

Desert View's PBIS Newsletter

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POSITIVE SOLUTIONS FOR FAMILIES: Eight practical tips for parents of children with challenging behavior

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How to Use This List

Review each of the tips below and think about situations you have experienced with your child. You will need to decide which strategies are likely to work best for your family. Remember, the idea is to develop specific approaches for your own family that can be used in everyday life.

Tip #1: Keep Your Expectations Realistic

It is important for you to know and understand your child's abilities and limitations. When you expect too much or too little from your child it can lead to problems and frustrations for you both.

Tip #2 Plan Ahead

Try to anticipate what your child may do or need in various situations. Make sure that you plan ahead to set your child up for a successful experience. Hope for the best, but plan for the worst. Always have a back-up plan!

Tip #3 Clearly State Your Expectations in Advance

Some undesirable behavior occurs because your child can't act differently, other times it occurs because your child simply doesn't want to act differently. Either way it helps for you to remember that your child cannot read your mind. Be sure to give your child one clear instruction so that he/she knows what it is that you want them to do.

Tip #4 Offer Limited, Reasonable Choices

In order for your child to learn to take personal responsibility they will need plenty of support and practice. *One teacher at Desert View suggests that giving children options—options that the adult is comfortable with—invites cooperation. For example, giving your*



child two options for the park they want to choose. You can also ask them which homework assignment they'd like to complete first. Just make sure the options you give them are ones the adult decides, and be sure to stay consistent! Telling them to choose between two different options for dinner one night and then another night telling your child they have to eat your chicken dinner may be met with some resistance.

Tip #5: “When...Then” Statements

This statement is a simple instruction that tells your child what he or she must do in order to do what they want to do. For example, your child wants to play outside, barefoot. “When you put on your shoes, then you may go outside.” You are not just saying “No”. You are letting your child know what needs to happen in order for him/her to reach their desired destination.

Tip #6: Catch Your Child Being Good.

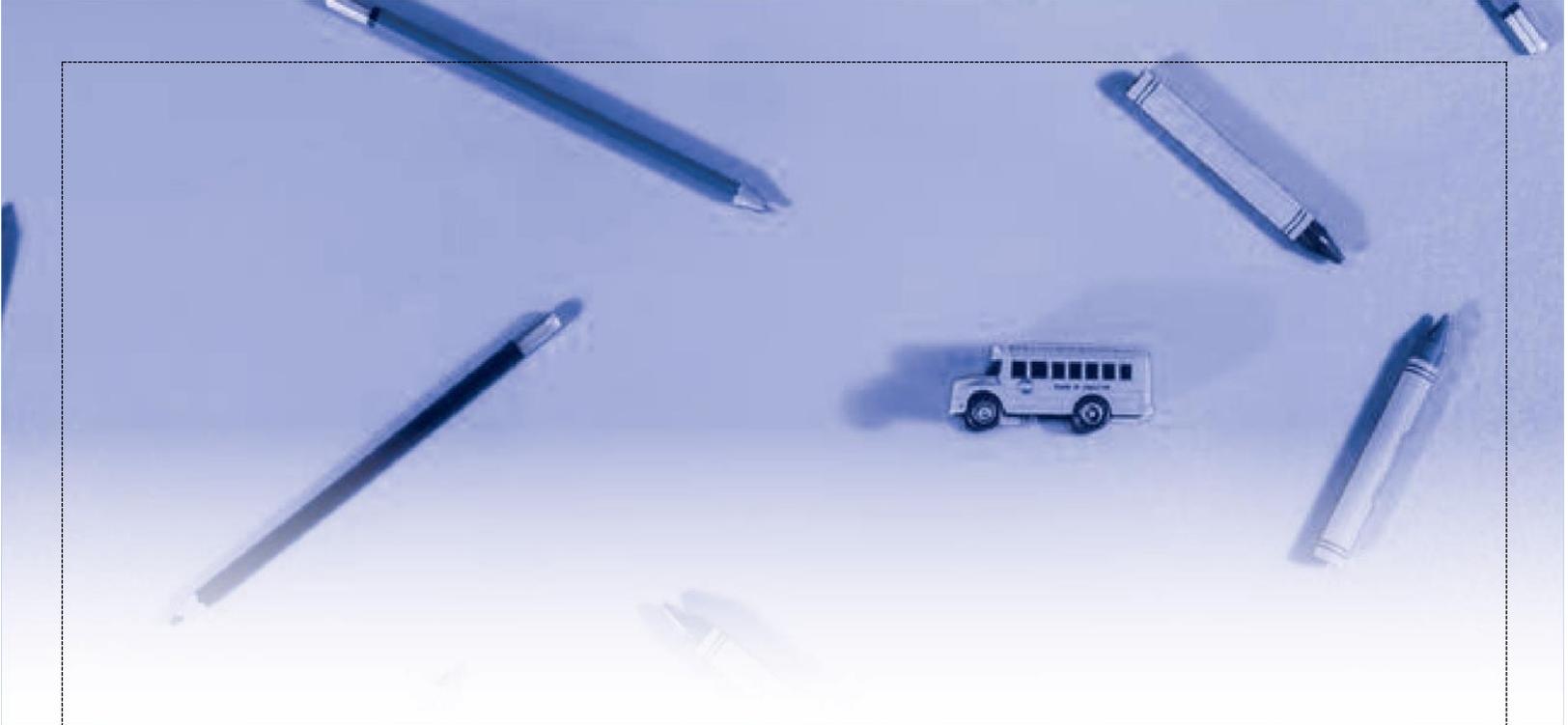
Did you ever stop to think about how much time you spend telling your child what he/she should not do? Instead, try giving specific, positive attention to the behavior you want to see. This will teach your child what you want him/her to do and increase the likelihood that this behavior will occur again.

Tip #7: Stay Calm

When you remain calm, it also give you time to think about how you want to respond. Remember, you are modeling desired behavior for your child—the more out-of-control your child becomes, the more self-control you need to show. When you remain calm your child learns appropriate ways to respond to difficult situations.

Tip #8: Use Neutral Time

Neutral time cannot be found in the middle of a difficult situation filled with strong feelings. Instead, neutral time is when everyone is calm enough to think and talk and listen. It's important to remember that neutral time can occur either before or after a child's unacceptable behavior occurs. You can talk about what happened earlier and talk about positive ways to handle problems in the future. The challenge is to identify neutral time and make use of these opportunities.



November 2019 Vol.1 No.3



