taught to sit quietly a few minutes after he is done eating before being let out.

Flexibility: Teach your child to be flexible with meals.

Infants - let someone else feed the baby occasionally - breast fed babies should be given a bottle once a week or so in order to train them to eat what is offered even when it is not preferred. This is a necessary skill for emergencies and other times mom may not be available.

Solid foods introduce new tastes, textures and food groups. Teach them to _____ new foods regardless of preferences. It is best to start with vegetables, then fruit later on otherwise they will prefer fruits and not want vegetables. Do this systematically so that you can watch for possible food allergies / intolerance.

Picky Eaters: A) Continue to serve a rejected food at the next few meals. He may eat it when hungrier and then learn to like it. B) Feed the least desired food first otherwise they fill up on what they like. C) If they reject most of a meal, don't force it. They will not starve and it can be refrigerated and served again at the next meal(s) D) As the child gets older, they may be required to eat a minimum amount (ex. 1 bite at 1 year, 2 bites at 2 years, etc.). Do not allow a picky eater to develop or for it to continue

Confidence/Security Your child learns to have confidence and security in your care of him and feeding is part of this. You will feed him at the proper time - which will adjust to fit within the family schedule.

Feeding Routines

A newborn will feed up to 8 times per day and sleep 16-20 hours.

By about three months that will (should) drop to four feedings with three daytime naps and a 10-12 hour sleep at night.

At about 8 months, the baby is starting to eat some solid foods three times a day plus a bottle in the evening and will drop another a nap and is awake longer between them .

Between 14-18 months, the baby drops another nap and should be eating regular meals with the family.

Mealtime gives many opportunities to teach social behavior

- 1) The baby eats with mom
- 2) The baby eats with the rest of the family
- 3) The baby eats with extended family
- 4) The baby eats with guests
- 5) The baby eats as a guest
- 6) The baby eats in a public place

Thankfulness: Christians are to give thanks in all things (Ephesians 5:20) and this includes what we eat (1 Timothy 4:4-5). Teach your child to be grateful for whatever food is served and discourage ungratefulness. Teach them to accept and try new foods. Serve a few bites of the new food first (without him seeing what you know he likes). You may have to serve it several times before he will learn to like / tolerate it. If he still doesn't like it, try it again in a month or two.

B. GODLY CHARACTER AND SLEEPING HABITS

(See Handout: *Sleeping Patterns in Your Baby's First Two Years* and *Common Sleep Problems*)

~6 - 13 months, a baby will have 2 naps of ~ 2 hours and sleep through night 9-12 hours.

14+ months - baby will have 1 nap of 2-3 hours and sleep through night 10-12 hours.

Independence - Falling asleep on his/her own. This is a skill that is learned. _____

Perseverance - Sleeping alone in own crib / bed & being content. An additional learned skill

The guidelines are:

A) Nap _____ when mom/dad says it begins

B) Nap _____ with mom/dad says it ends

C) Nap should end with a child who has a _____ spirit (if not, he may need more sleep).

Note: It can be helpful to include a favorite object / toy / pacifier as appropriate

Flexibility - Sleeping in Different Environments. Additional skills that benefit everyone!

In different places : _____

With different noises : _____

In different positions : _____

Self-Control - Staying in Bed. Climbing out without permission is not acceptable.

C. GODLY CHARACTER AND PLAYING HABITS - Physical & Mental development, self-control, stewardship, cooperation, kindness (See Handout: *Children and Play* and *Suggestions for Wake-Time Activities*)

Play Pen & Room Time

Benefits of a play pen:

1) Safe environment: _____

2) Portable bed: _____

3) Structured learning center: _____

Play time should be part of regular routine established into the child's day. This will transition to "Room time" when they are older. The skills learned here also translate into "sit time" for reading in one place (our children learned to stay on a blanket) - necessary skills to be able to study when they are school age - and to sit through a church worship service!

Guidelines:

- *Play pen - birth to 2 years. Room with gate ~ 16 months. Room without gate - 2 ½ years.
- *Work up to 2 play times of 45 - 60 minutes per day (replacing toys can lengthen time)
- *Transition to once per day when child transitions to one nap per day
- *Put them in when well-rested and fed. Take them out while still_____.

Number & Types of Toys

Guidelines:

- 1) _____the number of toys available at one time (one or two at a time - you can switch toys to extend play time. This helps teach concentration skills. Too many toys at a time confuses
- 2) Age appropriate to develop skills - fine and gross motor skills
- 3) Toys that are durable (books too).
- 4) Cautions: Be careful of videos - even the good ones are still _____learning and can reduce the child to think for himself / figure things out. You want to stimulate the mind and the body

Three - Six months

Baby on tummy Activity centers, mobiles, rattles
Using a walker Stick on toys, chime ball,

Six - Twelve months

Baby can sit Stacking toys (rings, blocks, cups), plush stuffed animals, stationary toys
Baby can stand Push / pull toys - corn popper, carts, balls, shape sorters, cardboard books

Twelve -24 months Pegboards, puzzles, duplo blocks, crayons, dolls

Rotate toys: As a child develops they learn to use the same toy in a different way, so a toy used earlier can be played with differently at a later time.

Clean-up: By learning to clean up after himself a child develops both orderliness and responsibility.

A toy box is helpful for large items,
Shelving is very helpful in teaching orderliness

Behavior with Playmates (& toys) This teaches them stewardship, respecting other people and their property, cooperation, tolerance, flexibility, conflict resolution

Sharing: Choosing to give up something so someone else can use it. Sharing is taught

Selfishness and covetousness are _____, so this takes work

Teach your child to wait patiently for a toy being played with by someone or play with something else

Dominion: The sense of _____for what belongs to you

This includes not only personal possessions (a child's toys at home), but what belongs to others but is being used by permission (church toys).

Special Toys: A child's special possessions that they are not required to share with siblings or visiting friends.

Stewardship: If the child abuses his toys or those of others, he loses the _____. If child allows others to abuse his toys (he can get help from parents to protect them), he loses privilege.

Note on having other children / families in your home. If other children misbehave in your home:

A) If child's parent is not there, you must correct - isolate / remove object of contention.

B) If child's parent is present, allow them to correct - but if they will not correct, then you must correct the child for you are a steward of your home.

C) If child is not correctable or child's parent is uncooperative, then do not invite them back until they are cooperative.

You may lose "friends" over parenting issues, but your child and stewardship are your primary responsibilities - and friends would not abuse you or your property.

D. GODLY CHARACTER AND SPEAKING HABITS James 1:19; 3:2-12; Proverbs 5:2; 17:26, Ephesians 4:29 etc. Self-control, discretion, kindness, courtesy

James 1:19 - *This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;* Listening is a skill that is more valuable than speaking.

James 3:2-12 - The tongue is dangerous. Learning to control it is a sign of maturity

Appropriate _____: Indoor vs. Outdoor voice - learning discretion to speak with enough volume to be heard, but not louder than necessary

Appropriate _____: Learning to speak with tone of voice that matches the purpose of what is being said and with proper respect to the one to whom they are speaking

Appropriate _____: When speaking to parents - sit or stand straight (no wiggling), look into their eyes. This shows respect and submission - and is also a skill needed to be a good listener since this requires attention to be focused.

Appropriate _____:

Proverbs 10:19 - *When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise.*

Proverbs 17:27-28 *He who restrains his words has knowledge, And he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.* ²⁸ *Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is considered prudent.*

Interrupting - Children are not to verbally interrupt rudely at anytime, and interrupt adults only in a genuine emergency (medical / dangerous). Teach them to interrupt respectfully by placing their hand on your leg / hip / shoulder and wait quietly until you give them permission to talk

Answering - Children are to be taught to answer others respectfully.

Greetings - Child responds with hi / hello / good morning / etc. with name if known. Do not allow “shyness” to be an excuse for rudeness.

When called - Child answers “yes, mommy / daddy / sir / ma’am / etc. This is essential for teaching first time obedience (answers, comes, has happy face - start when walking).

Appropriate _____:

Proverbs 16:24 - *Pleasant words are a honeycomb, Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.*

Ephesians 4:29 - *Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.*

Respectful - Child is to use proper title / names for people - esp adults - mommy / daddy / Mr. / Mrs. / Aunt / Uncle / miss, etc.

Gracious - Child is to be taught to speak graciously - not rude or crude (unwholesome)

Submissive - Child is not to speak rebelliously or with defiance to parents / authority. A child babbling “no” can be tolerated, but looking at you and saying “no” as a challenge to your authority is not. Tantrums - see below

Thankful - Child is to be taught to respond to questions with words (sign language) - “yes, please” “no, thank you” - not “yeah” “no” or grunts

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

The long term process of training your child is:

EXTERNAL BOUNDARIES → INTERNAL RESPONSIVENESS →
CONSCIENCE DEVELOPMENT → GODLY CHARACTER → WISDOM

Most chastening is done early in life if diligent / consistent (80% by age 5). If not, then problems continue all the way through childhood and culminate in teen rebellion.

Crying, Fussing, Whining

Babies will cry and fuss since they have no other way to communicate yet. Young children will attempt whining because they have not yet learned appropriate communication.

- 1) _____ before action. Determine cause of the crying. Possibilities include: Pain, hunger, discomfort (hot, cold, wet, dirty), needs help (stuck, can't reach toy), fear, exhaustion, lonely, bored, not getting what is desired (this food, not that food).
- 2) Take action that is based on the _____ interest for the child. Safety issues will require immediate attention and remediation. Some issues may be reasonably delayed according to priority (finish child's bath before changing baby's diaper). Some issues cannot be resolved despite the desire to do so (do not know source of pain in order to alleviate it). Some issues may

be purposely delayed to achieve a long-term goal (observe to see if child can resolve issue on his own, stretching time between feedings, training in new skills).

