

# Parenting the Positive Discipline Way

May 2014

## Follow Through



**If you say it, mean it,  
and if you mean it, follow through.**

Kids know when you mean it and when you don't.

**If you say:** "I will read a story at 8:00 after pajamas are on and teeth are brushed," and your kids aren't ready by 8:00; **kindly** point out the time and put the kids to bed without reading.

**Be encouraging** by saying, "You can try again tomorrow."

Quotes from the Positive Discipline books © Jane Nelsen and Lynn Lott

## Follow Through With Children

Parents sometimes believe that giving children what they want and not burdening them with rules will show them that they are loved. We want to stress that permissiveness is not the way to help children develop initiative-or any other valuable social or life skill. If you say it, mean it, and if you mean it, follow through.

Children know when you mean what you say and when you don't. It is really that simple. Say it; mean it; and follow-through.

Parents who say what they mean and mean what they say do not have to use a lot of words. In fact, the fewer words used, the better. When you use a lot of words you are lecturing and children tune out lectures.

One reason you may use a lot of words is that you are trying to convince yourself, as well as your child, that what you want is okay. If what you are asking is reasonable, have confidence in your request.

Some parents lack confidence because they feel guilty. They are afraid their poor little darling will suffer trauma for the rest of his life if his every desire is not met. Children will suffer much more throughout their lives if they develop the belief that love means others should take care of them and give them whatever they want. They will suffer when they don't learn they can survive disappointments in life—and discover how capable they are in the process.

Christine shares what happened when she learned to mean what she said and to follow-through.

"Not too long ago, my daughter knew she could get away with very little with her father. She went to bed for him like a Saint. When it came to me, she knew she could push me to the ends of the earth, and get whatever she wanted, even if the whole experience was negative. We spent hours, at night with her making requests such as, rub my back, put cream on my leg, fix my blankets—all just part of a power trip she was taking me on. I felt guilty and so I continued the long and drawn-out bed times that left me exhausted and unable to finish my nightly duties.

Since reading the Positive Discipline books, I learned that much of her self-worth comes from doing things for herself, and feeling accomplished. That opened my eyes. I cut out all the special services knowing she can do things herself, and it was my job to encourage her to do so.

We follow the same bedtime routine every night. I read her a book and then I remind her that she is a big girl and she can put herself to sleep. If she gets out of the bed, without saying a word, I walk her back to her bed. If it happens more than once, I remind her that I will no longer put her blankets back on nor will I refill her water. She knows I mean what I say. After two nights of doing this, bedtime has changed all the way around. I am so thankful for what I learned in Positive Discipline. What was once a dreaded time, is now a nice, quiet time to wind down from the day."