

# *Range of Discipline Techniques*

## *Positive Before the Fact Techniques*

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These discipline techniques are used to stop negative or unacceptable behavior before it happens by setting children up for success. These techniques include: Modeling, Empathy, Encouragement, Consequences (see additional information sheets on these topics), as well as the techniques described below: Routines, Sense of Humor, Setting Limits, Physical and Verbal Redirection, and Incentives.

### *Routines*

Routines are activities done consistently and predictably. Children can depend on family routines. Routines help children feel safe and secure. When children can count on the same thing from day to day, they feel safe and develop trust in their parents and their environment.

Example of routines you may already observe: go to school every day; go to religious services on weekends; have dinner with family every night or on certain nights each week.

Examples of routines that help young children feel safe and secure: evening and bedtime routine being the same every night; having a special holiday meal or celebration each year; singing a special song every morning when waking up.

### *Sense of Humor*

Even when children misbehave, it can be useful to respond with a smile and sense of humor. Playfulness can diffuse a tense situation. Approaching parenting with a sense of humor models enjoyment of life.

### *Setting Limits*

Limits are important at all ages and change as the child grows older. For very young children, limit setting begins with providing a safe, positive environment for the child to play. This makes them feel secure and allows them to explore without being told “no” as frequently.



## *Positive Before the Fact Techniques (Continued)*

### *Physical Redirection*

Changing the environment can change behavior. When you see signs that your child is about to make a poor choice, distract your child and redirect the focus to a positive task. For example, if your child is about to touch the hot stove, move their body away from the stove and toward a safe toy.

### *Verbal Redirection*

Verbal redirection refers to using your words to change the situation when your child is heading for trouble. The key to verbal redirection is to make positive statements. Tell your child what to do instead of what not to do. The words “no” and “don’t” should rarely be used. Instead, use the words “can” and “may” more often.

### *Incentives*

An incentive is a motivating force. It can be a thing, a privilege, or positive attention from you. Use incentives when offering your child choices. The incentive can “sweeten the deal” for the choice you want your child to make.

Incentives can set the stage for your child’s positive behavior. There are many different types of incentives. Children of different ages are motivated by different things. Keep in mind that the age-appropriateness of an incentive increases its effectiveness. Finding the right one for a child takes a little creativity. For example, you can offer your child a trip to the playground as an incentive for cleaning their bedroom.