

Teaching Children Discipline

- **Remember the purpose of discipline.** It is to teach your child socially acceptable ways of expressing natural desires and drives. Discipline guides your child into adulthood.
- **Successful discipline is geared to the child's developmental stage.** Don't expect a child of any age to perform something he or she is not ready for.
- **Children need positive reinforcement.** Reward your child for doing right with smiles, hugs, attention, praise and thanks. Rewards do not need to be toys or candy.
- **Never hit or shake a child.** Hitting is **not** a useful discipline tool for your children. Hitting and other physical punishment are not effective because they teach a child that it is okay to hit people, make children much too angry to be sorry for what they've done and can hurt a child physically.
- **Discipline is best taught by example.** The lessons you teach your child come from what your child sees you do – not what you say.
- **If what you are doing is not working, change it!** Your best efforts, even those that worked in the past, may break down. Try to keep sight of your basic principles and always cherish your relationship with your child.

The important thing is not whether your child behaves in the next few minutes or today or this week. The really important thing is how your child turns out 5, 10, or 20 years from now.