



Parent Education & Encouragement Group
"Represents Parental Protection, Mercy and Nurturing"

Presented at: **Good News Church**
239 W Washington Blvd Pasadena 91103
English and Spanish classes on Thursday 6:30pm- 8:30pm

1. **Communication, Active Listening, Acknowledging Feelings**
Comunicación, Escuchando con oído activo, Reconociendo sentimientos
2. **Family Meetings, Effective Praise and Rewards /Conflict resolution**
Reuniones familiares, Eulogio y recompensas
3. **Parental Function, Defining My Parenting Style**
Función de padres, Definiendo mi estilo de crianza
4. **Five-Step Problem Solving / Children's Court /Parent's Rights**
Cinco pasos para resolución de problemas, Corte de menores
5. **Single Parent and Multiple Parent Families**
Padres solteros y de ambos padres
6. **Domestic Violence, Self Control, Anger Management**
Violencia domestica, Autocontrol, Control de Ira
7. **Teens and Gangs**
Adolescentes y Pandillas
8. **Teaching Principles, Values / Family Rules / History of my Family**
Ensenando principios, Valores, reglas familiares y la historia de mi familia
9. **Education Guidance / Show & Tell**
Orientación educacional, Enseñar y demostrar
10. **Natural & Logical Consequences / Structure**
11. **Mild Social Disapproval, Ignoring / Point System, Contracts and Bargaining**
12. **Structure, Establishing Limits & Boundaries**
13. **Humnan Sexuality and Teens**
Sexualidad Humana, El desarrollo sexual en los adolescentes
14. **Family Health Nutrition and Child Safety**
Salud familiar, Nutrición, Seguridad de niños
15. **Teens, Drugs and Alcohol**
Adolescentes, Drogas, Alcohol y Tabaco
16. **Family Group Support, Skills Evaluation, Potluck**
Grupo de apoyo familiar, Habilidades de evaluación, Platillo para compartir

Daily Homework

Active Listening and acknowledging feelings
Five Step Problem Solving
Hug and Kiss your child

Homework Review

Lesson # 11 Mild Social Disapproval, Ignoring / Point System, Contracts and Bargaining

New Material

Lesson # 12 Structure, Establishing Limits & Boundaries

Homework Assignment

Write a paragraph:
1) What I learned
2) What I tried

Facilitators:
Horacio Garcia / Myles Williams / Elvia Casas
Program Director: Dr. Janice Woods

Establishing Limits and Boundaries

Children need space and freedom to grow. They need an atmosphere of warmth and trust to freely express their thoughts and emotions. The same is true for parents, because parents are still growing too...hopefully. We need to have healthy and constructive parent-child relationships. This in turn promotes the development of happier, more confident and more secure children. It seems too often that parents have to sacrifice their own needs for the children and sometimes vice versa. Either way it can mean disaster for both parent and child. When resentments build up and tempers flare, nobody gets what they really want, which is really a happy, healthy relationship with each other.

Think about how much your children mean to you and how good that they can make you feel. They make you laugh, they make you proud, and they even sometimes make you cry tears of joy. Your children care what you say, what you do and how you are feeling. They love you, trust you and miss you when you are gone. They probably come to you when they need answers, toy repairs, first aid and sympathy. You've got to admit; it's pretty gratifying to be loved and needed like that. It can be great to be a parent.

On the other hand, we're all human (adults and children) and problems do arise. We sometimes get in each other's way and on each other's nerves. We have conflicts, misunderstandings and worst of all, we have negative feelings between parent and child. When this happens, nobody wins. Have you ever wished that you could just leave? Do you sometimes say, "He'll grow out of it", but **how long**? Have you ever felt guilty and that maybe this is all your fault? Most parents have these difficulties and feelings.

Research shows that most parents, at some time or another, do have strong negative feelings towards their children. It is OK to be upset with your child now and then, however, it's not OK to be upset and angry with them constantly. Barring any mental health issues and anger management needs; parents and children should be able to solve interpersonal problems constructively without escalating to angry outbursts and lashing out disrespectfully.

Using the 5-Step Problem Solving method, as discussed in earlier sessions, is always a good tool. Of course Logical and Natural Consequences can teach children just how far they can go without suffering negative consequences. Another way to avoid many such problems is by setting appropriate limits and boundaries ahead of time.

Once again we need to remember the basic law of behavior, **a person's behavior is shaped by consequences**. Of course we have children with varying mental health issues that need mental health care and treatment. Some may also be in need of medications to address chemical imbalances. However, most children's appropriate behavior is simply a derivative of the structure, limits and boundaries set by loving, caring, nurturing, consistent, parents.

