

PARENTING TIPS

Fences Build Self Control

Through limit setting, discipline, and teaching, you provide “fences” that your children need. A fence is an indication of a boundary that shouldn’t be crossed. A fence around your house tells neighbors where the limits are and helps children and animals know where their freedom ends. The same is true in social relationships. Children need to know where the social boundaries are and when to stop before behavior becomes a nuisance to others.

Children who do annoying things habitually jump the fences. They need parents who are very involved in their everyday lives. The fences that facilitate social relationships can be complicated at times. Teasing has limits, and knowing when silliness or goofiness should end isn’t always easy to determine. Parents must step in at these times to help their children develop the social fences needed for successful relationships.

The goal of parent-control is to encourage self-control. Don’t be afraid to provide firm limits for your children. They need those external controls for awhile in order to develop internal control.

After children have learned to live within the boundaries and guidelines you’ve established for relationships, you gradually release the control and allow your kids to rely on their own internal fences that they’ve developed as a result of your training. The work you do during this time has long-lasting benefits. By focusing on impulsivity you will not only help your children socially, but you will also give them the tools to deal with temptation as well.

Remember that part of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 is self-control. It’s something that God also wants to develop in your child. It takes work but it’s worth it in the end.

This parenting tip comes from the book *Good and Angry, Exchanging Frustration for character in You and Your Kids* by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN