

# TIMEOUT—and other effective ways to discipline your child

As a parent, one of your jobs is to teach your child to behave. While this can take time, try not to get frustrated when your child does not behave. Instead, learn effective ways to discipline your child.

When your child does not listen, the American Academy of Pediatrics says to try these techniques:

- **Natural consequences.** It's hard (for you), but let your child see what will happen if she does not behave (as long as it does not place her in danger). For example, if she throws and breaks her toy, she will not be able to play with it. It won't be long before she learns to play carefully with her toys.
- **Logical consequences.** These are the times when you will need to step in and create a consequence. For example, tell your child that if he does not pick up his toys, you will put them away for the rest of the day. Mean what you say. Be prepared to follow through right away. Be firm and respond calmly.
- **Withholding privileges.** Tell your child that if she does not cooperate, she will have to give something up she likes. But never take away something your child needs, such as a meal. Choose something your child values that is related to the misbehavior. And take the item or privilege away right away if the child is younger than 6 or 7.
- **Timeout.** Works well when a specific rule has been broken. Is best for children 2 to 5 years old, but can be used throughout childhood. Set the rules ahead of time. Choose a timeout spot (a boring place such as a chair but not a bathroom or bedroom). Do not discuss or negotiate. Set a time limit (1 minute for every year of age).

