

123 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children 2-12

By Thomas Phelan

Book Summary by Lily Talley

Hi parents! I just want to pass this on again to you guys. I just finished this book and it has some great tips on parenting. I highly recommend buying the book and then reading these notes. It has tons of practical tips on many disciplining situations you can think of. Hope this helps!

3 Steps to Effective Parenting

1. Controlling obnoxious behaviour
2. Encouraging good behaviour
3. Strengthening your relationship with your child

Stop Behaviour

- Children are doing something you want them to stop
- These are frequent and minor everyday hassles that kids present to you. For example: whining, disrespect, tantrums, arguing, teasing, fighting, pouting, yelling

Start behaviour

- Children are doing something you would like them to start
- For example: positive activities such as cleaning their rooms, doing homework, practicing the piano, getting up and out in the morning, going to bed, eating supper, being nice to people

Use the Counting Technique (1-2-3) for STOP behaviour.

Use these 7 Tactics for START behaviour.

1. Praise
2. Simple request
3. Kitchen timer
4. Docking system
5. Natural consequence
6. Charting
7. Variation of 1-2-3

Parents' big mistake is that they treat children like little adults.

- They use words to explain things to kids.
- You can add more talking when they are older.
- One explanation is fine, repeated explanation gets us in trouble.

2 Biggest Discipline Mistakes

1. Too much talking
2. Too much emotion

Too much talking and explaining irritates and distracts children. If you show your kids that you are upset, they will feel powerful. You need to be consistent, decisive and calm.

Explanations are appropriate when the behaviour is new or unusual. When you talk more, your discipline message fundamentally changes. ("You don't have to behave unless I can give you 5-6 reasons why you should".)

Tips:

What to do in public?

- The long-term welfare of your kids comes before short-term worries about what others are going to think.
- Use a time-out place (or the car).
- Keep moving, don't let the tantrum disrupt you from what you are doing.
- Don't take them unless you have to.
- Sibling Rivalry
- Count both kids that are fighting.
- Never ask 'What happened?' or 'Who started it?' because they are not gonna admit they started the fight.
- Don't expect an older child to act more mature during a fight that a younger child, punish them both fairly.

Time-out does not start until tantrum is over. You start the timer for the time-out after they have calmed down.

6 Kinds of Testing and Manipulation

1. Badgering=the child keeps after you and after you and after you, trying to wear you down. For example: please please please!!! Can I have some? Can I? Can I?
2. Temper (Intimidation)=tantrums are prolonged if a) the child has an audience b) the adults involved continue talking arguing or pleading to the youngster c) if the adult doesn't know what to do
3. Threat="I'm going to run away!"
4. Martyrdom="No one here loves me anymore!"
5. Butter-up=the child tries to make you feel good, the parent can feel scared that they might frustrate this good feeling if they don't give what they want. This is an advance set-up for parent guilt. For example: "Mom you have such great eyes!" and then later says, "Can I have a twinkie?" 30 mins before dinner.
6. Physical tactics=physical attack, breaking something, running away

Whining is a type of badgering and martyrdom.

Develop a major/minor system. Develop major/minor consequences for major/minor behaviour.

Lying

2 Types of Lying

1. Lying by making up stories and boost ego
2. Lying to avoid trouble

With lying either you know the truth or you don't. Don't keep asking to find out the truth, this just gives children more opportunity to practice lying. Believe what they say, if you find out later they lied, punish the behaviour.

The 7 Start Behaviour Tactics

1. Positive Reinforcement=use a lot of praise tailored to the child, not to the point of embarrassment, praise them in front of other people and give them unexpected praise.
2. Simple request=when making a simple request, use a matter of fact voice. For example: "John it's dinner time."

3. Kitchen timers=use the timer to measure the time you're giving them to finish the task. For example: You have 5 mins to tidy up the table, then set timer straight away. When 5 mins is up they need to be done or a consequence will be given.
4. Docking system="If you don't do the work, I will do it for you buy you pay me". Have a source of funds, allowance or save cash birthday gifts for this technique.
5. Natural consequences=if they don't wear their coat, let them feel the cold later. Hopefully being cold (natural consequence) will teach them the lesson.
6. Charting=use a calendar to keep track of how the child is doing and give incentive, use a lot of praise with this
7. Counting for brief start behaviour=use this for brief things you want them to do but they are refusing. For example: hanging up their coat, feeding the cat

My favorite method that I also use with the kids I nanny:

The Garbage Bag method. Tell the kids to pick up the things they don't want in the garbage bag by 6pm. After 6pm everything not picked-up will go in the bag and the children lose the right to use the item until 6pm the next day. You determine the time for this.

This book has a lot more tips on how to use the 7 tactics. My advice is to get the book and use this summary to refresh your memory when it's time to discipline the kids.

THERE IS NO SINGLE FORMULA FOR PARENTING. EACH FAMILY HAS DIFFERENT WAYS OF PARENTING THEIR CHILDREN. I BELIEVE THAT THESE BOOKS ARE HERE FOR US TO LEARN FROM AND NOT TO DICTATE HOW WE SHOULD RAISE OUR CHILDREN. HOW WE RAISE OUR OWN CHILD IS STILL FOR US TO DECIDE, AND DECISIONS SHOULD BE MADE FOR THE BETTER OF THE CHILD.