

This paper is designed as an informational tool to help add tools to your toolbox. Every person has ideas and ways that work in life. Sometimes we need to collaborate with our partner to work as a team and accept new or different ways of doing things. This is hard. I believe it is worthwhile as it is developing stronger partnerships and families. Use what works, adapt it to fit your family and life style. Each family is different yet similar, work it to fit your family. Good Luck!

What type of family do you want to have? What type of children? Independent adults who take pride in self and are not entitled? Make your values and expectations fit the type of children/family you and your partner desire

Examples of some Family Values and Expectations:

- We respect each other's personal belongings and space
- We are polite and kind to all people, animals, and the environment
- We do our best at our work and activities
- We are grateful for things given to us/ Stewardship
- We seek to learn something new every day and have adventures
- We help each other at all times and act as a team
- Use your manners; please, thank you, can I get you..., how can I help

Helpful hints:

- (Thumper from Bambi: "if you can't say nothing nice don't say nothing at all")
- Honesty: Our family speaks the truth in kindness
(your opinion and truth is for you to think but not always share especially if it is hurtful; for example, "that lady is fat!" if she heard that she would be hurt and sad)
- See it, own it: if you see it pick it up even if it isn't yours
- Stewardship which means taking care of things in our home and things you have been given.

- Listen to others when they speak and take care to hear their words; take turns talking. We all want to be heard take time to hear your family
- Hands, feet and objects to yourself

WARNING to Child/Children Remember every issue is not written down and we are your parents/caregivers. We ultimately determine what is going on each day.

It is very helpful to have a routine with expectations for various times of the day for your child/children. This is their routine for them to accomplish. Parents are the coach not the doer.

An example:

Morning:

- Wake up to alarm
 - I have observed that most behavioral problems later with children revolve around having a parent or caregiver wake them up and the child's refusal to get up
 - children as young as 3 can do this. Make it fun let the child pick out own alarm clock. Phones should not be used as alarm as issues occur with late night texting/social media problems as well as the low-level emissions that can disrupt sleep. If children have sleep issues no electronics except an alarm and perhaps a white e reader with no internet access should be allowed in room. Most devices have ways to surf the internet which again causes problems.
- If eat breakfast at home go and eat; clean up your area when finished
- Hygiene: shower if needed; wash face, use face wash, lotion etc. and make sure to brush teeth; use a timer if needed. Clean up sink and make sure towels are hung or put in laundry, pick up any dirty clothes and put in dirty clothes container, if wear pajamas again take to bedroom
- Put on clothes for day that are laid out from previous night if possible
 - if have younger child may want to give two choices and allow the child to pick clothes for day. Encourage checking the weather first to encourage observation and problem-solving skills

- Make bed
- Put pajamas in dirty clothes container or fold and put under pillow or on bed (each child should have container for dirty clothes in their room and it might be a positive responsibility for them to take care of getting it to laundry room or even to wash, fold and put away their own clothes; I have seen children as young as 5 be taught to wash clothes and love it!)
- Check room and grab backpack or other items needed for day
- Make sure backpack is ready and remember a lunch or snack if needed
 - children should be encouraged to help make lunch if younger or make by self if older. May give choices but allow kids to do it themselves. This helps with independence and self confidence
- **NOW** if child has a phone they can have it at this time if that is your policy to allow a phone to go to school. It is helpful to allow this privilege after the child is ready for their day. If child has time before needing to leave this is the time to relax with tv or other choices
- At least 5 minutes prior to needing to leave an alarm should go off to stop what everyone is doing and children get their items such as backpack and outside clothes (if needed) to leave for ride/bus

Many families have animals put the animals care in a place that makes sense for your family and another responsibility/expectation for your child/children

Remember this is NOT a have to do list. It is an example of ideas that have worked in the past to encourage a smooth morning with less stress and build responsibility and other positive characteristics in children.

