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parenting CHRISTIAN kids



**St. Michael
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Provide Positive, Productive Discipline

POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. For wisdom as you strive to lovingly direct, correct, and guide your children.
2. To help you set and stick to appropriate rules and limits.
3. To shape your children into people who willingly obey you, other authorities, and God.

For many parents, a common New Year's resolution is to begin (or jumpstart) a discipline strategy that actually works. No matter what method you choose, the desired result is the same: children who are obedient, safe, and have begun to internalize right from wrong.

The key to discipline, no matter a child's age or temperament, is understanding his or her heart. Look beyond the misbehavior and ask, "Why is my child behaving this way?"

Misbehavior is usually motivated by one of four things: a lack of attention, a need for power, a desire for revenge, or a sense of failure. Once you've keyed in on the real problem, you can provide logical consequences that lead to positive change.

There are four R's of logical consequences:

- Related—keep the consequence directly related to the behavior;
- Respectful—enforce the consequence with dignity and respect;
- Reasonable—don't just add punishment to make children feel bad; and
- Revealed—let children know in advance what the consequences are.

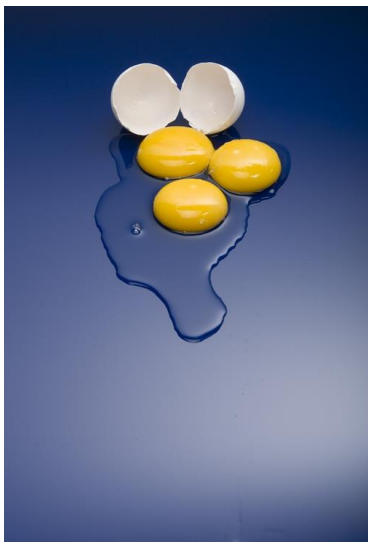
One "R" that's tempting but harmful is rewards. Some experts suggest that bribing children to obey actually hinders their ability to develop self-discipline because they aren't controlling their own behavior—someone else is.

Read on for more tips about using positive discipline in your home.

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TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Eggstra Soft Hearts

Make a batch of cookies as a family using a recipe that requires eggs. Without anyone knowing, hard-boil one of the eggs beforehand. When you attempt to crack the hard-boiled egg into the bowl, discuss the difference between an egg that's cooked and one that isn't.

Say: **When you boil an egg, a change happens inside that makes it harden. We can't bake cookies with hard-boiled eggs!**

Read aloud Hebrews 3:7-12.

Say: **When we hear Jesus' words but ignore what he says, it shows our hearts are hardened. It makes us difficult for him to use. But when our hearts are soft, we listen to Jesus and follow him. Then he can use us to do great things and to help other people.**

Pray: **Dear Jesus, we love you and want to follow you. Please make our hearts soft and obedient to you every day. In your name, amen.**

Let someone eat the hard-boiled egg and use a raw egg to finish making the cookies.

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Keep Discipline on Track

Shepherding your children is a big responsibility. To avoid feeling overwhelmed, remember these tips for establishing an approach to discipline:

- Keep it simple—make sure your kids understand each rule.
- Keep it consistent—don't ignore misbehavior when you're tired or busy.
- Keep it fair—make sure the rules apply to everyone.
- Keep it fresh—review rules regularly and adapt discipline methods as your children grow.

Above all, remember: Jesus will help you shape your children. Pray about any discipline challenges. Ask Jesus to give your kids obedient hearts and a desire to always follow him.

Try these ideas for discussing discipline as a family:

Simon Says Play Simon says with younger children, giving everyone a chance to be Simon. Then discuss what it's like to give orders and to be obeyed. Also talk about what makes following instructions easy or difficult.

The Right Recipe Mix the ingredients from a simple biscuit recipe. As you add ingredients, discuss the importance of following the instructions and the effects of leaving an ingredient out; for example, biscuits made without baking powder are flat and dense. Read 2 Peter 1:5-8. Ask: "What 'ingredients' does God want us to have? Why is it important to follow God's instructions for our lives? What ingredient can you add to your life this week?"