- 3) Dealing with _____. Many infants will have a fussy time in which they are unsettled / agitated / irritable - sometimes referred to as colic. This is unsettling for the parents because we usually do not know its cause. As the child gets older it becomes easier to distinguish legitimate causes such as mild pain (gas, constipation, getting sick), an irritant (dirty / wet diaper), being over-tired and causes that reveal areas for correction and training such as being unhappy about their current activity (play pen, nap) or attempted manipulation to get attention or what they want. Illegitimate fussiness is corrected through isolation until they can be content / happy - "No fussing, Happy!" (Note: for possible gas pain - try moving legs toward chest, also Mylanta drops)
- 4) Whining - see note on manners when eating.

Temper & Frustration Tantrums - See Handout : *Temper Tantrums versus Frustration Tantrums*

Temper Tantrums

Description: A temper tantrum is an outburst of anger related to _____ what is desired. It is a rejection of parental authority. (Passive - going limp to avoid going where they don't want)

Prevention: If you are consistent in correcting illegitimate fussiness, then your child will probably not try this or it will be headed off before the child gets to the level of a tantrum. .

Correction: Tantrums need an audience (it is an effort to manipulate), so express your displeasure and isolate. A child old enough to remember (2+) that does this more than once will need to be chastised when they have calmed down.

Frustration Tantrum

Description: This is an outburst of anger related to _____ to accomplish a task - usually expressed verbally, but can quickly escalate to physical (throwing, kicking, hitting, etc.). This could be a lack of physical skills / ability or mental ability to figure out a solution. It does not reject parental authority, so it is different from a temper tantrum.

Prevention: While you want to give your child things that will stretch his mental / physical skills and abilities, be careful of giving him something that is too far beyond his abilities.

Correction: 1) Calmly remind him that getting angry will not solve his problem, then ask if he would like your help (as the child gets older, teach him to ask for help). 2) If he is too upset talk about it - then isolate from the source of frustration and tell him that when he is calm he can try again and ask for help. 3) If he has also had unacceptable behavior (kicking, throwing, etc.), then follow #2 above and then correct misbehavior after he has calmed down.

The "Why" Questions - This is a great age of inquiry and discovery and a good parent wants their child to learn and ask questions. However, not every "why" question must be answered - why?

- 1) Questions must be asked respectfully. An inquiry is a request, not a demand.
- 2) Some questions are inappropriate as to subject matter or timing - they could be embarrassing (why is that lady so fat?) - The child is firmly told you will talk / they can ask about it later.
- 3) Some questions are only to extend the conversation - the parent can redirect the conversation.
- 4) Some questions are challenges to authority, not an inquiry. The child is to obey without challenge. (You will teach the child the appeal process when they are older).
- 5) The child is to be taught self-control, so a parent can decide to end a "why" question conversation.

Handouts Attached

*The Extremes of Parenting: Authoritarian & Permissive
Legalism & Parenting
Parenting Your Child's Emotions
Toddler Challenges at Mealtime
Sleeping Patterns in Your Baby's First Two Years
Common Sleep Problems
Suggestions for Wake-Time Activities
Children and Play
Temper Tantrums versus Frustration Tantrums
The Nature of Toddler Conflict / My Toddler is Biting Other Children*

Recommended Parenting Resources - Toddlers

Websites

http://gracebibleny.org/category/sermons/family_marriage_children

<http://www.dorposts.com/>

<http://www.growingfamiliesusa.com/>

Materials from Growing Families USA (All materials by Gary & Ann Marie Ezzo)

Books

On Becoming Babywise I (Birth to 5 months)
On Becoming Babywise II (5-12 months)
On Becoming Pretoddlerwise (12-18 months)
On Becoming Toddlerwise (18-36 months)
On Becoming Preschoolwise (3-4 years)
Let's Ask Aunt Annie (5 books dealing with how to raise a child to be 1) Loving, 2) Responsible, 3) Secure, 4) Trusting, 5) Moral)

DVD Series (*= available in audio CD format)

Preparation for Parenting (Birth to 5 months)
Babyhood Transitions (5-12 months)
Preparation for the Toddler Years (12-18 months)
Toddler Transitions (18-36 months)
**Growing Kids God's Way* (Core Curriculum - 3-18 yrs)
Parenting from the Tree of Life Series I, II & III
Potty Training 1-2-3

Books:

A Hive of Busy Bees, Effie M. Williams (Character sketches to read to your children)
Creative Family Times, Allen & Connie Hadidian (Practical activities for building character in Your Preschooler and handling children in multiples)
Shepherding Your Child's Heart, Tedd Tripp
Instructing a Child's Heart, Tedd & Margy Tripp
Toilet Training in Less than A Day, Nathan Azrin (No fail toilet training)
The Shaping of a Christian Family, Elizabeth Elliot (Practical general guide for Christian family life)
What Every Child Should Know Along the Way, Gail Martin (Teaching practical life skills in every stage of life)

COMMON SLEEP PROBLEMS

As we use the word “common,” we do so in reference to Preparation for Parenting babies and not babies in general. The common problems for a demand-fed baby are not experienced by babies on a routine. As you discovered, sleep problems for your baby have much less to do with nature than with nurture.

Sleep is a natural function of the body. The primary cue for infant sleep is sleepiness. Sleep cues are influenced (often negatively) by a variety of sleep association props. Some sleep props, such as a special blanket or stuffed animal, are usually harmless, while others, such as the nighttime bottle, pacifier, and thumbsucking, can be addictive. The problem with sleep props is not getting the child to fall asleep initially, but helping him to learn to get back to sleep without the prop.

The Nighttime Bottle

The most common sleep prop for the older infant is the nighttime bottle. Too many children have become conditioned to going to bed with a bottle and depend on it to fall asleep. You can avoid the bottle prop by not getting in the habit of putting him down with one. That does not mean he will never take a bottle in his crib. There are some naptimes when baby, bottle, and crib form a convenient alliance for a busy mom. As long as this behavior does not become habit forming, it will not become addictive.

Rotate the Blankets

So that your child does not become overly attached to one blanket, consider limiting its use to the crib/bed and on some occasions a long car ride. Do not let your pre-toddler drag it everywhere he goes. Although a special blanket provides a sense of familiarity, true security is tied to relationships, not objects.

Sleeping Through the Night

A child should sleep through the night by three months if he is getting enough food in four feedings (last is given before bed). Do not rush in if 3 month old wakes up. Wait at least 10 minutes to see if he goes back to sleep. If not in pain or dirty / wet diaper, put the child back down for sleep. Waking up and staying awake can be a bad habit that can last until 5 years old if you let it. If it has become a habit, pick a night to let the child cry until they go back to sleep on their own (By three months, you should be able to distinguish the different cries of your baby - pain, hungry, dirty / wet diaper, fussy, angry, etc.). Be sure to put a favorite blanket / object / pacifier / etc. in the crib to help.

Pacifier

There are many good reasons for using a pacifier with your newborn. But by six months of age, any need for additional non-nutritive sucking is greatly diminished. Does your child need a pacifier to fall asleep? If so, now is the time to start breaking the habit.

Experience and common sense teach that it is easier to do away with the pacifier at six months than at twelve or eighteen months of age. At six months parents can just take away. Yes, there probably will be some crying, but no emotional change. If your child is older, you can prepare him a few days in advance with some encouraging words and finally a gentle “no more, you are a big boy / big girl.” Another suggestion is to pierce the pacifier with a needle and release the vacuum. The vacuum bubble is what makes the pacifier enjoyable; when that is gone, the pleasure is gone, often resulting in the child weaning himself. OR cut off the tip.

Thumb Sucking

Of the two nonnutritive sucking techniques, thumb sucking is the most difficult to control. We can take away the pacifier but not the child's fingers. As with many adult habits, parents will not be able to break the habit of thumb sucking overnight. It is a gradual process that requires consistency on the part of the parents. The way you break the nighttime habit is to break the daytime habit.

If your child is between six and eighteen months of age, limit his thumb sucking to naps and bedtime only. When you see his thumb in the mouth, gently pull it out, say, "Not now," and redirect the child to appropriate play. If the child rejects your friendly warning and returns his thumb to his mouth, snap his cheek a couple of times with your thumb and middle finger. Verbalize his need for obedience by saying, "Ryan, obey Mama. Take your thumb out of your mouth." If the child persists with his thumb isolate him to his crib until he takes his thumb out of his mouth and all crying has ceased.

Teething and General Sickness

Teething can disrupt nighttime sleep. When a tooth begins to break through the gum, you have the condition commonly referred to as teething. Like jaundice, teething is not a disease, but a condition of growth. Your baby's first teeth will push through between six and eight months of age. By six months, one baby out of three has one tooth; by nine months, the average baby has three teeth. Teething should not interfere with breastfeeding, since the sucking is done by the tongue and palate, not by the gums.

Discomfort, irritability, fussiness, increased salivation, and a slightly raised temperature can accompany the eruption of a tooth. As uncomfortable a child might appear, parents should not regard teething as a catch-all excuse for chronic poor behavior or a drastic change in their baby's routine.

Obviously teething can disrupt nighttime sleep. How can you comfort your baby and at the same time avoid establishing poor sleep habits? First, understand that the process of cutting teeth does not disrupt sleep in all babies (especially PCF babies). There is still discomfort but not enough to override the well-established sleep patterns. Second, understand the temporary nature of the condition. Babies do not cut teeth for weeks. The norm is usually a couple of days. Your local pharmacy has over-the-counter teething gels that serve to numb the gums enough to allow the baby to relax and go to sleep.

