

## THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT KIDS

1. Kids are not little adults but are developing, growing, and constantly learning people.
2. The job of being a kid is to play, grow, and develop in a safe, understanding environment.
3. Kids learn best by what they see. If a child sees adults picking up clothes, eating correctly, and being nice to each other, they will respond in the same way. Don't use a don't do as I do, do as I say approach.
4. Keep instructions, expectations, and reprimands short, simple, and age appropriate. Lecturing a 2 year old for 5 minutes about why he/she can't have a dangerous toy is wasted time and only makes everyone angry.
5. Children's brains develop very slowly. They can only keep their thoughts together for about 1 minute for every year of age: a two year old can only remember for 2 minutes, a five year old for 5 minutes, etc. Ordering a two year old to stand in a corner for 10 minutes is abusive as they won't remember what they are there for and are being asked to remain in control for too long.

### TODDLERS (AGE 0 TO 2)

Toddlers are active, curious and delightful little creatures who need to be protected from toys with small parts, appliances, and other electrical sources, dangerous plants, dangerous things they could put in their mouth and objects they can pull off of tables, stoves, etc.

They like to do the same things over and over. They scare easily and like to be cuddled and held frequently. They do not do bad things on purpose. They are easily redirected if given a choice of appropriate things to do. They respond well to NO! They don't like to be left alone for long and need frequent reassurance that adults or others are still around close to them.

### PRE-SCHOOL (AGE 2 TO 4)

Young children are curious, sensitive, and full of energy. They want to explore, try everything, and don't believe there is anything they cannot do. They think about themselves first and have to learn to share with others. They can sit still for only a few minutes.

They need consistent, firm but gentle reminders of what is expected of them. They are possessive and think everything is "mine."

They respond well when given choices between two things. (For example: don't ask them what they want for lunch. Instead say "you can have a sandwich or some tacos for lunch = which will it be?")

### EARLY SCHOOL AGE (AGE 4 TO 6)

Children of this age are reaching out into the world and meeting other adults as authority figures. They are impressed with their own importance and think they know everything.

Children this age see the world in one of two ways. 1) The way things are (as they see them) and 2) the way they would like the world to be.

They respond well to isolation or being put in a chair, etc. for a few minutes (no longer). Power struggles and attention getting behaviors are frequently seen.

### LATER SCHOOL AGE (AGE 6 TO 10)

Peers become increasingly more important to kids of this age. They love to share work they have done at school and respond well to praise and affirmation.

They start to display a sense of justice of "this is/isn't fair" at this stage and also began to use lying as a way of getting out of or avoiding trouble.

They need increasing responsibilities around the home and should be allowed to handle

small amounts of money with assistance.

Not being allowed to play with friends or having bicycles, etc. taken away are effective management methods.

### ADOLESCENCE (AGE 10 TO 15)

Children of this age group want all the freedom of being an adult but aren't ready for the responsibilities. Their bodies are changing significantly and they think parents have "joined the other side and are now part of the enemy". Peers are very important. They become overly conscious of hair styles, clothing, and other fads which are important to them. Music, the telephone, and friends are often sources of conflict.

Grounding, extra chores, and isolation from friends are often effective means of discipline. Let them be somewhat involved in the discipline decisions.

### YOUNG ADULTS (AGE 15 TO 18)

Individuals at this age have very definite ideas about their beliefs and what is important to them. They should be allowed increased decision making powers and can often be used as models for younger children. They should be viewed as "almost adults" but not babied or nagged into doing things.

It is almost too late to instill decency, respect for others or cooperation at this stage of the game.

Gradually allowing them more responsibility, say in their own decisions, control over their own lives is the goal of this stage of life.