Three Strikes As a family, attend local sporting events and look for ways players follow or break various rules. Afterward, discuss misbehavior and its consequences in sports and in life. Share ways that athletes—and other people—can learn and grow from their mistakes.

Rule Roulette Play cards or board games as a family, but take turns setting new rules. Talk about what

it's like to remember all the changing rules. Discuss why it's helpful for rules to remain constant. Then brainstorm times it might be good for rules to be changed.

Jericho Obedience Create a circular wall with building blocks, cartons, or boxes. Say: "God told Joshua and his men to march around Jericho for six days. Let's march!" Count aloud as you march around the wall six times. Stop and say: "On the seventh day, God had them march around the city one more time and give a loud shout." March around the walls once more, shout together, and topple the wall. Discuss what happened when Joshua obeyed God—and what happens when we obey God.

Big Fish Tail Form a line with each person holding on to the waist of the person ahead of him or her. Have the line walk in a "swishing" motion like a big fish while the person at the head of the line tries to tag the person at the tail. Switch roles and play several rounds. Afterward, read Jonah 1:1-3 and Jonah 2:1. Discuss how Jonah disobeyed God and tried to get away from him and what happened when Jonah turned back to God.

"No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way."

—Hebrews 12:11

MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIE

Title: *Kung Fu Panda 3*

Genre: Animation, Action, Adventure

Rating: PG

Cast: Jack Black, Angelina Jolie, Dustin Hoffman, Jackie Chan

Synopsis: Po's long-lost father shows up, and the duo heads out to find the hidden community of pandas. But when a powerful enemy sweeps across the country, Po must train his panda brethren to fight for their lives. This proves to be just as difficult as it sounds.

Our Take: The *Kung Fu Panda* franchise has been exceedingly clever and funny. We love its messages about the power of teamwork and that we can't judge people (or pandas) by their outward appearances. Hopefully, this most recent addition will stay true to that form.



MUSIC

Title: *II*

Artist: Capital Kings

Synopsis: This duo's music is a catchy mix of pop, dance, and electronic. They often team up with big names in contemporary Christian music, including tobyMac and Britt Nicole. Capital Kings' self-titled first album entered the Billboard charts at number five. Now that they're better known, their new album will likely go even higher.

Our Take: Kids love the high-energy music, and there aren't many Christian dance bands out there, so these guys certainly fill a void. Their lyrics may not plumb theological depths, but they don't shy away from sharing their faith, either.



CULTURE & TRENDS

Media Saturation In a large-scale study, Common Sense Media found that preteens use media an average of six hours per day and teens an average of nine hours per day, not including time spent on schoolwork. Media use includes activities such as playing video games, using social media, listening to music, reading, and more. (*commonsensemedia.org*)

Too Much Too Soon The pressure to advance children academically at earlier ages may be having a negative effect, according to Professor Stephen Camarata of Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. As a result, "schoolwork" in the home and in preschools is replacing commonsense, intuitive time for nurturing young children. (*washingtonpost.com*)

Games, Sites & Apps

Star Wars Battlefront

In this mission-based game, players are either the heroic Rebellion or the evil Empire. Violence is cartoonish, despite the battlefield setting and Teen rating. But with a multiplayer format, keep in mind that kids may hear bad language from other players.

24/7 Science

This free site for children from UC Berkeley makes learning science fun. Kids can dig into various science topics, play games, and engage in "interactives" that let them experiment in the real world. The site can be found at www.lawrencehallofscience.org/kidsite/.

Smashy Road: Wanted

In this app, kids drive recklessly through a pretend town after unlocking new cars (through in-app purchases, by playing for certain amounts of time, or by watching video ads). Although the crashes aren't violent, beware that the game's goal is to break the law and evade police.

QUICK STATS

Training Parents Autistic children whose parents were enrolled in a parent-training program had a 47-percent reduction in serious behavior problems. By comparison, autistic kids whose parents were enrolled in a parent-education program had a 31-percent reduction. (*foxnews.com*)

In Control According to a study of 15,000 British children, kids who learn self-control early in life are more likely to find and keep a job in adulthood. (*dailymail.co.uk*)

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