W
ouldn’t it be wonderful if our children were always well-behaved and we never had to worry about discipline? In reality, however, we know that discipline is one of the necessary, if sometimes unpleasant, parts of our job as parents. When you discipline your child, you are teaching the right way to behave. This is an important part of child development.

Children Need Discipline

Children need discipline to protect them from danger, to learn how to get along with others, to learn acceptable and appropriate behavior, and to learn that society has certain common rules that everyone is expected to live by. Discipline also helps children learn to think in an orderly fashion and to understand the logical consequences of their actions. Most important, positive discipline helps a child learn self-control, which builds healthy self-esteem.

Parents and School Discipline

The discipline a child learns at home is the foundation for behavior at school. Be familiar with your school’s discipline policy. If your child’s teacher reports a discipline problem, talk with your child and the teacher to work on a solution together.

Discipline Tips for Parents

■ Emphasize “do’s” rather than “don’ts.”
■ Put limits on your child’s behavior, but be careful not to make too many rules.
■ Be consistent. A predictable environment helps children to feel safe, since they know what to expect.
■ Keep a sense of humor. It helps you keep a proper perspective about what is really important.
■ Praise your child’s accomplishments.
■ Listen to your child and help him or her work through a problem.
■ Encourage independence. Let children make their own decisions and contributions to family decisions whenever appropriate.
■ Set a good example. A child learns more from what you do than from what you say.

For more information on child behavior and discipline, check out the Parenting 24/7 website, made by the University of Illinois Extension at parenting247.org.

Reference

“Me” Puppets

Materials needed:
- Paper lunch sacks or old socks
- Scissors, glue
- Markers
- Optional: yarn, buttons, fabric scraps, etc.

Directions:
1. Hold the lunch sack or sock upside down, so the bottom can be the face of your puppet.
2. Have your child use markers to draw a face on his or her puppet, making it look just like him or her.
3. Use other materials, such as torn paper, old buttons, and yarn for hair and clothes on the puppet.
4. Make a puppet for everyone in the family. Don’t forget pets!
5. When the puppets are all complete, have them introduce themselves to each other and tell all about their favorite things.
6. Have fun together creating a puppet show, and perform it for your family and friends!


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