

Try These Parenting Tips

They'll teach your children to solve problems, value relationships and be independent

"People take childbirth classes, so why not parenting classes?" That's Shel Dougherty's viewpoint. As the instructor of Redirecting Children's Behavior, a course that teaches effective and simple parenting techniques, she sees how parents benefit. "Every parent wants the same thing from family life—an environment filled with teamwork, cooperation and fun," she says.

Use these tips from Dougherty's program to teach your children responsibility, build self-esteem and encourage good behavior.

Give your undivided attention

When your daughter comes to you with a butterfly she found, how do you respond? It's a great opportunity for a Genuine Encounter Moment, or GEM, Dougherty says. Here's how to experience a GEM:

- Stop what you're doing
- Get down to your child's level
- Look into her eyes
- Touch her
- Listen to what she says

It may only take 30 seconds, but it's often all your child wants. GEMs help your child feel acknowledged, important, cared for and valued. When she gets this kind of focused attention, she'll have little need to misbehave to get attention.



LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL
Cedar Crest & I-78, Allentown
17th & Chew Streets, Allentown

LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL—
MUHLENBERG
Route 22 & Schoenersville Road
Bethlehem

lvh.org
610-402-CARE

For more information
or for a physician referral,
call 610-402-CARE

Try These Parenting Tips

Use mistakes to teach lessons

Your son spills milk and cereal on the kitchen floor. Yelling is not the answer. It will scare him, cause him to cover up mistakes, lie or blame others for future mistakes. Instead, teach your child that mistakes are not “bad” and are essential for learning. Here’s how:

- Don’t tell him he can’t get cereal on his own anymore. Give him another chance. It shows him you have faith in his ability to improve.
- Show him how to do it the right way (pour the milk slowly over the cereal and carry the bowl with two hands).
- Ask questions like, “What did you learn from this?” or “What will you do differently next time?” He’ll learn more when he thinks of his own solutions.
- Allow him to repair his mistake by cleaning up the mess. It will teach him responsibility and the consequences of his actions.

Avoid the parenting “don’ts”

These common parenting behaviors aren’t helping your children be the best they can be.

- Don’t humiliate. If you embarrass your children, especially in front of their friends, they will seek revenge.
- Don’t criticize. Encourage your children and give them constructive messages.
- Don’t overuse “no.” Tell them what they can do. Say, “Walls are not for coloring on. You can color on this piece of paper,” or “Yes, I’ll take you to the mall when you’re done with your chores.”
- Don’t compare your child to another child. It breeds competition and hinders cooperation.
- Don’t overprotect. Let your children figure things out on their own, even if they’re struggling. They’ll gain confidence in their ability to care for themselves.



LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL
Cedar Crest & I-78, Allentown
17th & Chew Streets, Allentown

LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL—
MUHLENBERG
Route 22 & Schoenersville Road
Bethlehem

lvh.org
610-402-CARE

For more information
or for a physician referral,
call 610-402-CARE