If the problem is so serious that it keeps your baby awake, comfort him by rocking, but do not take him in bed with you or feed him. Sleeping with you will not make the child's gums feel better, but it will promote an undesirable sleep prop. Comfort when comfort is needed, but when those teeth finally break through, get back to your regular routine. If your child continues to wake during the night, it is not from need but habit. He must relearn how to fall back to sleep on his own. That will not take long at all.

You can handle illnesses in a similar fashion. Stay as close to your routine as possible and follow your doctor's advice regarding the use of medication. Usually a decrease in appetite will accompany an illness. Do not force your child to eat but maintain adequate liquid intake as prescribed by your pediatrician. Provide comfort when comfort is needed but avoid habit-forming practices that will only need correction in the future. After an illness passes, it may take up to three days before your child accepts the reality of his old routine. So, once your child returns to health, get back to your routine.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WAKE-TIME ACTIVITIES

As new parents, you sometimes need ideas for how your baby can spend his wake-time. There should be things that you do with and things he does on his own. Balance is still our key word. You may want to read some kind of basic information on child development, so you can attempt to correlate your plans for your baby's wake-time with his stage of development.

You are still working on his heart as well as his developmental skills in this part of your baby's routine. Playing alone teaches him independence and unselfishness; that he doesn't need to be in the center of your activity at all times. Playing on his own also introduces the concept of boundaries, which deals with self-control. (This will be explained further in the sections on the Playpen and Baby Proofing).

A. Mom and Baby

Feeding--whether bottle or breast feeding, you spend much of your day holding your baby while feeding him.

Singing--even from birth, babies respond to mom's singing, especially if your baby is on your lap with much eye contact, and if the songs have hand motions as well. Of course singing goes well with rocking, too.

Reading--it's never too soon to read bits of scripture or to look at colorful picture books together (especially cardboard or plastic ones that baby can explore more on his own).

Bath--this is another nice time of the day for you and your baby. You can even sing, or tell him which part of his body you are washing, or just have fun splashing.

Walk--taking time for a stroll outside is great for you and your little one. You can sing or talk while you are walking and the fresh air is good for you both.

Play--initially, there is not much play with a newborn. Flirting with him, smiling, talking, and gently moving his arms and legs are about all he can take at first. As baby gets stronger, you can gently roll him side to side while on his back and as his head gets stronger, help him practice sitting up. Baby will enjoy the difference between you and dad in this kind of play.

B. Baby alone

Books and bright pictures and patterns--a great way to visually stimulate your baby by putting these around his play area.

Mobiles--moving, musical mobiles are another great way to help your baby learn to "track" with his eyes.

Crib Gyms or things that dangle over your baby and rattle when he bats at them help his eye hand coordination as batting is the necessary preparation for reaching out and holding objects.

Swing--this is a way for baby to watch what is going on around him and can help calm fussy newborns. A possible misuse of this piece of equipment though would be to constantly let your baby fall asleep here since he needs to learn to fall asleep on his own.

Infant Seat--this is another way for baby to sit up and take notice of his world. Sometimes toys or books can be hung from them if they have an overhead handle.

Johnny Jump Up--when baby is able to sit (or if mom has one with excellent neck and back support) baby loves stretching his legs and getting the sensation of his body moving.

(Note: Having some of this equipment whether bought new, used or borrowed is nice but is certainly not a necessity.)

In terms of how these mom and baby or baby alone activities fit into the day, balance again is the key word. In addition to the time feeding, changing, and bathing baby, you might have at least one "play time" a day where baby has your full attention for 15 minutes or so. Dad will also spend time with baby. Remember, these playtimes can be added in, but are harder to take away if baby becomes too accustomed to a majority of his waketime with you or dad entertaining him.

Example: You go in and wake your 3-month-old baby for his 8 a.m. feeding. After helping him awaken and possibly greet the rest of the family, you sit down together to begin baby's breakfast around 8:15 a.m. By 8:45 a.m., baby has been fed, changed, flirted with, and now is put on his back under his crib gym. Around 9:00 a.m., you put baby on his tummy to practice getting his head up, to look at the bright pictures around the sides of his crib, and to roll over. At about 9:15, you check to see if baby has rolled over and turn on the mobile. If baby is still going strong at 9:30, mom can leave him in the crib, move him to a swing or infant seat, go for stroll, or give him a bath.

Obviously, this is just a sample of how your baby could spend his morning. But basically, he is on his own from 8:45 to 9:45 or 10:00 a.m., whenever he goes down for his nap. An older baby might be on his own for this time in his playpen, able to move more by himself and hold toys as well.

If the baby is well, and getting enough to eat, and you are home at some time each day to try this, your little one will get used to this part of his routine. You need to stick with it and not jump every time you hear a peep. As he gets accustomed to what you are doing, he will kick his legs in delight as you turn the mobile on.

1. Let Them Play

This topic is so important to a child's development, that it deserves its own section. It's all about children and the lessons learned from play; from those everyday moments, such as when we hear a little voice down the hall engages in a one-way conversation. "Now girls, look at Mommy's face and pay attention. We're going to the store and the two of you need to obey Mommy with a happy heart," says three-year-old Ashley to her favorite dolls. Seldom do we stop and think about the importance of imaginative play. Yet in the life of children, it is a natural thing. In fact, having varied forms of play is one of the strongest indicators of healthy emotional growth and a significant component of a child's orderly development. Play is not simply a time when a child amuses himself. With all the pressure these days to educate young children early (even starting in utero), parents can take heart. One of the most active forms of learning is play.

In *Preparation for the Toddler Years* we introduced our readers to the learning mechanism of curiosity and the role it plays in a toddler's learning ability. There we defined curiosity as a natural stimulus, a child's birthright—a survival mechanism. It is the key that unlocks the treasures of knowledge and opens a world of discovery for young children. Curiosity serves the child as a necessary precursor to the advanced skills of logic and reason.

While curiosity draws a child to an object, a second force holds him there. That force is attention. Attention is what holds a child in the moment of exploration, whether it is ten seconds or ten minutes. Attention is the power of attraction. Attraction is the result of sensory nerves working together, holding a child's interest to an object. It could be the color of a magazine, a shiny new pen, the odd-shaped lamp, or the musical ring of your cell phone. Color, shine, shape, and sound—all are in need of investigation. Curiosity, attention, and attraction all lead to investigation, which brings to the young child the excitement of discovery and learning.

Remember when your toddler was sitting on the rug eagerly engaged in playing with a toy? As a toddler he was not limited by rules and regulations, starting or ending points of formal play. He played with the object as long as he wished, until he became interested in something new. He often manipulated his toy with his hands, pushing and pulling, pounding and banging, even attempting to test and taste the surface with small bites. The developing brain was working, processing, reinforcing, and gaining usable sensations. This is all part of a toddler's learning mechanism. In the process of investigative play, your toddler derived as much enjoyment from the stimulation of his senses and motor capacities as he did from the toy itself.

But as your child approaches three years of age, an even more powerful force comes into being. This force, your child's imagination, will cause you to marvel at its limitless possibilities. This natural endowment is a function of play as much as it is a function of higher learning. Whether this is accomplished through imaginative friends or educational toys, it is part of a child's world.

2. Play and Imagination

Behold the wonders of your child's imagination! Evan rushes to park his bike on the front walk, grabs the coiled rope hanging off the back, and dashes for the front door. "Fire! Hurry! Spray the flames!" he shouts breathlessly, aiming the rope's end at the porch. Then circling back to the garage for assistance, he reaches for a make-believe axe to chop open an invisible door. One slightly amused black Labrador lifting her head for a second, curiously looks on. She's seen similar antics a million times before.

At three years of age, make-believe and other imaginative activities begin to occupy an important place in the child's mental world. Imagination will do what curiosity cannot. It will carry a child beyond the boundaries of time and space. It can take him to places he has never been. He can move mountains

with his imagination and test his own feelings without fear of reprisal. Through the imaginative process, a child gives life to inanimate objects, while assuming a controlling role as chief operator of his own play.

In *On Becoming Toddlerwise* we shared the story of two-year-old R. J. and the Tommy Train he received for his birthday. At this age, R. J. showed only curious interest in the Tommy Train box cars and engine. He touched the tracks, spun the wheels, and even tried to stack the cars. But he did not understand how to play with a train.

At three years of age, the train set came out again and curiosity gave way to R. J.'s developing imagination. Now a more dominant cognitive process began to rule R. J.'s thinking. Now he plays the role of engineer. His mind constructs mountainous terrains out of pillows, wobbly bridges from a shoe box, and special tunnels through the legs of a chair. Train sounds begin to accompany each circle of the track as the train became real in R. J.'s mind. Big changes took place in one year. The same will happen with your child.

There is more! Your child's imagination is facilitated by another significant facet of a child's life, and that is play. Sometimes your child's imagination can interfere with your reality. Perhaps you casually remove the stuffed brown monkey from the kitchen counter only to learn you've inadvertently cut short the show he is performing for an audience of one. Now someone besides the monkey is decidedly unhappy. Other times, and this is the good stuff, your child's imagination enhances your reality. In other words, Mom should take advantage of the child's imagination to achieve some healthy goals. Like when the lumps of steamed broccoli become foot soldiers preparing to march off to war against the formidable flu germ enemy causing his cold. Get clever, make his imagination work for you.

