

Parenting Preschoolers

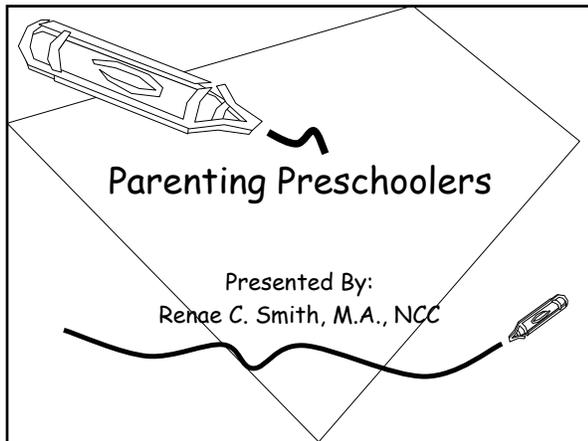
Handout

April 8th, 2008

Presented By:
Renaë Smith, M.A., NCC



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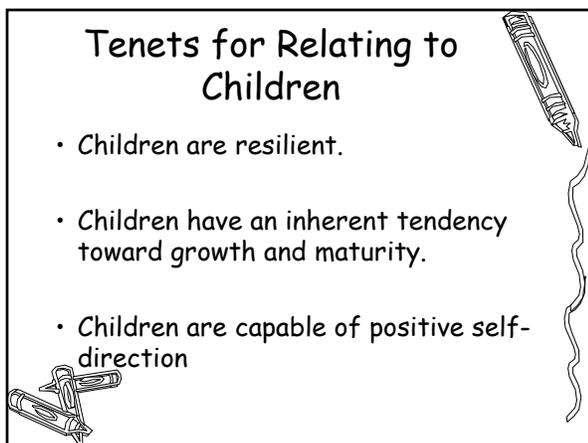
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Tenets for Relating to Children

- Children are not miniature adults.
- Children are people.
- Children are unique and worthy of respect.



Tenets for Relating to Children

- Children are resilient.
- Children have an inherent tendency toward growth and maturity.
- Children are capable of positive self-direction

Tenets for Relating to Children

- Children's natural language is play.
- Children have a right to remain silent.
- Children will take an experience to where they need to be.



Tenets for Relating to Children

- Children's growth cannot be speeded up.



Age Appropriate Behaviors

- Young preschoolers make comments and requests, and tell others what to do.
- Young preschoolers can talk about things that happened and make up stories.



Age Appropriate Behaviors

- Preschoolers can listen attentively to stories and retell stories themselves.
- Preschoolers can enjoy books that tell about real things as well as make-believe.



Age Appropriate Behaviors

- Preschoolers may revert to toddler behavior when feeling upset or shy.
- Preschoolers make shapes such as circles and squares and pretend to write the way they have seen adults write.



Age Appropriate Behaviors

- Gross Motor Skills
 - Catches a bounced ball
 - Walks downstairs without support alternating feet
 - Jumps forward without falling
 - Throws ball overhand
 - Climbs to top of slide and slides down



Age Appropriate Behaviors

- Self-help Skills
 - Completely dresses self with verbal assistance
 - Wipes up spills
 - Brushes teeth independently
 - Washes and dries hands independently
 - Toilet-trained



The Child's World

- Unsafe
- Mixed Messages
- Everything is bigger than life. Crouch down, but don't talk down.
- Time skew
- Communicate through Play



Behavior

- Feelings cause behavior.
- All behavior serves to attain goals.
- When children misbehave, we feel...
 - Annoyed
 - Angry; Provoked; Authority is threatened
 - Deeply hurt; Want to get even
 - Despair; Hopelessness; Want to give up



Focus On:

- person rather than problem
- present rather than past
- feelings rather than thoughts or acts



Parenting Children with Character

- Responsible vs. Good
- Praise vs. Encouragement
- Open vs. Closed Response



Parenting Children with Character

- Punishment vs. Logical Consequences
- Democratic (choice) & Positive Parenting vs. Autocratic & Negative Parenting



References

- Cloud, Dr. H. & Townsend, Dr. J. (1999). *Raising great kids*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan
- Dinkmeyer, D. & McKay, G.D. (1976). *Systematic training for effective parenting*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service, Inc.



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We appreciate your feedback!

LIFEWOR
STRATEGIES



POSITIVE BEHAVIORS

| Child's goal | Behavior | Encourage positive goals |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Attention | Helps others, volunteers | Acknowledge child's contributions. |
| Autonomy, self-responsibility | Self-discipline | Encourage decision-making. Let child experience logical outcome of his/her actions. |
| Justice, fairness for all | Returns kindness for hurt. Ignores belittling. | Appreciate his cooperation. |
| Acceptance of others | Ignores confrontations. Withdraws from power contest. | Recognize child's effort to act maturely. |
| Competence | Works hard | Individualize work to insure success. Make a contract with child to note progress. Match the task to the mental level. |

GUIDE FOR MANAGING BEHAVIOR

First, the parent (or teacher) should identify why the child is behaving as such – what is the purpose of the behavior? What is the child seeking - power, attention? How is the parent or teacher feeling – angry, annoyed? Find out how teacher/parent's redirection can overcome misbehavior.