It is the parents/caregivers job to ensure a more organized less chaotic morning for the child/children. Parents may need to be ready for their day BEFORE the child/children start their routine so the parent(s) can coach as needed. If an adult is grumpy in the morning, just like a child, that means they need an earlier bedtime. Children and adults need to meet their personal sleep needs and this is not determined by age. Many younger siblings can stay up later than the older ones and sometimes even parents and get up with no issues and attitude.

Bedtimes should be determined by if one is grumpy in morning and refuses or is slow getting ready for the day.

Afternoon: Each family is different. Many have sport or other activities so plan a daily calendar at family meeting to meet time changes for dinner, homework and possible chores like make a lunch and or snack, pack backpack

Helpful hints for sleeping and connection

- Research has shown that our body makes melatonin one hour before we lay down to sleep. Having a regular bedtime (even on weekends) allows the body to know when to start this process. If you vary bed times the body will not start making the melatonin until you actually lay down; which is why many people lay awake in bed a long time before they fall asleep. It is encouraged to have a regular bed time for everyone in the family, adults also. If one needs a sleep aid and uses melatonin it should be taken one hour before bed
- Devises including tv should be stopped one hour before bedtime. **Use this hour to unwind together and prepare for bed.** Reading to children or taking turns reading is a positive connection most families overlook due to our busy lifestyles. I encourage each parent to read to each child and spend this as one on one time with them. Each child needs one on one time with a parent so take turns and make it happen. This is also a good opportunity to communicate with them. Listen to your children, allow them to be heard and enjoy reading or taking turns reading to one another as a positive relationship builder
- Research has also shown that cell phones, computers, tv and most electronic devises emit a low level of energy that may disrupt sleep. For those that have trouble sleeping the room should be cleared of those devises. Cell phones should not be allowed in a child/teens room as it is disruptive because many kids text or go on social media all night long.

Even if your child/teen does not others do and the ding is disturbing to your child's sleep.

- Each person needs a different amount of sleep. Age is not a factor. Many younger children can stay up later than an older sibling or even parent and wake up happy and perform their expectations for the morning. Determining if a person needs more sleep is by noting behavior. Is the person grumpy, slow to follow morning routine? Then an earlier bedtime is needed (for adults too)

Night time routine

- One hour prior to bed stop all electronic use
- Eat a snack if this is usual in your family
- Hygiene; shower/bath; lotion; teeth etc.
 - Remember to clean up sink area, bath/shower area and hang towels or put them in hamper
- Check weather for next day and pick out clothes; parents may help by giving two choices for the younger children
- If child has cell phone now is its bedtime so it should go to an inaccessible location to charge until parents give back the next day. This policy helps when child/children reach teen age years and phone/internet/social media problems may occur. Stop it before it happens then it is just normal routine and nothing to fight about
- In bed, quiet reading and or reading time with parent(s)
- Lights out- Skill work if child has them, such as breathing out bad of day, tapping in positives of day, breathing skills etc.

Remember this is NOT a have to do list. It is an example of ideas that have worked in the past to encourage a smooth nighttime routine with less stress and build responsibility and other positive characteristics in children as well as build family connection if reading together is incorporated.

Money and responsibility

Children do not need parents/caregivers who do everything for them. This is a problem and why we are seeing many entitled young people and young people who have no daily living skills. Doing everything for a child is not a way to show love and may cause depression, discouragement and issues with self-esteem as the child might internalize this to mean they are incapable to do things or they are above others and need not do things. Both mindsets cause problems in life.

If you choose as parents/caregivers to give money for chores **be consistent** and do not pay if chores are not complete. There are numerous ways to do this and pick what is right and fits with your lifestyle and schedules.

One idea is the list: each child has a list to do and get paid when completed to **parents' satisfaction**.

Another idea: is the entire family cleans together and may swap jobs (or not) this encourages the family as a team to work together and avoids the procrastination and arguments of the list.