Play, whether a child does it by himself, in a small group, or with Mom at the park, is one of the most underestimated and often misunderstood components of a child's healthy, developing cognitive world. Play creates learning opportunities and experiences that uniquely connect a child to his world, which otherwise could not be obtained. Through play, a child is first introduced to problem solving techniques, development of moral and social skills, improved motor coordination, logic, reasoning, and strategy. Plus, play has educational value and provides therapeutic benefits. Play complements and reinforces gender identification and encourages appropriate risk-taking.

Overall, play is the single most important means by which a child connects with his world and the people around him. Think of play as the hub on a wagon wheel. Moving from the center outward, spokes connect to the outer rim of life and learning. Play generates multiple activities that go into shaping the child, reinforcing values and stimulating learning. Please take note of this in our wagon wheel diagram on the next page. Everything about play accents a child's understanding of his world. From right and wrong to parental expectations, play reveals in a public way how a child thinks, reasons, and applies concepts learned the day before. Through his imaginative play, he mimics actions, traits, and social expectations by becoming another person and in this way he gains the experience of self-confidence necessary for proper socialization. By denying a child opportunity to play, a parent is in grave danger of collapsing the bridge connecting a child's discovery, knowledge, and experience to learning.

3. The Benefits of Play

Play is your child's tutor. It goes far beyond simply encouraging learning activities. Through attraction, it becomes a means by which a child stretches himself beyond his present circumstances. He takes chances. When you think about it, play often contains an element of risk. There is some risk involved when a child ventures out on his first steps without the aid of Mom or Dad. There is risk involved when a child shares a new toy with a visiting friend or for the first time, reaches out to pet the neighbor's puppy. There is risk involved when a child stands on a stage reciting a single line in the

Thanksgiving play. He takes risks whenever the group's activities call for running, jumping, and bumping. There is risk associated with being picked on a team or not picked at all. In this sense, play motivates a child to step beyond the present to a new level of experience.

Play also has important educational value. During playtime a child picks up, manipulates, and studies toys of all types. He learns shapes, colors, sizes, and textures and how parts of object fit the whole of the object. His mobility allows the development of life through the games he plays and the contact he makes with others. In time a child learns to formulate plans, develop strategies, and exercise his assessment skills in problem-solving because of play.

Developing socialization skills is one of the corollary affects of education. Through play, children learn that their personal gratification often depends on the cooperation of other children. Play teaches children about partnership, teamwork, and fair play. It is through play that a child's primitive understanding about "rules" is reinforced, because most games have rules. Interestingly, while the home environment may be more forgiving or patient with the bending of the game rules, it is quickly apparent to your child that his playmates are far less tolerant of a rule being violated. He quickly learns that he must "follow the rules" or be at the mercy of his peer group.

Play is also therapeutic both physically and emotionally. Physical play releases the pent-up energy stored during times of sitting still. That is why recess time at the school yard is so noisy and fun-filled. The children are released to play with others. Physical play is a pressure valve allowing for the release of energy. In the preschool years, play must have some outside activity that has a physical dimension attached. Swinging, chasing after the dog, marching in Dumbo's imaginary parade, hide-and-seek, or any activity that can get their little hearts pumping, growing legs moving, and developing minds stimulated provides therapeutic benefits.

Imaginative, emotional play is freeing to your child. Such play allows him to test his desires, fears, and hopes without the risk and hardships of judgments and boundaries associated with reality. He is able to think outside the boundaries of logic, reason, and reality. He is able to manage and direct ideas that only he understands and he does it in fragmented ways. He can take a big box and a blanket, make it become first Davy Crockett's fort, then a service station for his trucks, followed by a broadcast booth like the one he saw yesterday on television at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade. In any event, the child is in control of something he can control and should control. Children need to be able to control some things. Parents too often err in allowing these "things" to be Mom and Dad instead of the events of imaginative play.

A child's imagination leads to other forms of play. Children mimic. Have you noticed that? In our example, three-year-old Ashley recounted what she knew about going to the store with Mom and let her imagination direct her play toward her dolls. Obviously, she had an impression from her life that she transferred into her make-believe world. Thus both imitation and imagination work hand in hand.

The value of such play is worth noting. It not only stimulates a child's thinking, but also reflects what he is learning and how he is learning it. The next time you overhear your child's one-way conversation, listen carefully to the tone of voice used. For better or for worse, you might hear your own. Another aspect of play is the element of repetition. Much more is taking place in a child's's play than what appears on the surface. Repetition gives the child the chance to consolidate skills needed to solve board games and puzzles, to stack blocks or connect Hot Wheels racing tracks. Even though your child appears to be doing the same thing over and over again, his activities are leading somewhere. For example, a four-year-old may have mastered elementary motor skills necessary for running and dodging a ball. Repetitious play advances him to the next level of skill called 'anticipation', where movements are predicated not as a response to the person throwing the ball, but to the anticipated throw itself. Here again, strategy, thinking, and reasoning skills merge to bring the reward of success. Success and accomplishment reinforce the cycles of learning.

Anticipation is not limited to the realm of physical movement, but extends also to imaginative activity. To have expectations based on the belief of what will happen tomorrow, a child must be able to imagine. Imagining what will happen next, good or bad, is part of the thinking exercise of our humanity. Parents give little consideration to the fact that if a child is in any way deprived of imaginative emotional play, either through discouragement or the lack of freedom at self-play, he will equally be deprived of what it is to know hope. For hope itself is not only a measure of the imagination transcending time and space, but of our very humanity. It all comes back to the importance of play.

Play also contains the element of construction. Man by nature is a builder. The Jewish Old Testament gives an account of a man named Nimrod, called “the builder of cities” (Genesis 10:6–12). In fact, he built eight mighty cities by which he established his kingdom. One component of play common among children worldwide is the construction component. Children are builders and their efforts reflect the knowledge of our day. With their amazing imaginations, they construct buildings, boats, spaceships, mountains, overpasses, and tunnels. They use blocks, sticks, paper, and grass. They erect tall buildings out of discarded oatmeal boxes and bridges out of spare Lincoln Logs. Complete with sound effects, little boys move massive amounts of soil with their powerful diesel trucks, which may be nothing more than a thick piece of tree bark. Little girls also use construction in their play, but tend to make finer and more delicate objects such as doll clothes and paper dolls. They set up beautiful tea parties and arrange their neat little house with a few empty cardboard boxes, a folding chair, and a spare blanket. They love Grandma’s old dresses and play endless hours as beautiful princesses or fancily dressed ladies right out of old Victorian neighborhoods.

It is through the medium of play that a child first develops his sense of fairness and cooperation. It is in play that moral strengths and weaknesses show up. How your child moves the board game pieces, scores his game, follows the rules, and shares with others reflects his developing moral identity. The child that sulks because he didn’t get his own way or bullies, manipulates, or quits a game because he is not winning reveals much about a child’s underdeveloped sense of fairness, sharing, cooperation, and justice. Play not only reveals moral strengths and weakness, but in the right or wrong environments, it can encourage both.

Such moral attitudes, healthy and not-so-healthy, develop early and are continually reinforced by moral lessons taught throughout the day. Lessons in right and wrong and consideration for others drive a child’s social experience. Children do not like bullies and quitters, but they enjoy children who know how to play by the rules and are willing to share. Your child’s moral sense creates either a positive, rewarding, and affirming response from other children or rejection. Most socialized play will always have a moral component. How well prepared is your child?

4. Play Has Limits

Developmental Limits

The technical word among clinicians for developmental limitations is ‘maturation.’ Before certain types of play can be attempted, a child must demonstrate a level of maturity that includes the readiness of the mind and necessary motor skills to participate. If a child lacks basic eye-hand coordination, he is not ready for T-ball any more than he is ready for an international Ping-Pong competition. But there is more to consider. Significant yet often elusive complements of physical readiness are the mental activities associated with play. These include a child’s level of interest, his willingness to take chances, his self-confidence in play, his ability to overcome fearful anticipation of play, and the ability to handle defeat or victory that comes from play.

Also, the personal satisfaction derived from being able to do something well is an important influence on a child’s development of “self.” This was not a concern for your two-year-old, but it will be a concern for your four-year-old. If a child is rushed into any type of physical play that leaves him

continually on the short end of victory because of his lack of readiness skills, he tends to back away from other good avenues of play that can lead him to competency in other areas of his life. When a child begins to shun games that test his skills because of a pattern of failure, he tends to form defensive strategies that carry into other areas of endeavor including school, friendships, and his own sense of self-worth. A child who holds dearly to the belief that “I can’t” because of repeated failures often translates this belief later in life to “I won’t even try because I will fail.” Be careful not to push your child prematurely into organized play activities prior to his readiness.

Emotional Limits

“My four-year-old falls apart if he doesn’t win!” This statement usually signals that a child is playing a game beyond his emotional readiness. Do not push your children into games or types of play for which they are not emotionally ready. Some games are too emotionally challenging for children. Your four-year-old should not be playing the marble-dice board game, ‘Aggravation’ (by Milton-Bradley/Hasbro). The repetitive range of emotions experienced from excitement and anticipation of victory to a sudden loss of all your marbles (literally and figuratively) and imminent defeat are far too many emotional ups and downs for a young child to handle. We are not saying that your child should avoid games that challenge his emotions and test his limits. We are saying it is wise to avoid games that are developmentally beyond his emotional limitations. If your child is routinely falling apart emotionally, the games he is playing are beyond his age-readiness. This often happens when children are playing games with their older siblings that are designed for that sibling’s age. Going to bed with tears and a sense of defeat does not make for sweet dreams for your little darling.