MISBEHAVIOR

| Child's goal | Parent/Teacher's feelings | Parent/Teacher's reactions | Child's responses | Guides for redirecting |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Attention | Annoyed | Remind, coax | Stops behavior only temporarily | Ignore misbehavior, notice positive behavior |
| Power | Angry, provoked | Gives in, or fights | Power struggle or defiant behavior | Withdraw, or enlist their help. |
| Revenge | Hurt | Gets even | Seeks revenge | Avoid punishment. Build trust. |
| Display of inadequacy | Discouraged | Gives up | Shows no improvement | Encourage the child's positive effort. |

METHODS OF DISCIPLINE THAT PROMOTE SELF-WORTH

1. Show that you recognize and accept the reason the child is doing what is the wrong thing: "you want me to play with the truck but..." This validates the legitimacy of the child's request and shows you are an understanding person and not afraid to be the authority or leader of the situation.
2. State the "but": "but right now Jeanie is playing with it ..." This teaches empathy and perspective taking and shows that you are being fair.
3. Offer a solution: "In 10 minutes she has to go with Dad..." This teaches delayed gratification and gives an understanding of time.
4. Say something that indicates our confidence in the child's willingness to learn: "I know you are being very patient and will have fun with it when your turn comes". With this you are affirming the child's good character quality and assumes he has the capacity to grow and mature and transmits your belief in him.
5. In some situations you need to model how to do it a better way. This sets firm limits but puts you together on his "team".
6. Toddlers can be redirected to something similar: "This is Johnny's paper. Here is your paper." This endorses the child's right to choose but teaches others have rights too.
7. Avoid accusation – this lowers their self-esteem.
8. For every "No", offer two other acceptable choices. This encourages the child's independence and emerging decision-making skills.
9. Adults should never fear children's anger. Help them express their feelings in words and to think of alternatives and solutions: "you feel angry because I won't let you have candy. I will let you choose between a banana and an apple. Which do you want?"
10. Make your directives simple and clear and in a firm and friendly voice. This assures that the child is not overwhelmed with a blizzard of words and refuses to comply as a result.
11. Always avoid negative comments and remain impartial when imposing the consequence or discipline. It is easier to become successful in life with a positive outlook.
12. Teach your child VALUES: They are lighthouses that keep the child from crashing on the rocks. Good values to teach are, courage, honesty, peacefulness, self-reliance, self-control, self-discipline, fidelity, justice, mercy, empathy, and love. Parents should model these in all their relationships and transmit the high priority they themselves put on these values.

CHARACTERISTICS AND DISCIPLINE OF THE YOUNG CHILD

Characteristics of 2-year-olds and young 3's

- Always on the go – prefer to run or climb
- Beginning to develop sense of danger
- Easily frustrated – upset when events do not meet expectations
- Developing independence – says “Me do it” or “No,” but are still dependent too
- Learning to be more helpful and responsible
- Beginning to take care of dolls and act out familiar scenes
- Experimenting with art materials
- Developing control of finger and hand muscles
- Acquiring interest in playing *with* other children
- Learning language rapidly
- Enjoy learning and using new skills

Characteristics of older 3's and 4-year-olds

- Test physical skills and courage – have sense of caution
- Like to play with others
- Share and take turns sometimes – cannot wait long
- Talk a lot – are silly, boisterous, use shocking language
- Very interested in world – ask lots of questions
- Reveal feelings in dramatic play
- Enjoy art materials – want to keep projects
- Want to be grown up one day and a child the next
- Developing a longer attention span
- Want real adult things
- Do not like to lose – may change rules or quit

Characteristics of 5- and 6-year-olds

- Becoming more outgoing, sociable
- Like to play cooperatively
- More interested in making final product
- Able to use words to express feelings and cope with situations
- More confident about physical skills
- Like grown-up activities
- Still may need adult help to calm down
- Take care of dressing and other personal needs
- Prefer realistic working toys
- Interested in numbers, letters, reading, and writing
- Still need reassurance and affection
- Curious about people and how the world works

Presented By:
Renae C. Smith, MA

Renae Smith is an experienced play therapist, counselor, and teacher, having received her Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from the University of Wisconsin—Green Bay, and her Master's Degree in Human Services Counseling from Regent University. Renae enjoys working with adults and children of all ages, with a range of issues including, childhood trauma, grief and loss, anxiety, depression, self-esteem issues, and workplace and social challenges. Renae has also been involved in many ministries at her home church and school, including serving as school counselor, directing and teaching the "Toddler Time" program, facilitating a people-helping training group, serving as a Sunday school and Vacation Bible School teacher, and playing in the band for contemporary worship services.

Renae enjoys spending part of her summers in Southeast Asia, lecturing and counseling with Global Mosaic International, Inc. She just recently returned from Malaysia where she taught the "Counseling Children and Adolescents" course at "Alpha & Omega International College" in Kuala Lumpur. Renae is currently finishing a two year residency with "The Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia" and is also working as a therapist with Dr. William Bixler and Associates in Manassas, Virginia.
