

Firm, Fair & Consistent[®]

Our Savior Lutheran School, Aiea, Hawaii
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Guiding Students for School Success

Parents' expectations are powerful

A recent study addressed a question many parents ask themselves: "If I believe in my child, will she really believe in herself? Will it help her succeed in life?" The answer went beyond "yes." The research linked kids' behavior to parents' positive and negative expectations. For example, if moms expected 6th and 7th graders to rebel and take risks, the kids seemed more likely to do so. But expecting kids to resist harmful peer pressure and do the right thing may have had an opposite effect.

So how can you show positive expectations? You can:

- **Be a role model.** Imagine how you want your child to behave and make decisions. Then teach this through words and actions. If you're pressured to buy something you know is too expensive, for instance, resist the temptation and stick to your budget.
- **Look for positive examples.** Point out kids your child's age who are doing good things. Look for opportunities for your child to participate, such as helping a charity that matters to your child.
- **Discuss consequences.** What are the possible effects of taking various risks? What about not taking them? Don't view dangerous risks, such as substance abuse, as "normal" parts of growing up. Expect your child to make good choices.



Source: "Study: Parents' Expectations Can Influence Risky Teen Behavior," Join Together, www.jointogether.org/news/research/summaries/2009/study-parents-expectations.html.

Imagine life without routines. No one would know how to behave! Children, in particular, like to know what to do and when to do it. They thrive on routines.



Help your child follow simple routines before school, at homework time and at bedtime. Enjoy predictability, and celebrate with a little spontaneity. "Homework's finished and we have an hour before dinner. Let's bake cookies for dessert!"

Why you should hide the remote control

You know it's a bad idea to let your child spend too much time "vegging out" in front of the TV. It encourages laziness, but studies show it may also lead to:

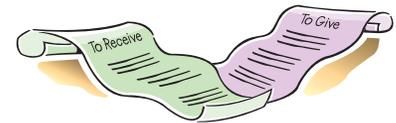
- **High cholesterol.**
- **Obesity.**
- **A negative body image.**

So limit your child's daily screen time to two hours—and hide the remote. Without it, he can't just sit and flip through channels!



Source: Jennifer Trachtenberg, M.D., *Good Kids, Bad Habits*, ISBN: 978-0-06-112775-5, HarperCollins.

Two wish lists may lead to less greed



Does your child's "I want" list get out of control during the holidays? Have him make two gift lists this year:

1. **On the first**, let him write down as many gifts as he'd like to receive.
2. **On the second**, have him write down an equal number of gifts or services he's willing to give, —such as cleaning his room, helping bake cookies for a neighbor or donating a toy to charity.

Source: P. Onderko, "Teach Your Kids to Be Thankful for Gifts," Today.MSNBC.com, http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/34611665/ns/today-today_holiday_guide.

Combat boredom with the arts

Does your child have a ho-hum attitude toward school lately? Is she bored or not working up to her potential? Try nurturing her creative side!

Research shows that students who are involved in creative activities do better in school than students with no such involvement.

To expose your child to the arts:

- **Attend a concert** together.
- **Visit a museum** or gallery.
- **Enroll her in acting** or writing classes.

Source: Charlene C. Giannetti and Margaret Sagarese, *Parenting 911: How to Safeguard and Rescue Your 10- to 15-Year-Old from Substance Abuse, Depression, Sexual Encounters, Violence, Failure in School, Danger on the Internet, and Other Risky Situations*, ISBN: 0-7679-0321-8, Broadway Books.

No bullying—but what about teasing?

Bullying is a serious problem today. But what about teasing? Is it off limits or okay? “Positive” teasing, which is not aggressive or purposely hurtful, uses humor to address sticky topics. To help your child understand this and be respectful:

- **Describe positive teasing.** It involves playful words, body language and laughter from everyone. “That shirt is ugly, Dad!” is disrespectful. “Want to hire me as your fashion advisor?” is better and adds humor.
- **Explain the goal.** Teasing should be fun and strengthen relationships. It should not cause harm. When someone bigger, more powerful or more popular “teases,” it might be bullying.

Source: S. Cleaver, “Just Teasing,” *Scholastic Parent & Child*, October 2009, Scholastic Inc.



Questions & Answers

Q: I drove my child’s homework to school twice this week after she forgot to bring it herself. I’m getting irritated. I want her to learn to be more responsible, but I can’t just let her get a zero on an assignment, can I?

A: Actually, yes, you can let her get a zero. At least sometimes. By letting your child endure the consequences when she’s irresponsible, she may behave more responsibly the next time.

To ensure that she “faces the music” when she does something wrong:

- **Resist the urge to swoop in.** If your child is usually very careful with her schoolwork but accidentally forgets an important project at home, it’s fine to run it to school for her. But if she constantly leaves papers behind (despite your warnings to be more careful), stop rescuing her. She may take her responsibility more seriously once her teacher begins to notice it, too.
- **Let her experience natural consequences.** It’s pouring rain, but your child’s bicycle is, yet again, standing out in the driveway. What should you do? Nothing. A soggy bicycle seat is a logical consequence for her negligence.
- **Follow through.** Did you tell your child she’d be grounded if she forgot to walk the dog one more time? Is the dog frantically staring at you with the leash in its mouth? Follow through on your warning and make your child stay inside this weekend. She might fuss, but hopefully she’ll also get the message.



Keep your cool—it pays off in the end

When your child starts throwing a fit, your first instinct may be to get as angry or as upset as she is. But you’re much better off staying calm.

If you can keep your cool while your child is losing hers:



- **Her tantrum** or bad behavior is likely to stop sooner.
- **Her acting out** may be less severe.
- **You’ll feel better** about how you handled the situation.

Source: Ray Burke, Ph.D. and others, *Common Sense Parenting: Using Your Head as Well as Your Heart to Raise School-Aged Children*, ISBN: 978-1-889322-70-4, Boys Town Press.

Take the stress out of the holidays

‘Tis the season for holiday fun! But sometimes too much cheer can create a season of not-so-festive behavior, too. To make the holidays less stressful, be sure your child:

- **Gets enough sleep.** Stick to his regular bedtime.
- **Eats properly.** Make sure he’s snacking on more than cookies.
- **Remembers his manners.** Teach him to be respectful. Remind him to say “Thank you” if he receives a gift—even if he’s not crazy about it.

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