

## 20 TOOLS FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR KIDS

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(Adapted from Enrich-Abilities Inc.)

1. Request the child to stop--or YOU stop!
2. Use Active Listening-- and reflect the feeling message back.
3. Politely request the behavior you DO desire.
4. Keep your talking to 10 words or LESS.
5. Take time for training! Teach the skills needed to get the behavior you desire--remember to do this one step at a time.
6. Ignore the behavior-- especially when it just annoys you--especially if it is not life threatening. Notice the positive behavior and magnify it by utilizing the art of real encouragement. Maybe a hug would encourage this discouraged child!
7. Try an "I statement" to express your feelings in a positive way.
8. Engage the child in making choices that you can live with ("when you \_\_\_\_\_, then you may \_\_\_\_"; would you like to \_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_?")
9. Use your sense of humor--maybe a laugh would break the tension!
10. Utilize What, Why and How questions that avoid blame and shame.
11. Distraction--turn child's attention away from what he is doing wrong to something else which will attract his attention!  
Redirect the child's NEED to a different, more acceptable activity.
12. Spend focused attention on this child--using "special time" alone with the child at a different time when not misbehaving.
13. Take a "cruise" away from the situation yourself--leave for a while and return to it later.
14. Suggest a reasonable time out for the child--one that is POSITIVE--avoid sending the child to his room to "think about what he did wrong"!
15. ACT don't TALK about it! Follow Through is very important.
16. Allow Natural Consequences except when they would be TOO SEVERE, TOO FAR REMOVED to teach anything worthwhile, or affect TOO MANY OTHER PEOPLE.
17. Structure reasonable, respectful, and related logical consequences with the child BEFORE the misbehavior occurs, if possible.
18. Plan ahead. Hold a family meeting.
19. Have the child express his feelings in a picture or a story.
20. Give a wish or a fantasy.