

# CARING FOR KIDS



Matthew Paterson Elementary School



## 5 Rules for Disciplining Kids

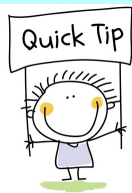
The Latin origin of the word discipline meant “teaching or learning”. How we discipline our children should be about *teaching* them how to behave. Parents who can manage their own emotions and are tuned into their kids will be more successful at teaching them how to behave. Here are five tips for getting the most out of your teaching from Dr. Daniel Siegel’s book *No-Drama Discipline*.

1. **Be calm.** Children rarely remember what is said to them when they are being screamed at. Instead they may be startled and scared. Instead, take some deep breaths, relax and then address the misbehavior.
2. **Think about the outcome.** When you stop and think about your goal for the interaction you are having with your child—for example, *I want him to take responsibility for his behavior*, you are more likely to achieve that with more conscious and effective steps to reach your goal.
3. **Connect on an emotional level.** If your child is very upset, get down to their level, reflect what they are feeling, *“you seem really sad about this...”* rather than arguing with them. Once the child is calm, you can work together toward a solution to the problem.
4. **Don’t physically punish.** By now most parents know that hitting children is ineffective and can result

in children becoming aggressive as well. Corporal punishment does not make children behave. Nor does being forced to make an empty apology. Instead talk and listen to the child and help them to understand the consequences of their actions. Help your child to reflect on how others are affected by his or her misbehavior. This can help teach empathy and compassion, and lead to greater self-control.

5. **Lead by example... and let them be.** Rather than try to be your child’s friend and smooth every bump in the road for her; or conversely, being too strict and distant toward your child; behave like the person you want them to be. Demonstrate kindness and honesty, patience and generosity. Provide safety and structure and then allow your children to explore within those limits. If you don’t impose unnecessary restrictions based on your desires, your children will imitate your positive traits and feel the freedom to become the people they are meant to be.





## Catch Them Doing Good!

**Try to notice and comment when your youngster acts responsibly.**  
**"Thanks for putting your plate in the dishwasher without being asked."**

## Responsibility-How Much?

Jackson, a first-grader, puts his laundry in the hamper and brushes his teeth without being asked. Lily, a fourth-grader, entertains her little sister at the store and helps her mother put away groceries. How do you know which responsibilities your youngster might be ready for? Consider these areas:

### My needs

Your children's first responsibilities probably involved taking care of their own needs (eating, dressing). As they get older, they can do more for themselves. For example, they might pick out their clothes and make their snack. These tasks will be easier if they keep their closet and drawers organized and you store snacks where they can reach them.

### My Behavior

Teach your youngster to take responsibility for her actions. Say she blames a friend when she is caught talking in class ("She talked to me first!") Point out that she is responsible for her own behavior. Then ask how she might react next time (look away from her friend, talk to her at lunch or recess instead.)

### My home

Explain to your children that they should do their chores without being reminded. It may help to assign jobs that fit into their schedule.

For instance, they might make their beds in the morning, walk the dog after school, or straighten up the family room before bed.



Resources for Educators

## Healthy Eating



How can you get your kids to eat more fruit without nagging? Here are seven tactics you can use to guide them without saying a word:

- 1. Eat Together:** If you snack on fruit in front of your kids, they're more likely to meet their fruit and vegetable requirements, according to a new study in *Appetite*.
- 2. Keep Trying:** Many children reject new foods because they're afraid of them, not because they don't like the taste. Don't give up! You may need to present a new fruit 10 times or more before they'll accept it.
- 3. Slice Fruit:** Your kids may be more likely to want sliced fruit than whole fruit. This has shown to be true in schools too.
- 4. Use Stickers:** Stickers: so simple, yet so powerful. Researchers have found if you stick a popular cartoon character on a piece of fruit, your child may be more excited about eating it.
- 5. Let Them Pick Their Fruit:** While it's not as exciting as plucking fruit off a tree, your children can still participate in the picking process at the store. Having them participate makes them more excited about eating it.
- 6. Mix It Up:** Offer fruit in a variety of forms, textures and shapes. Experiment with frozen, freeze-dried, canned, fresh and dried fruit.
- 7. Make Fun No-Cook Creations:** There are easy ways to make fruit a little more exciting. Check out [SuperKidsNutrition.com](http://SuperKidsNutrition.com) for some no-fuss frozen treats.

PBS.org

### Quote of the month

**"If you think you can do a thing or you can't do a thing, you're right."** Henry Ford

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