

Safe kids 😊 Healthy kids 😊 Happy kids

Toddlers Can Learn Good Behavior

Taming a toddler's behavior is not easy. It is, however, essential.

Children who can manage their own behavior:

- Have more confidence,
- Can make friends easier,
- Feel more in control, and
- Are happier.

Toddlers can learn how to cooperate with others. Parents must be patient as they daily teach their toddler. Try these tips and tricks.

- 1. Kids can handle choices.** Make them age appropriate. Choices help children feel and use their power. Offer two choices during meals, at bedtime, and for bathing, dressing and going out. For example, “Do you want your peas *on* your potatoes or *beside* your potatoes?” “Do you want your bath *before* we read a book or *after* we read the book?” Gradually give them more choices.
- 2. Avoid threats.** Parents rarely follow through with their threat. Instead, discuss what you want your child to do. Plan ahead. What will you do if your child disobeys? For example, you have to leave for daycare and your child will not get ready:
 - Give her a 10 – 15 minute warning. Kids need time to transition from one activity to the next. Set a timer.
 - When the timer rings, he needs to get ready to leave. Ask him to put items in him bookbag.
 - If she disobeys, carry her to the car. She may have to leave her favorite toy because she did not get ready.Soon, she will learn to be ready when you tell her.

- 3. Do not yell if you cannot get your child's attention.** Kids “tune-out” yelling parents. Try singing the words you want your child to hear. Talk in a whisper. Create a sign that signals to your child that you want his attention. For example, clap 3 times or put your hand in the air. Ask your child to do the same.
- 4. Use humor to get your child to cooperate.** Kids love “talking objects”. For example, say “Your toothbrush just told me you do not know how to brush your teeth. Is that true?”
- 5. Make learning fun.** If your child needs to learn to count, go through the house counting red items. It is fun. It also teaches him to recognize the color red.

Teaching good behavior takes time. Having a happy, cooperative toddler is worth your time spent teaching.



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