A rule of finance for all is to have 80% of income for Needs (bills) and Wants; 10% for saving and 10% for charity. The charity piece is positive in building empathy and caring for others in need and social responsibility.

Many parents take that 80% and lower it and increase savings. That is parents/caregiver's choice. Remember when teaching finance mistakes are ok when young and less devastating so allow some learning events to occur. I have seen many adults as well as children who do not understand the concept that money earned is not just for wants but that bills and needs are first to be paid and **then** if money left over it can go to wants. This is why coaching and guiding, not controlling is helpful for our children to learn good spending and saving habits. Teaching them the value of money and expectations of being an adult by showing rent/mortgage, car payment/insurance; heat, water, sewer, garbage are bills to be paid first followed by food, gas, clothes, cell phone, internet. In actuality

internet and TV and many cell phone plans are wants and not needs. Then comes the games, purses, extra clothes, fast food, movies which are wants.

It is also good to have child/children know the cost of food at grocery store (jr high?) I have worked with many 18 year olds (and older) that were clueless about rent, electric, heat, water, food costs. They had always used all money earned for fun. Daily living skills should be taught to children.

When it comes to teaching about credit cards the lesson my parents taught was very helpful. I got a credit card at 16. The rule was I had to pay it in full when the bill came so no interest was incurred. That gave me 30 days to get a babysitting job, beg for money from parents if I did an extra project or when I had a part time job use paycheck to pay it off. I followed this plan and up to my marriage it worked. I am again doing this in our personal finances and it has helped our financial security.

Another item to consider is when having a family meeting plan an event to help others. For example; take the family to Feed my starving children. Help at a food shelf. Plan an afternoon at home and go through extra and old clothes, toys, household items to share with others. Help out at church (nursery) These are life lessons that encourage community service which our world needs. It also promotes the idea that they can help and give even without money.

These are ideas for you to utilize if it seems like something you as parents/caregivers want to try.

Discipline:

Age appropriate; Know your child's likes; those are the items or privileges that a loss of will help the consequences work to modify behavior

Use words like these are our expectations and when not met the consequence is...

Have specific consequences that are logical and not dependent on if you are grumpy or happy.

Be consistent: If the rule is no hitting the consequence is the same; usually verbal or physical abuse should be the worst consequence you have. Many families lose all screen time, turn off cell phone (check with your provider there is a way to turn off data, text and phone) for the rest of the day and perhaps so many hours the following day and they are unable to go out of house

If you have a picky eater give the child one maybe two choices of something they can quickly make, like a healthy cereal or toast with peanut butter. If they CHOOSE not to eat either they do not get any dessert or snack or juice or milk until the next meal. If that is the next day let it happen! Your child may be hungry but will not die and the lesson will be learned much faster. I am mean. I always encourage the family to go out or make a great dessert for an after dinner snack and make the child watch. Problem solved! (hopefully. lol) I did it and it worked!

Another logical consequence is if the child is to have homework done by ___ they don't get screen time, cell phone, electronics until it is done nor are they able to engage with friends until it is done. Same concept for if you have a chore list. If in the morning the bed was not made they do not get screen time, cell phone, electronics or are able to engage with others until the chore is done. Same concept for other chores. If you want all chores done by a certain day and they are not done, No screen time, cell phone etc. and no engaging or going out with friends. ~You get the idea. ~

Parents/caregivers sit down together and make your expectations(rules) and determine consequences. Present at a family meeting and before giving consequences ask for ideas from the child/children. Also ask if there are other

expectations you missed. Get them involved then present the best choice for consequences. It may be your child/children's idea.

If your family is having behavioral problems more severe. Set up some sessions with me to work on one of the programs that will fit your family.

These are suggestions at ways discipline using logical consequences and being consistent. There are many great ideas out there and your tools may work fine. This entire paper is intended to guide and possibly add new tools to your toolbox and make life a little more positive.

