

PARENTING TIPS

Ending Every Discipline Time Positively

After a consequence or a conflict time, it's important to have a positive conclusion. It's usually best to talk about what went wrong, why it was wrong, and to give children a plan for next time. After that discussion, end the whole discipline by saying something like, "Okay, go ahead and try again."

An affirming statement at the end says, "I believe in you. Yes, you're going to make mistakes, there are consequences but we can debrief and learn together." This gives your child the confidence to try again. This kind of ending essentially says to a child that you believe in him, that we all make mistakes, and you know that he now has what it takes to make a right choice next time.

This kind of ending is similar to the way that Jesus ended the conversation with the woman caught in adultery. He said, "Go and sin no more." That's the kind of ending we want on our discipline. Go and try again.

Start this kind of positive conclusion with children as young as two years old. They may not be able to answer all the questions and, of course, you'll want to keep it short. But take time to hug and affirm a young child recognizing that the way you correct at two builds patterns for ways that you'll correct at five or fifteen.

With older children, take the time necessary to discuss issues and work to bring discipline times around to a positive conclusion. If the child is unwilling to respond you may need to take a break but don't just let it go. Teach young people that we continue to work on conflict until it's resolved. That's not easy sometimes but if you work hard on it now you'll be giving your child a gift that will be used later in life as well.

This parenting tip is from the book Home Improvement: [The Parenting Book You Can Read to Your Kids](#) by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN