

Parenting During COVID-19

Ivy Tech-Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic



During COVID-19

Talking About the Pandemic

- Be willing to talk. They will already have heard something.
- Silence and secrets do not protect our children. Honesty and openness do.
- Think about how much they will understand. You know them best.
- After talking, help them relax
 - Model relaxing activities or talk about something positive

Homework and e-learning

- Have a set schedule with frequent breaks
 - Breaks can even be rewards
 - Recommend 20 minute blocks of work
- Consistent Time & Place
 - Free from distraction
- Don't just order to do it, explain why (once)
- "I can't do this!!"
 - Letting them struggle to an extent helps them learn
 - Make sure they understand instructions
 - Ask questions instead of telling answers





Bad Behaviors & Discipline

Child's Goal:	You Feel:	First Reaction:	Child Need:
Undue Attention – Keep others busy or get something special	Annoyed, Irritated, Worried, Guilty	Reminding, Coaxing, Doing things for the child they could do themselves	Notice me! Involve me! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redirect by involving in a useful task • Avoid service • Say it only once, then act • Plan one-on-one time • Set up routines
Power – to be the boss	Angry, Provoked, Challenged, Threatened, Defeated	Fighting, Giving in, Thinking “you can’t get away with it,” wanting to be right	Let me help! Give me choices! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let routines be the boss • Offer a limited choice • Be firm and kind • Withdraw from conflict and calm down • Practice follow through

Mistaken Goals

Child's Goal:	You Feel:	First Reaction:	Child Need:
Revenge – to get even	Hurt, Disappointed, Disbelieving, Disgusted	Retaliating, Getting even, Taking behavior personally, Thinking “how could you do this to me?”	Help me! I’m hurting! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid punishment and retaliation • Apologize • Deal with the hurt feelings “your behavior tells me you must feel hurt; can we talk about that?” • Share your feelings • Don’t take behavior personally
Assumed Inadequacy – to give up and be left alone	Despair, Hopeless, Helpless, Inadequate	Giving up, Doing for, Overhelping, Showing discouragement	Have faith in me! Don’t give up on me! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show faith • Make the task easier until the child experiences success • Encourage any positive attempt, no matter how small • Build on his/her interests

Mistaken Goals

Planned Ignoring & Attending

Attending

- Always attend to the behavior you want to increase
- Be specific when using praise so that the child knows the positive behavior she or he did
- Make eye contact and smile when attending to a behavior
- Use a pleasant voice when attending to a behavior

Planned Ignoring

- Never ignore a dangerous behavior (i.e., possibility of an injury or other serious complication)
- Ignore the same behavior consistently
- To ignore the behavior, actively avoid eye contact and turn away from the child
- The behavior may initially get worse which is common
- Remember why you are ignoring, so that you won't feel guilty and stop prematurely

Types of Discipline

Natural Consequences

- Help correct immature behaviors. These consequences would naturally happen without adult intervention.
- E.g., overslept and missed the school bus so the child walks to school

Logical Consequences

- Punishment logically fits the misbehavior
- E.g., child deliberately breaks toy then parent does not buy replacement toy

Removing Privileges

- Shorter periods are better than longer ones.
- E.g., playing video games, watching TV, having friends over

Time Out

- Temporarily removing the child from a stimulating environment or situation. Removing attention from the behavior.

Reward Systems

- Create a Token Economy for your child
 - Your priorities are different than your child's
- What is it you want them to do? What is it you want them to learn?
- What motivates your child? What is it they want to do?



Tips

One-on-one Time



Baby
/Toddler

Copy facial expressions or sounds
Sing songs
Stack cups or blocks
Tell a story, read a book



Young Child

Read a book or look at pictures
Make drawings with crayons or pencils
Dance to music or sing songs
Do a chore together – make it a game



Teenager

Talk about something they like
Cook a favorite meal together
Exercise together to their favorite music



Keeping it Positive



**Say the behavior
you want to see**

Instead of “Stop bugging
your brother” try “please
go play with your video
game on your own”



**Speak in a calm
voice**



**“Catch” your child
behaving well**

Be specific with what you
are praising



**Help teens stay
safely connected to
their friends**

Get Structured



Routine should be flexible but consistent



Younger children benefit from picture schedules



Older children benefit from being involved in making the schedule



Include exercise or a way to keep moving

Giving Effective Instructions

- Reduce distractions before giving an instruction.
- Make eye contact.
- Say the child's name.
- Use a firm voice (not angry or shrill).
- Be clear about what you want the child to do.
 - Don't make any comments about the child.
- State the instruction as an instruction, not a request, favor, or question.
- Give only one instruction at a time.
- Always praise/reward as soon as your child follows an instruction.



Take Care of Yourself!

It is okay to feel stressed!

Take time just for you.

- Take turns with a co-parent or put them in an activity where they can play independently
- Be mindful of relaxing during this time
- Tell your kids what you're doing

Meditate or do Yoga together

Reporting

If you know of a child who is being abused or neglected, it is your duty to report it.

Report Abuse 24/7 Hotline



Call: 1-800-800-5556

Text (SMS): 741741