Intellectual Limits

Because of differences in cognitive skill levels and childhood interests, children need to participate in types of play that fit their intellectual needs and abilities and can challenge their thinking without crushing their spirit. Pushing a child into a game before he is intellectually ready does not serve the child well. No matter how insistent your four-year-old might be, or how well he can “wheel and deal” with you, do not entertain the idea that he is ready for a game of “Monopoly” (Parker Brothers, 1935). He is simply not ready for the type of competition, the skill level, or the logic of buying and selling Pennsylvania Avenue property. Nor is he able to comprehend underlying meanings or sustain his own interest through the length of time it takes to finish the game. This will only lead to unnecessary four-year-old frustration tantrums.

Moral Limits

Children from the earliest days of memory face the impact of moral decisions and obligations made on their behalf and by themselves. From the time they were able to first understand language, they were reminded what is good, bad, approved, or naughty. The idea of what they are obligated to do or not do, how to behave or not behave, is fairly imbedded in daily thought and expected conduct. Therefore, any type of play that undermines or is antagonistic to your family’s moral values should be avoided. Any type of play that weakens your child’s developing conscience undermines the fullness of his public character. Any type of play that interferes with basic respect for parents, property, and other people must be discouraged.

When you compromise the moral aspect of play, all sorts of bad things can happen to your child’s mental world, from poor self-esteem to poor play habits. In time, this leads to weakened friendships and shunning from other kids. On and on the downward spiral goes when lines of moral play including fairness, sharing, and following the rules are crossed. The best prevention that parents can provide when it comes to play is stressing to their children that it must be “play by the rules” or “don’t play at all.”

Gender Limits

Every grandma knows that if you put a toy car, ball, stick, doll, blanket, and dishes in a room, little boys immediately gravitate toward the car, ball, and stick while little girls drift to the doll, blanket, and dishes. It really doesn't matter where a child is from, whether it be a complex society like ours or a simple tribal setting in the rain forest, little boys have a trail of masculine adjectives that distinctly separate them from little girls. Social conditioning? There might be some, but not sufficient enough to alter male and female predispositions embedded in nature's endowment of gender. The fact is, male and female brains are wired differently. Yes, little boys love trucks and little girls love dolls.

We bring this up as encouragement and as a warning. When it comes to play, parents should not attempt to gender-neutralize their little boys or girls, but rather appreciate the differences and work with each propensity. A delightful example of this was demonstrated by Dr. George Lazarus, an associate clinical professor of pediatrics at New York City's Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. He recounted a mother sensitive to gender-neutrality who gave her daughter several toy trucks only to find her daughter later tucking them into bed.

Understanding gender difference helps parents make proper evaluations about their child's progress both in play and life. It helps avoid speculative evaluations. For example, when a mother says, "But his sister was talking at his age," she is making a comparison in language development. But research confirms that girls tend to have a verbal advantage over boys early on. They speak sooner and more comprehensively by three years of age than their male counterparts who arrive at the same level of competency around age four-and-a-half years.

Yet, boys have other strengths including aptitudes for math skills and completing calculations in their heads sooner than girls. Even the construction of their building blocks demonstrates gender predispositions, or lack of, toward engineering tendencies. Boys are also wired for action. That might be one reason they are always on the go, while their sisters are content to sit and play with their dolls or be entertained in a single location. This is why play is so very different for each.

Finally, notice how little boys play together compared to how little girls play. Girls are more relational and will work together to accomplish a common goal. Boys however, are far more likely to try and do things "on their own." Of course, any wife understands this truth. Just think through the times you may have offered directions to your husband only to hear, "I know where I'm going," as you're headed again for a wrong turn.

Summary

It is almost startling to realize just how important play is to a child's emotional, moral, and social development. Play is not simply an activity that a child wants to absorb himself in; it is a necessary framework for understanding his world. As we have seen previously, play involves many facets and connects children to life in many ways.

But this too can be taken to an extreme with the old adage, "if a little is good, more must be better." Play is not an isolated experience in a child's life, but only one significant component surrounded by other aspects of learning. Not all education comes in the form of play. A child will learn from playing with a toy, but more importantly, he must develop specific skills that he can only gain at the hands of Mom and Dad. Sitting, focusing, and concentrating skills are not play, but they are necessary aspects for life. Following instructions and being kind, fair, and honest will be used in play, but are not necessarily learned there. The learning process of these skills starts with Mom and Dad's acute awareness that a three-year-old heart is in need of training to think about the feelings of others first.

<http://www.growingfamiliesusa.com/let-children-play>

Temper Tantrums versus Frustration Tantrums

Most three- to seven-year-olds should be beyond the temper tantrum phase. However, if that tactic has been unintentionally strengthened by parents, it may be in full force. You cannot expect that a child will achieve maturity in emotional behavior any sooner than he will achieve maturity in other areas of development. How he controls and expresses his emotions is far more important than the fact that he merely controls or expresses himself. The first is a learned state, the second is the natural state. There are right ways to express feelings and wrong ways. Throwing temper tantrums is the wrong way. The propensity for throwing temper tantrums is a normal phase of development. That is not to say temper tantrums must be. Tantrums are triggered by one thing—disappointment. A temper tantrum, whether thrown by a child or an adult, is a coping mechanism occurring because a child has not learned how to correctly manage disappointment. As future control over this emotion increases, the potential for tantrums decreases. Meanwhile, you still need to deal with it. Here are some suggestions.

1. Take note of when and where your child throws his fits. Is it only in public, just before or after a meal, or when he is tired and in need of a nap? If a pattern exists, knowing it will help you prevent tantrums before they happen.
2. As difficult as it may be, try not to talk a child out of his tantrum. Without realizing it, you are encouraging the behavior by rewarding it with attention and gentle words. To work effectively, a tantrum needs a sympathetic audience. Talking provides that audience. Speaking beseechingly to a child in a tantrum is like granting a terrorist's demands.
3. Use isolation against temper tantrums. Deposit the child in his room or on the couch until he settles down. That may take ten minutes or longer. What about the child who will destroy his room during one of his fits? To frankly state our opinion, any child between the ages of three and seven who trashes his room during a time of correction is outwardly displaying total contempt for his parents' right to lead and rule his little life. This can be corrected, but only in time.
4. One technique that some have found helpful in such cases is to physically hold the child. Sit down and hold that child until you feel the struggling arms and flailing legs surrender to your will. Don't let go. When he surrenders, the tantrum is over. And you will see a more peaceful child.
5. Do not add the question "Okay?" to the end of your instructions. "Johnny, we're going to leave the store now, okay?" This is begging for trouble. What if it is not okay with Johnny? Try it this way: "Johnny, we're going to be leaving the store soon. I want to hear a 'Yes, Mommy.'" A child will not say "Yes, Mommy," and then throw a tantrum.
6. Teach delayed gratification. This must become a reality in your child's life. He simply cannot have everything he wants when he wants it. Immediate gratification training only heightens a child's anxiety when the pattern is not maintained.

Frustration Tantrums.

Frustration tantrums are not the same as temper tantrums. A frustration tantrum happens when a child cannot make his body accomplish the task his mind can clearly understand. For example, when Martha tried to place her dolls in a circle, one kept toppling over. She knew in her mind what she wanted to do but could not physically make it happen. Frustration is the basis of these tantrums, not rebellion.

You will naturally desire to help your child when he gets frustrated. You see him in distress and rush to intervene. However, do not be too quick to jump in. You may be encouraging a short temper and a quickness to give up.

Make yourself available but first insist that the child ask for your help. A simple statement such as, "Mom will help you if you want, but you must ask me," puts the burden of cooperative problem solving on the child. This is a virtue to develop in him, because he will need to know how to work with others to solve problems later in life. If you sense a growing frustration and there is no hope of resolving it, then consider playtime over for now.

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THE EXTREMES OF PARENTING: AUTHORITARIAN AND PERMISSIVE

We stated at the beginning of this narrative that the primary pursuit of parenting is to raise a morally responsible and biblically responsive child. With that goal in mind, we ask: What prevents parents from going to some rigid extreme to bring about their moral agenda? What might protect children from physical or emotional abuse arising from oppressive parenting? After all, history records many evil things done in the name of religion for the cause of raising "Godfearing" children. What might protect children from the deficient parenting that is the predictable outcome of moral relativism and the fruit of permissive ideology? What will stop the type of child abuse that leads to drugs, alcohol, and suicide?

Our answer is straightforward. Only biblical ethics provides safeguards to prevent parents from drifting to extremes of abuse, because only a biblical approach calls both parent and child to accountability. The moral rules for the parents are the same for the child. There is no double standard, which is not the case for the extremes of authoritarian and permissive parenting.

When parents suspend the moral rules for themselves but enforce them for the child, you have authoritarian parenting. "Do as I say, not as I do" is the authoritarian rule. Authoritarian parents may tell their children not to lie, but at the fairground, they tell them: "Say you are eleven, so you can get in free." In contrast, when parents suspend the rules for the child, or make them so broad that they appear nonexistent, you are left with permissive parenting. Tolerance to wrong behavior prevails, since there are either low or no moral expectations placed on the child only the pursuit of the child's happiness—not his holiness.

One worthy note before we explore these two parenting extremes: Biblical parenting is not a combination of the two methods. Actually, the two are the exaggerated extremes of biblical precepts.

Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parenting was the norm for the first sixty years of this century and was most closely associated with supposed Judeo/ Christian ethics. Because it was predominantly concerned with restraining evil, authoritarianism paid little attention to elevating good. That means there was a greater emphasis placed on what children should not do than on what they should do. Restraint parenting resulted in the attitude that the ends justify the means, or one can do anything to bring about conformity to societal rules. During the reign of authoritarianism, social engineering was the task of parents, neighbors, churches, and teachers, but not of the State. Although children typically conformed and did virtuous acts, they did so out of the fear of reproof and not because of the love of goodness. The child heard "you will do it or else." The "or else" became the motivation for right behavior, not a resident principle of the heart.

Authoritarian parenting manipulates the child, not his environment. Parents play off of dependent emotions such as love, guilt, and fear. For example: "Susie, if you keep doing that, Mommy won't love you," or "Be good in the store today or Dad will call the orphanage to have them come and get you." Although the weapons of fear and conditional

love are devastating, authoritarian parenting is still not as personally or socially destructive as permissive parenting.

Permissive Parenting

Since the late 1960s, permissive theories have dominated the American culture. Permissive parenting is not concerned with suppressing evil or elevating good. At the core of this theory is the concern over creating the right environment for the child, and not behavioral results.

Parenting arouses many different emotions. The emotions of love, joy, peace, contentment, and confidence are easily matched by the emotions of frustration, disappointment, and discouragement, (and on some days, despair). Parenting to achieve all the right emotions is not the genesis of child training. Yet such a belief is the common denominator of permissive parents. For them, childrearing is reduced to avoidance of all the negative emotions and pursuit of all the positive ones. Thus right and wrong training is measured by how parents think their child feels rather than by the end product—their child's behavior. Feelings belonging to both parent and child become the basis of nurturing and their ethics. If the child feels happy, the parent is satisfied. If the child feels sad, then the parent works to create an environment that will eliminate his sadness.

Permissive parents are rated according to their ability to avoid conflict and tolerate wrong behavior. Our society approves of tolerance but ignores the end product, an outofcontrol child. Patience and tolerance are not the same thing. We are to be patient with our children, not tolerant of their corrupt behavior.

Permissiveness is a great part of our social problem today. Its' legacy is evil in the land. Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 8:11, "Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Parents have made tolerance of wrong behavior a virtue and have elevated it above what the Bible calls right and wrong. Today it is acceptable to tolerate the wrong of a child's behavior but not acceptable to speak out against it. The danger of such thinking is that it categorically removes the concept of evil from society. If all is tolerable, nothing can be evil. To say to parents that it is good to tolerate their child's sinful deeds is to plant at the most fundamental level of our society, the family, seeds of our own destruction.

This partially explains why permissive theorists are not concerned with comprehensive moral training. As most permissive theories go, children are born morally good or, at worst, morally neutral. There is no reason to train a child in virtue and righteous living if by nature from birth they have only the capacity for disobedience and not the desire.

There are serious problems with the theory of moral goodness. The most obvious one is the inability to explain why naturally good children do morally bad deeds. Permissive theorists get around that dilemma by first blaming parents for corrupting the child's good nature. They call it defective parenting. The fact is, parents are not responsible for corrupting a child's nature. Children are born with a natural predisposition for waywardness selfishness, and selfcentered propensities.

A second problem is that they reclassify the child's behavior from the ethical side of right and wrong to the psychological side of healthy and sick. By doing that, a behavior becomes whatever one defines it to be.

To keep a child psychologically healthy, the permissive parent manipulates the

environment. If that does not work, he tricks the child into appropriate behavior. Out of the liberated 1960s came reverse psychology, a deceptive practice that appealed to the child's lust of the flesh or his craving for selfdetermination. For example, if Stevie's mother is attempting to get him to put his shoes on, she will try her manipulative persuasion by insisting he not try to do so. "Don't put your shoes on. No, no, don't you even try." Because she tries to maintain a conflictfree environment, manipulative negotiations must be used to bring about compliance. There is a much better way to parent than tricking a child into right actions.

We believe that both permissive and authoritarian parenting styles are wrong and are detrimental to the welfare of a child. That is why we will endeavor to guide parents according to the basic rules of biblical ethics. However, the inability to produce a morally responsible child is not exclusively the result of authoritarian or permissive parenting. Often the fault lies with something more basic—a failure to instruct in moral principle.

LEGALISM AND PARENTING

One of the greatest attacks on the sufficiency of Scripture in the area of parent discipleship is legalism. Legalism creates prohibitions by elevating a method over biblical principle. Legalism is a word often hurled at situations by those who struggle with authority or higher standards. Whenever someone wants to lower the standard, he is the first to call those who keep the standard legalists. However, higher standards do not form the basis for legalism.

What is legalism, and what are the characteristics of a legalist? The legalist sees all decisions in life as either black (immoral) or white (moral). He or she acknowledges no grey areas and often demands that the consciences of every believer be identical.

We have all heard the exhortation "Let's keep things in context." The most notable aspect of a legalist is this: he rejects context. Responding to the context of a situation does not mean we must suspend biblical law or principle, but that we apply them in the most appropriate way. Considering context guards against legalism. Here we are not talking about situational ethics. The Situationalist does not believe in moral absolutes. Contextual ethics manages moral absolutes given the uniqueness of each situation.

A legalistic approach to parenting is very dangerous, leaving in its wake a frustrated child—one that fears failure rather than loves virtue. As we progress in this curriculum, we will introduce the importance of firsttime obedience. A child is to obey parental instruction the firsttime it is given. It is important however, to consider the context of each situation.

The following example illustrates this point. When Ryan's father said, "Stay in bed and leave the light off," he was expecting total compliance. When his little brother Nathan fell out of bed in the middle of the night, Ryan got up and turned on a light on to help him. The legalist would see that as a clear violation of the father's instruction. But his behavior was not in violation of his father's instructions, because in this vignette, and thousands like it, context qualifies original intent. It was never the father's original intent to keep Ryan in bed under all circumstances. It is context that allows a child to do the right thing if trained to the principle and not the rule the principle represents. Our fear is the number of children who would have laid in bed fearing to get up to help because they were trained to the rule not the principle the rule represents. Failing to teach principle deprives the child of moral discretion.

The legalist would say, "I don't think it's right for women to wear slacks" because he holds to the black and white of his own rule. He makes his wife wear a dress as she feeds the livestock. He is not a legalist because he believes women should not wear slacks. That is a personal preference. He is a legalist because he rejects context. Black and white are the only options he will consider even in nonmoral areas. For him, an action is either right all the time or it is wrong all the time. In this example, he sees it as wrong even in the context of working in a barn. If he feels it is wrong for his wife to wear slacks, he probably assumes it is wrong for all women in all situations.

The validity of his assessment depends on whether God placed that judgment in the "black" zone. Does God say by law or principle that wearing pants is morally wrong? Obviously not. Even men in biblical times didn't wear pants! When there is no direct or indirect prohibition in Scripture, you have a "grey area." If Scripture does not state a higher law, then private interpretation cannot establish it. And silence does not automatically equal to prohibition. A woman wearing pants while doing barn work does not detract from biblical principle that governs womanly conduct nor does it detract from the original intent of her creation.

To bind the believer based on the grey areas of life contradicts the Apostle Paul's teaching to accept that "one man esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind" (Romans 14:5). Paul went on to say that the law of God speaks to neither position; therefore, the individual believer is free to follow his own conscience on the matter.



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Parenting Your Child's Emotions

“My two and-a-half year old son doesn’t like it when I correct his four-year-old brother. He becomes sad whenever his brother is being taken away for correction because he knows he’s losing his playmate,” a mother reported. “I think it would be better not to correct my four-year-old in order to spare my two year old feelings of sadness.”

Every child will experience both pleasant and unpleasant emotions. Hopefully, your child will know more of the first than the second. The experience of positive emotions, like joy, happiness, affection, esteem and the sense of discovery leads to feelings of security and confidence. But attempting to orchestrate positive emotions by avoiding circumstances that might lead to negative emotions is both unwise and unhealthy.

Parents error whenever they focus on the single category of emotion and not the “*whole child*”. The “*whole child*” concept is derived from a single question asked of Jesus in Mark 12:28. “*What is the greatest commandment of them all?*” Jesus instructed that we are to “*Love God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength*”. This response not only provides an answer to the immediate question, but also an insight into the four basic human capacities. To “*Love God with all of your heart,*” speaks to a child’s moral capacity. The soul represents his emotional capacity. The mind speaks to a child’s intellectual capacity and “*loving God with all of your strength*” represents his physical capacity. Whenever you parent the four capacities, you are parenting the “*whole child*”. Over-emphasizing any one of these at the expense of the others creates an unhealthy balance. In our opening example, the mom was willing to put aside needed correction for her four-year-old to secure a temporary moment of happiness for her two-year old. This is not a good exchange.

If happiness is the highest value to offer children, then other “*good*” values such as honesty, compassion, self-control, self-entertainment, obedience, submission, and patience will gradually be nudged out of your child’s life because they are not always compatible with a child’s happiness. Parenting for “*happiness*” sake is a poor substitute for parenting the whole child — his heart, his mind, his body, and his emotions.

Another childhood emotion parents will routinely deal with is disappointment. When it happens in your home do not be too quick to try and fix it. “*Oh, Honey, are you disappointed? Will giving you some ice cream make you feel better?*” Masking disappointment does not fix disappointment. In contrast when you teach your son or daughter how to properly handle disappointment, you will be giving your child a gift that will follow him throughout his entire life. If your child is discouraged, don’t lower the standard, but give him the skills to improve. If a task is proving to be too overwhelming, then remove the challenge for three to six months until your toddler has the skill to take it on.

Let’s talk about disappointment from the parent’s side of the issue. What happens when we transfer our adult-size emotions to our pint-size children? For example, as a mom, you may be disappointed to learn the Children’s Museum is closed and therefore the outing you were looking forward to was cancelled. Before rushing in to console your toddler, make sure there is a real need. Please be careful not to project your feelings of disappointment onto your child who is not experiencing them and probably doesn’t even know what the Children’s Museum is about.

The same is true when a child gets hurt. When he takes a little of the time, *"I am okay,"* and his emotions remain calm and under control. Other parents project their emotions by pushing the panic button and reacting as if every little tumble or scrape was a medical emergency, *"Oh Baby, are you okay?!"* To which the child learns, *"I must be really hurt, look how alarmed Mom sounds."*

If parents become characterized by emotionally rushing in to rescue their child in a way that is totally disproportionate to what actually happened, the child learns to respond to the parent's emotions and not the actual circumstance. He learns to exchange self-evaluation and self-control for out-of-control screams and excessive crying. The child is being trained to negative expectations, and that will become a way of life for him. on the lawn, some parents respond with a cautious calmness, *"You're okay, you can get up."* And the child learns ninety percent of time, that in fact, he is okay.

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Parenting with Gary & Anne Marie:
Toddler Challenges at Mealtime

Mealtime provides a number of challenges and opportunities to teach and learn. This particular category has a number of subdivisions to follow. We begin with appetite versus hunger.

Appetite Versus Hunger

“My two-year-old seems hungry all the time, and then when I want him to eat a meal with the family, he's not hungry.” Parents in North America have an unjustified phobia that their children are not getting enough food to eat. As a result, mothers (more than fathers), tend to overfeed their children starting when they're babies. In a discussion with a group of moms of one- and two-year-olds, it became evident that confusion exists over the difference between appetite and hunger.

Hunger is a biological response triggered by a message sent to the brain when there is a drop in blood sugar. This drop is the body's signal that it needs more fuel. Appetite, in contrast, is not triggered by blood sugar, but by two senses-sight and smell. Appetite has nothing to do with hunger. We eat because something looks or sounds good to us. For example, as I am typing this paragraph, my mind is thinking about that piece of pizza left over from last night's dinner. My memory tells me that it is something that I would like even though I just had breakfast two hours ago.

Toddlers are the same as adults. Many of their food wants are simply wants, not needs. We are not advising that parents withhold food from a child when hunger is at stake, but rather that they learn how to monitor real need. Keep your routine and have special snack times, but do not fall prey to giving your child food just because he asks for it. If you err in this, you may end up with the next problem.

Picky Eater

Like all people, your toddler will show preferences in taste. But don't be too quick to say, “Oh, he doesn't like it,” then offer something else. While you will occasionally give him what he likes, you must also consider what meets the needs and desires of the entire family. When it is age-appropriate, offer your child the same foods your family normally eats.

Many finicky eaters are created, not born. As a parent, evaluate your own relationship to food. Are you overly concerned with nutritional intake? Are you yourself a picky eater? Perhaps you are a junk food connoisseur. As hard as it may be, try not to pass on any extreme preoccupation with food. Family mealtime and the kitchen table should not become a war zone; try to make meals a pleasant experience for everyone.

Here are a few points to consider:

* As mentioned above, Americans tend to overfeed their children. Here are some guidelines for serving sizes: one teaspoon per year of age per food. For example, if your toddler is two-years-old, then he should be served two teaspoons of peas, two teaspoons of rice, two teaspoons of applesauce, and so on. Schedule regular mealtimes, and stick to them as much as possible. This will help maintain your child's hunger mechanism.

* Avoid giving your child too much to drink. An appropriate amount for a drink is eight ounces. Sippy cups are often ten to twelve ounces. Ten ounces of water given late in the afternoon will cause the stomach to expand to the point that the child is not sufficiently hungry at dinner to cooperatively eat foods that are not his favorites.

* A child that eats too little and just picks at meals is a child who is probably snacking too much during the day. He is never hungry enough to eat full meals. Set the timer at dinner; when it goes off, the meal is over. If your toddler hasn't finished his meal, a reasonable consequence is the loss of dessert and or the snack for tomorrow.

Snacks

Snacks are fun afternoon breaks, but like anything else, balance is needed. A snack is not a second meal or a substitute for the next meal. How will you know if you're offering too many snacks? Obviously your toddler's eating habits will be affected. He will eat poorly at the next meal or become a picky eater. If you see either happening, cut back on the amount of snacks offered, or cut them out altogether. Here are a few helpful hints about snacking:

- * You don't have to offer a snack every day.
- * Use moderation. Don't let snacks detract from a hearty appetite.
- * Don't use food to avoid conflict. It's generally not wise to attempt to influence a child's behavior by offering a snack.
- * Do not use food to pacify sad emotions.
- * The place for snacking should be consistent-such as in an infant seat or high chair. Avoid allowing your child to crawl or walk around the house or store with a juice drink or snack in his or her hand.
- * As a general rule, offer snacks in the afternoon, such as right after your child wakes up from a nap.

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Helping Children Manage and Overcome Fear

Certain childhood fears need to be managed, while other fears can be overcome with time and education. Here are some facts to consider while working through your child's fears

* Fear itself is not a cure for fear-Forcing a fearful preschooler to “*face his fears*” is not the best way to help him overcome them, nor is ridiculing him for being afraid or commanding him to ignore his fears. This approach goes against the very thing the child needs-the full confidence that his burden of fear is being shared with Mom and Dad or big brother or sister. Ridiculing and name-calling are antagonistic forces to companionship and trusting relationships.

* Education-Methods that promote self-confidence are the best ways to help children overcome their fears, and this can be done in part through education. Children are less likely to be fearful if they have some understanding of the object of fear. When the child learns that the puppy's actions are playful not threatening, that the snake is behind the glass and cannot get out, or that thunder has an explanation, he will better be able to manage potential fear with the assurance brought by such knowledge. Educating a child about his natural fears is one of the best ways to reduce fear.

* Getting acquainted-Giving your preschooler opportunity to get acquainted with the fearful object or situation is another form of education. This may take time since the child's confidence in the knowledge of what is safe must grow stronger than the fearful experience of the past. Gradually introducing your child to the object of dread through role-playing, actual encounters with the object, or parental example helps alleviate his fears. When your child sees that Mom is not afraid to play with the puppy, he will join in the fun and in time overcome his fear. In contrast, if Mom overreacts to the excited puppy by hopping on a chair, the child will not be far behind her.

* Removing fearful stimuli-Remove all inappropriate fearful stimuli from your child's life. The Wizard of Oz is not a movie for preschool-age children to watch. Even the movie Dumbo can create apprehension. Poor little Dumbo, separated from his mom and forced to work the circus scene as an oddity, is way beyond the context of your preschooler's sense of security. Take note of what your child is watching on television, including cartoons. Given the state of the world, even the nightly news can be fear-provoking to children (and adults).

* Substitution, not just suppression-Universal in application, this particular suggestion should not be limited to the single category of fear, but applied to any circumstance that employs moral and virtuous opposites. For example, the Ezzos were once approached by a father asking how to deal with his son's obsessive jealousy. That question leads to a broader one: How do you deal not only with jealousy, but also all attitudes of the heart and emotions, including fear? Children of all ages are better served by substitution than by suppression. The father mentioned above was frustrated by his efforts to suppress his son's jealousy. No matter how hard he tried to keep the lid on it, jealousy continued to leak out.

The problem here (and for many parents) is not simply the presence of a vice or a weakness, but the absence of a virtue and strength. Suppression of wrong behavior is often achieved by encouraging the opposite virtue. If you hope to suppress jealousy, give equal time to elevating the opposite virtue, which in this case is contentment. If you have a child struggling with envy, teach charity. For anger, teach self-control. For revenge, teach forgiveness.

Substitution make all the difference in the world. This same principle applies to childhood fears. Often the problem is not the presence of fear but rather the absence of trust or courage. Parents, by the language they use, tend to focus primarily on fear (the negative) and not on courage (the positive). Instead of saying "*Don't be afraid*," parents should consider saying instead "*Be brave*" or "*Be courageous*." This type of encouragement is not meant to satisfy a moment of fear, but to establish a pattern of belief for a lifetime.

* Prevention-Most of the suggestions above to help overcome fears can also be employed to prevent many fears. Giving a child a heads-up about the neighbor's dog or how loud the fireworks will sound makes good sense. When dealing with young children, some form of pre-activity warning is better than the shock of discovery.

Considering the fact that, in essence, children's fears are not greatly different from those of adults, parents should demonstrate great patience toward a fearful child. Do not put a premium on insisting that a child not be afraid, but assure him that you will walk with him through fearful situations. After all, the last thing you want to create is a condition in which your child fears telling you about his fears.

Article by Gary Ezzo / Anne Marie Ezzo

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SLEEPING PATTERNS IN YOUR BABY'S FIRST TWO YEARS

Unlike feeding patterns, babies sleep patterns have more variation because of individual differences. Beware though, of sources basing sleep information from a demand feeding perspective, because, as we have already explained, that philosophy and practice prevents babies from going alternately from RSP to ASP sleep.

Remember, stable sleep patterns are based on stable hunger patterns. When there are a number of changes in your baby's eating patterns, there will be a corresponding change in his sleep patterns.

A. Newborn

Sixteen to Twenty hours per day of sleep. There will be a period of sleep between each feeding. So, under PCF, initially this sleep will come in 6-8 naps (depending upon the number of daily feedings).

Though you want to make sure your baby stays awake for his feeding, if he conks out right afterward, go ahead and put him to bed. He may very well sleep until the next feeding-- you may even have to wake him for the feeding. If he starts waking too soon between feedings, try to keep him up longer after each feeding.

