

Further Resources

For More Information:

<https://childbuilders.org/healthyminds>



Stream Our Podcast:

<https://childbuilders.org/podcast>



This brochure is adapted from Parents Under Construction, one of ChildBuilders' programs teaching children how to build strong relationships and healthy families since 1992.

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Discipline is not about control. It is about guiding your child with care.



Tools for Positive Discipline: Raising Mentally Healthy Kids

Firm and kind parenting strategies to build trust, self-discipline, and a stronger parent-child bond.

ChildBuilders is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Building Your Toolbox

Imagine This:

- ★ Your 8-month-old crawls toward an electrical outlet, reaching out with curious fingers.
- ★ Your 3-year-old asks for a cookie. When you say, "No, not now," she starts to whine and throw a tantrum.
- ★ Your school-age child comes home 30 minutes late from a friend's house. When you tell him he is grounded, he shouts, "I hate you! You are the worst parent ever."



From Reaction to Intention

Situations like these are common in parenting. In moments of fear, frustration, or anger, parents might yell and spank. But research shows these reactions aren't the most effective or mentally healthy strategies.

Just like a carpenter uses different tools for different jobs, parents need a variety of strategies to guide their children.

These strategies can help you fill your "**parenting toolbox**" with simple, mentally healthy tools that teach your child **self-discipline**—the most important skill for growing into a confident, caring adult.



Tools for Parenting

1. Redirect, Don't React

When your child is doing something unsafe, act quickly but calmly.

- ★ Say "That can hurt you," in a firm voice.
- ★ Move them to a safe space or remove the unsafe object.
- ★ Offer a safer choice: "Let's play with this toy instead."

This tool is called *redirection*—you help your child shift from unsafe to safe behavior without fear or shame.

2. Watch Your "NOs"

If children hear "no" all the time, they may stop listening. Save "no" for serious safety issues, like running toward the street. Instead, tell your child what they can do:

- ★ "You can play outside after your homework is done."
- ★ "When you eat your dinner, we can have dessert."



3. Reflect Their Feelings

When children are upset, try naming what they feel to help them identify their emotions and learn it is safe to express how they feel. This is called reflecting feelings. Say things like:

- ★ "You seem really sad."
- ★ "I think you might be feeling very angry."

This helps your child feel seen and heard—and it can calm strong emotions.

4. Be Consistent

Children feel safe when they know what to expect. If you say that homework must be done before screen time, stick to it.

- ★ Follow through every time.
- ★ Keep your word.

Consistency builds trust and teaches children how to make good choices.