

My Best Behavior

Gentle reminders and a dose of encouragement go a long way toward helping your little one behave well. Below are simple strategies to use with him. And on the next page, you'll find a chart where he can track his success!



Be clear

If your child understands exactly what is expected of him, he's more likely to cooperate. Choose rules that suit your family's needs. Keep the rules—and the reasons for them—simple. *Example:* "We hold hands when we cross the street. I want you to be safe."

Be calm

Your youngster may respond better if you calmly explain what she did wrong and what the consequence will be. For instance, say, "Shannon, our rule is that we don't hurt others with hands or words. Because you hit Sally, we are leaving the playground."

Be firm

It's normal for your child to test limits. But once you decide upon a rule, don't back down. Try saying something like, "You know our rule about TV, and you've watched enough today. Asking over and over isn't going to help." If you give in, your youngster will learn that testing allows him to get his way.

Be part of a team

One of the best ways to influence your youngster's behavior is to make sure everyone is on the same page. Talk with your spouse or partner and other family members. Make sure everyone is aware of the rules and consequences you've set for him.

Be flexible

Offering your child choices whenever possible allows her to feel she has some say in her world. You'll boost her cooperation—and her self-confidence. You could say, "Lucy, it's snack time. What would you like today, an apple or a banana?"



Be positive

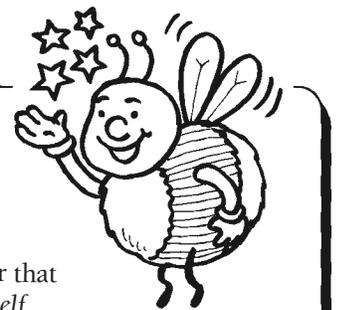
When you notice your child being considerate or helpful, point it out right away. By giving her attention for good behavior, you'll motivate her to repeat it. *Example:* "Gabby, thanks for helping me put away the dishes. Now we have time to go to the park." Ask the other adults in her life to

let her know when they catch her being good, too. Encouragement is a powerful tool!

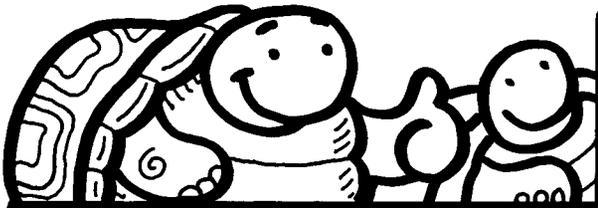
Progress chart

On the next page is a chart your youngster can use to keep track of her own good behavior. Down the left side, help her fill in behaviors that you often remind her about—tell her that the chart will let her remind *herself* instead! *Examples:* Brush my teeth. Share my toys. Say "please" and "thank you."

Your child gets to make a mark for each day the two of you agree a "job" is done well. She might draw a star or a smiley face in the correct box. Seeing her chart fill up will encourage her to do her best. *Tip:* Continue the behavior success by making copies of the chart to use each week.



continued



WAY TO GO!

| What I'm working on | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
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Early Years