B. 2 Months

Your baby has dropped the nighttime feeding, so instead of 2 naps at night; he is now sleeping continuously 6-8 hours, and is sleeping during the day between his other feedings. May have a wakeful period sometime during his day.

C. 3 Months

Your baby has now dropped the "10 p.m." feeding and is eating four times a day, and sleeping 10-12 hours at night. So, he has 3 daytime naps between 1-3 hours long, and one long stretch of nighttime sleep. (This pattern may occur earlier, depending when your baby sleeps through.) Usually stays awake from 1 to 1 1/2 hours at a time.

D. Six to Thirteen Months

Your baby drops his late afternoon/early evening nap, Months leaving two naps; one in the morning and one in the afternoon, usually about 2 hours each.

E. Over Fourteen

Your baby drops another daytime nap (parents usually prefer to drop the morning one). He now sleeps 10-12 hours per night and 2-4 hours in one afternoon nap.

The Nature of Toddler Conflict

Let's face it. There is no end to a toddler's creative expression, from munching on crayons to striking a Superman pose while standing on the grocery cart seat when your head is turned toward the vegetable bin. A toddler's day covers a gamut of challenges, including a meltdown because his applesauce is touching his scrambled egg, to a small tantrum because you casually mentioned the word "nap".

It is a daily fact: The nature of young children usually runs contrary to Mom and Dad's wishes and often a toddler's impulsive outbreaks make no sense at all. But, this is what you're working with. You say, "Sit still", and their body says, "wiggle". You say, "Come here" and little legs carry them any place but here.

As a parent, have you ever experienced something like this? One moment all is going well between you and your toddler and then you try to put a jacket on him and suddenly your efforts are met with a stern "No! Me do it!" Or, you instruct your two-year-old not to jump on the couch and he does it anyway with an impish grin that communicates, "I am the master of my universe!" Unlike conflict in the adult world, conflict with a toddler is driven by the self-pleasing impulses: "Because I want to" or "Because I don't want to". Toddler conflict flows from deep within his nature — a nature that has "me, myself, and I" as the principle force of life. The frustrating challenge that most parents will face is not knowing when this impulse of "I will", or "I will not" might emerge during the day driven by "Me, myself, and I".

"Me, myself, and I" that is how a young toddler is wired. But over time this view of self must give way to an expanded view of family, community, and the world of cooperating with others. It is during the toddler transition that a world of 'otherness' understanding begins to invade his life and collides with the world of 'self'. That sets the stage for conflict.

This is one reason we believe the period between eighteen and thirty-six months is the greatest period of conflict in the life of every human being. So much of what a toddler is learning runs contrary to his nature. Think about all that is directed his way. He is now told to share, talk nice, get in line, stay seated, be good, stop moving, be kind, and for goodness sake, leave the poor cat alone. While he may learn a new rule, he is not old enough to appreciate the benefits of the rule, or why Mom and Dad get upset when he breaks the rule. Not only is he learning new rules at home, but everywhere else his little feet land. And to add more confusion, he is also observing how other children follow the rules or don't!

Conflict does play a shaping role in the process of child training. Used here, the term conflict does not denote bad, wrong, disagreeable or poor performance. Rather, it descriptively denotes new awakenings, as your child begins to shed his old infantile view that it is 'all about me' and begins moving into a world that is all about 'we'.

What might the next eighteen months look like in your home? Well, it will be filled with peaks and valleys. For two weeks you battle over an unwelcome behavior, and then suddenly, victory! Everything is calm for a week and you begin to think, "This isn't so bad". But before you call for the city parade, beware that your next challenge is at your doorstep. Up and down, peaks and valleys. Welcome to the roller-coaster ride of the toddler years.

It is not our intent to communicate a negative message about the toddler phase, because there are plenty of moments of joy. But we do not want parents to be surprised by the amount of conflict common during this time, especially if you set and enforce behavioral goals and expectations for yourself and your child. As a word of warning, if you ever hear a parent claim they have no conflict with their toddler, we wonder what type of beliefs they hold about the preciousness of others.

<http://www.growingfamiliesusa.com/general-parenting-themes>

My Toddler Is Biting Other Children

"I just received another report from his nursery teacher. My Jessie did it again. He bit another child. What's the problem?" If you worked with children you know this is more common of a problem than not. Child biting is troublesome for six people — two children, (the victim and the biter) and two sets of parents. Both have reasons to be concerned. It is easy to become angered when your child is the victim of a biter and it is just as easy to feel shame over your child's negative, aggressive behavior if he is the perpetrator. Some clinicians suggest biting is normal. But that is like saying tooth decay is normal. It's "*normal*" only because prevention did not take place.

Observation points us to certain constant negative environmental stimulants associated with biters. A noisy environment, inadequate sleep, lack of structure and routine, lack of boundaries in general, and over-socialization are but a few. While all of these contribute to aggression in children to some extent, the last is most significant. Biters seem to be part of a group that has been prematurely placed in social settings that overwhelm their senses. Clearly, they are over-socialized by being placed in too many group activities. Some toddlers simply cannot handle the stress of "*too many children around*." Group settings include church nurseries, day-care facilities, and large birthday parties, which may simply overwhelm these children. Biting then becomes a coping skill whenever the child senses encroachment or when his own need is not met.

The only good news about biting is that it is temporary (although it will never be over soon enough for the victims). A child's biting might diminish, but if not dealt with properly and early, the underlying aggression will simply change forms as the child grows. While your immediate solution will be isolation (time-out chairs are not effective), you still need to deal with the underlying problem. When a child bites, use your voice and facial expressions to show that biting is unacceptable. Speak firmly, and have him make eye contact with you while you express your dissatisfaction. The child, of course, needs to be isolated from potential victims, but the real solution is in changing his environment. His world must be reduced socially.

At the first sign of biting, try to limit outside activities involving groups of children. This may temporarily include other toddler birthday parties, the church nursery, and any playgroup activities. When allowing your child to participate in group activities, you can volunteer to sit in on the activity and observe your child. This will allow you to see what causes him to bite, and you can intervene when you realize that he is going to do so. Taking care of the problem in the early toddler phase can eliminate it altogether in the preschool phase, just around the corner.

Article by Gary Ezzo / Anne Marie Ezzo

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Please
Alicia Aspinwall

Webster's defines our manners as our "morals show in conduct." Good people stick to good manners, as this story from an early 20th Century writer reminds us.

There was once a little word named "please," that lived in a small boy's mouth. Pleases live in everybody's month, though people often forget they are there.

Now, all Pleases, to be kept strong and happy, should be taken out of the mouth very often, so they can get air. They are like little fish in a bowl, you know, that come popping up to the top of the water to breathe.

The Please I am going to tell you about lived in the mouth of a boy named Dick; but only once in a long while did it have a chance to get out. For Dick, I am sorry to say, was a rude little boy; he hardly ever remembered to say "Please."

"Give me some bread! I want some water! Give me that book!" - that is the way he would ask for things.

His father and mother felt very bad about this. And, for the poor Please itself, it would sit up on the roof of the boy's mouth day after day, hoping for a chance to get out. It was growing weaker and weaker every day.

This boy Dick had a brother, John. Now, John was older than Dick - he was almost ten; and he was just as polite as Dick was rude. So his Please had plenty of fresh air, and was strong and happy.

One day at breakfast, Dick's Please felt that he must have some fresh air, even if he had run away. So out he ran - out of Dick's mouth - and took a long breath. Then he crept across the table and jumped into John's mouth!

The Please-who-lived-0there was very angry.

"Get out!" he cried. "You don't belong here! This is *my* mouth!"

"I know it," replied Dick's Please. "I live over there in that brother's mouth. But alas! I am not happy there. I am never used. I never get a breath of fresh air! I thought you might be willing to let me stay here for a day or so - until I felt stronger."

"Why, certainly," said the other Please, kindly. "I understand. Stay, of course; and when my master used me, we will both go out together. He is kind, and I am sure he would not mind saying 'Please' twice. Stay, as long as you like."

That noon, at dinner, Jon wanted some butter; and this is what he said:

"Father, will you pass me the butter, please - please?"

"Certainly," said the father. "But why be so *very* polite?"

John did not answer. He was turning to his mother, and said, "Mother, will you give me a muffin, please - please?"

His mother laughed.

"You shall have the muffin, dear; but why do you say 'please' twice?"

"I don't know," answered John. "The words seem just to jump out, somehow. Katie, please - please, some water?"

This time, John was almost frightened.

"Well, well," said his father, "there is no harm done. One can't be too 'pleasing' in this world."

All this time little Dick had been calling, "Give me an egg! I want some milk. Give me a spoon!" in the rude way he had. But now he stopped and listened to his brother. He thought it would be fun to try to talk like John; so he began,

"Mother, will you give me a muffin, m-m-m-?"

He was trying to say "please"; but how could he? He never guessed that his own little Please was sitting in John's mouth. So he tried again, and asked for butter.

"Mother, will you pass me the butter, m-m-m-?"

That was all he could say.

So it went on all day, and everyone wondered what was the matter with those two boys. When night came, they were both so tired, and Dick was so cross, that their mother sent them to bed very early.

But the next morning, no sooner had they sat down to breakfast than Dick's Please ran home again. He had had so much fresh air the day before that now he was feeling quite strong and happy. And the very next moment, he and another airing; for Dick said,

"Father, will you cut my orange, please?" Why! The word slipped out as easily as could be! It sounded just as well as when John said it - John was saying only *one* "please" this morning, And from that time on, little Dick was just as polite as his brother.