When setting limits and boundaries we need to consider the facts. Why is the limit set here? Why are these boundaries in this place? All children will eventually get around to asking the never-ending question "Why"? The better you are prepared to answer that question, the more reasonable, logical and respectable you will appear to your children. Some of us can remember when mother may have told us, "Because I said so." That was enough to get us out of her hair. But that was only a temporary deterrent because the question was still there, and it would be answered...if not you by someone else. Many times in our own life, we ended up learning "why" the hard way (Natural

consequences). In many other cases, we never understood why we couldn't go past a certain street. We did it, things were OK (nobody died). Where is the logic, what's the reason for this rule? How does this affect my credibility with my child?

In driver's education the instructors tell us the reason for the laws and limits. In most cases we learn to avoid negative consequences by knowing the limits ahead of time. The same is true for our kids. Sit down with them, talk intelligently with them, explain the reasons **WHY** the limits and boundaries exist.

Remember that each child is different and we cannot say that there is going to be one technique/tool for a given situation. We can say that we need to have many techniques/tools available for many different children and situations. After setting the limits and boundaries for a given situation we need to use other techniques/tools in addition, to support our efforts.

Praise (From lesson two) is most important when the child follows the guidelines and stays within the limits and boundaries set for him. Mild Social Disapproval (From lesson 11) is also an excellent technique/tool to remind the children not to test the limits and boundaries set. Once again, this requires parents to explain clearly the expectations for their behavior ahead of time. These consequences (Both negative and positive) will reinforce the limits set and allow parents not to spend so much time dealing with conflicts, misunderstandings and negative feelings.

We discussed in earlier sessions the value of contracts or reward charts and how we can increase desired behavior with positive consequences. We found these tools can effectively modify behavior. We also discussed how negative consequences should be used when limits and boundaries are not respected. But what about behavior that doesn't change no matter how much we discipline and implement negative consequences. In many cases, this is really a matter of the odds of the child being caught.

Most children are very aware of what behaviors they can get away with and of the odds that they might get caught. If they don't get caught, they don't get punished; it's that simple. In this case, increased supervision may be the only answer. However, understanding the logic surrounding the limits may enable the child to reason with himself. Let the child make you proud when he tells you that he made the right choice, even when he could have gotten away with making the wrong one. Then praise the child, thus teaching the child that making the right choice is good for him with or without supervision.

Now what about the repeated undesirable behavior that takes place right under your nose? The child knows you'll notice it and knows that he will be punished but he does it anyway. This could be a factor of some more powerful rewards serving to maintain the undesirable behavior. For example, a child may find it more rewarding to get in a few punches on his older brother that torments him regardless of the punishment. Another example is when a child finds that they get more attention if they do something bad since everybody is so preoccupied with the newborn. Clinician files are filled with cases of children who simply wanted more attention.

There are many of us who still question the use of rewards and feel that this is nothing more than a bribe. Let's take a look at definitions.

REWARD: in psychology, it's something positive that follows a desired response and acts to encourage desired behavior. Something desirable given in return for what somebody has done.

BRIBE: to give somebody money or some other incentive to do something illegal or dishonest. When a child molester gives a child some money to keep quiet, that's a bribe.

Remember

- 1) Behavior is shaped by consequences i.e. rewards, discipline, punishments.
- 2) If you want to see more of a certain behavior, you need to reward and **PRAISE** that behavior.
- 3) If you want to see less of the behavior, you should (if possible) ignore the behavior or discipline the child when he engages in the undesired behavior. Also remove the rewards that serve to maintain the undesired behavior.

Now let's discuss some of the limits and boundaries that we have set for our children. Let's be sure we know why they are set and how we all benefit by them. When parents and children have the same expectations, as limits and boundaries are understood, there is typically more harmony in the home and happier healthier relationships between parents and children.

Sources: 'Effective Parents, Responsible Children' by Robert Eimers and Robert Aitchison, Ph.D.
'Nanny 911' by Deborah Carroll and Stella Reid

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Remember your own childhood and the limits and boundaries that were set for you.

The purpose of this exercise is for you to be introspective and find the best way to communicate your limits and boundaries to your children. Do this by looking at what worked and what didn't work for you as a child.

Give an example of limits explained to you, as a child; were they reasonable and age appropriate?

Were the boundaries a source of safety or comfort for you or a challenge to extend them?

Did you understand why the limits and boundaries were set in place or was obedience relied upon?

Describe some limits and boundaries you have made for your children and describe how you put them in place.