

# Firm, Fair & Consistent®

Neil Cummins Elementary School

Guiding Students for School Success

## Show how perseverance pays off

“When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” This phrase sums up perseverance—the ability to push forward without giving up, even when it’s hard. Perseverance leads to success. Researchers also link it to confidence, responsibility and a willingness to take healthy risks.

To build your child’s perseverance:

- **Set reasonable expectations.** Help your child pick goals that are sensible, yet challenging. Expecting too much of someone can be harmful.
- **Allow room for mistakes.** It doesn’t take perfection to reach a goal. In fact, facing setbacks—and persisting in spite of the setbacks—is quite an accomplishment.
- **Limit criticisms.** Kids need their parents’ support, so tell your child what she’s doing right. When you must criticize, do it in a helpful, caring way.
- **Be a role model.** Show that you like to keep trying. Note positive examples in stories and books (*The Little Engine That Could*).
- **Offer encouragement.** Say things like, “That math homework isn’t easy. But you’re really sticking with it!”
- **Teach patience.** Patience and perseverance go hand in hand. For example, waiting for results from a science experiment takes both—but it’s worth it!



Source: Marianne Neifert, M.D., “Raising a Moral Child,” Parenting.com, [www.parenting.com/article/Mom/Health-Fitness/Raising-a-Moral-Child-21354393/6](http://www.parenting.com/article/Mom/Health-Fitness/Raising-a-Moral-Child-21354393/6).

## When is disobedience a serious problem?



All kids disobey their parents at times. But consider that your child’s disobedience may signal a bigger problem if it:

- **Happens constantly.**
- **Doesn’t improve** despite your efforts to make it stop.
- **Is accompanied by anger** or aggression.

If this sounds like your child, you may be dealing with more than simple disobedience. At this point, it’s important to talk to his school counselor or pediatrician about finding outside help.

Source: “What can be done about a chronically disobedient child?” American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org/publiced/BK5\\_Disobedience.htm](http://www.aap.org/publiced/BK5_Disobedience.htm).

## List and post your essential rules

Try writing down your family’s “household rules.” How long is the list? Consider making just a few, reasonable rules (not too many!). You can set clear limits based on your values. Post the rules as a helpful reminder.

Not sure what to include? Next time you’re at school, notice which rules teachers have posted in the classrooms. These provide good food for thought—and consistency between school and home.



All *work* and no *play*, as the old saying goes, makes a child dull. But all *play* and no *work* doesn’t prepare a child to grow up to be a responsible adult.



This summer, help your child use her leisure time wisely. Set aside time to read favorite books aloud, and schedule visits to the library. Encourage physical activity. And expect her to keep to the chore schedule.

## Is your child patient?

Does your child want what he wants—when he wants it? To teach your child patience:



- **Enjoy “slow” activities.** When you’re gardening or baking together, it’s tough to rush.
- **Delay gratification.** Have your child save for what he wants.
- **Model it.** If you’re stuck in traffic, don’t pound the dashboard. Chat with your child or play a car-friendly game like I Spy.

Source: Marilyn Heins, M.D., F.A.A.P., “Teaching Kids Patience,” ParentKidsRight.com, [www.parentkidsright.com/pt-patience.html](http://www.parentkidsright.com/pt-patience.html).

## Solve problems in three simple steps

When kids and parents don't agree, arguments can result. It helps to have a strategy for solving problems. For example:

1. **Understand the problem.** Ask questions. Listen well to each other. When explaining feelings, begin with "I." This prevents accusations and blame. ("I feel worried when you don't do your homework because learning is so important.")
2. **Brainstorm and discuss.** You and your child can make all kinds of suggestions, even if they're silly. Sometimes odd ideas inspire the best solutions. When you disagree, do it gently. "That plan is creative. But I think it would be hard to do."
3. **Test a choice.** Decide to try one of the ideas. You might say, "Let's try this for a week. Then we'll talk about it Friday night."



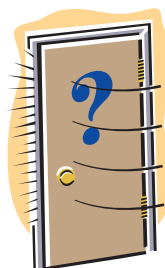
Source: Don Dinkmeyer, Sr., Gary D. McKay and Don Dinkmeyer, Jr., *The Parent's Handbook*, ISBN: 0-7854-11887 (American Guidance Service, Inc., 1-800-328-2560, www.agsnet.com).

## Questions & Answers

**Q:** My child has ADHD, and sometimes it feels impossible to discipline her. How can I bring some peace back into my house and stop all the yelling (hers and mine)?

**A:** It can be tough to discipline any child, but adding ADHD to the mix can complicate things. Still, disciplining your child doesn't have to end with screaming or headaches. The key may be to tweak your definition of "discipline." Instead of concentrating on enforcing rules, focus on making it easier for your child to behave properly. For example, you can:

- **Put a positive spin on your comments.** Rather than telling her what *not* to do ("Don't slam the door!"), remind her what she *should* do ("I'm glad you closed the door so quietly."). This makes it seem less like you're giving orders and more like you're offering support.
- **Give her plenty of warning.** Your child may struggle with following instructions and find it hard to shift from one thing to another. So give her enough time to do what she's told. "You need to pick up your books. You have until the count of three to start moving." Then count out loud—slowly. If she doesn't cooperate? Enforce a consequence.
- **Help her practice good behavior.** If your child isn't sure how to act in certain situations, role-play those scenarios with her. For example, if she must interrupt a conversation, show her how to do it politely. "Excuse me," she might say, "but I really need to tell you something."



Source: Tula Karras, "Managing misbehavior in children with ADHD," ParentCenter.com, [http://parentcenter.babycenter.com/0\\_managing-misbehavior-in-children-with-adhd\\_67401.pc?page=1](http://parentcenter.babycenter.com/0_managing-misbehavior-in-children-with-adhd_67401.pc?page=1).

## Respond to rudeness

When sports figures behave rudely on the field (and get away with it), it should come as no surprise that children sometimes behave rudely. But as a parent, you can—and should—respond to your child's rudeness. You should:

- **Let your child know** his behavior is unacceptable.
- **Stay calm** and state your family's rule and the reasons for it.
- **Suggest alternatives.** Sometimes children are rude because they don't know what else to do or say.

If rudeness is not an occasional thing, but seems to be the way your child deals with the world, you need to pay attention. Talk to a counselor.

## What's the secret to setting limits?

Think of *things* your child has outgrown this year—a pair of shoes, a jacket, jeans. Most parents don't think twice about replacing them.

How about the *limits* you set for your child? Those can be outgrown, too. Check regularly to see whether the limits you established still "fit."

And leave room for adjustments—you can always return to the way things were.



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