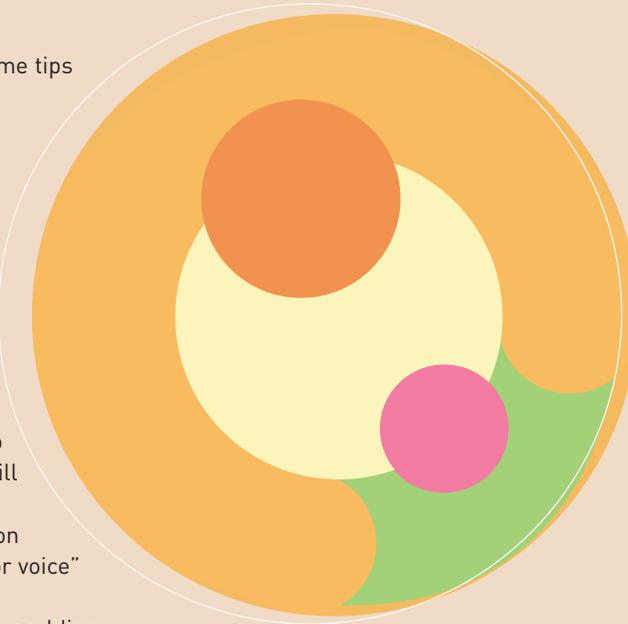


**Respond to Your Child's Behavior:**

Toddlers **will** test the limits. It is part of growing up. Here are some tips to help your child develop self control:

- Before you discipline, put yourself in your child's place. Children have reasons for how they act. For example, she may not have the words yet to express her anger so she acts on her feelings in another way like biting, slapping, kicking or throwing.
- Say calmly and firmly what you do not like and then tell your child what she can do. Be sure to keep your words positive and brief. You will need to repeat yourself again and again because this is how young children learn.
- Establish a few simple rules for your child. Always respond to your child when she does not follow these rules so that she will learn them.
- Use "Do's" rather than "Don'ts" by giving your child information about what you want him to do. For example, "Use your indoor voice" instead of "Don't yell".
- Redirecting or shifting your child's attention works better than scolding. This can help you maintain trust and respect.
- Give your child words for all of his feelings. Toddlers feel understood when you name their feelings. Encourage him to use words to describe how he feels.
- Turn tasks like cleanup into a game. Encourage your child to sing a song with you while you pick up his toys with him.
- Remove your toddler from a situation when he has a tantrum or is very angry. Give him space to calm down, but remain close by. Children can scare themselves when they become out of control. Stay calm yourself. Do not sympathize or scold. When your child is calm, talk with him about what happened. Tell him what he can do about it. Reassure your child by giving him a big hug. Then ask him if he would like to go back and play.
- Ask for help. There is always more to learn about parenting. Talk with a friend or professional you trust. Knowing when to reach out for help is a sign of wisdom and courage.
- **Never shake a baby! Shaking a baby may result in neck whiplash, back and bone injuries, paralysis, permanent brain damage, and sometimes death.**



If you are a parent, share this with your child's caregiver. If you are a caregiver, share this with the child's parent(s). Thank you!

TEACH
SELF CONTROL

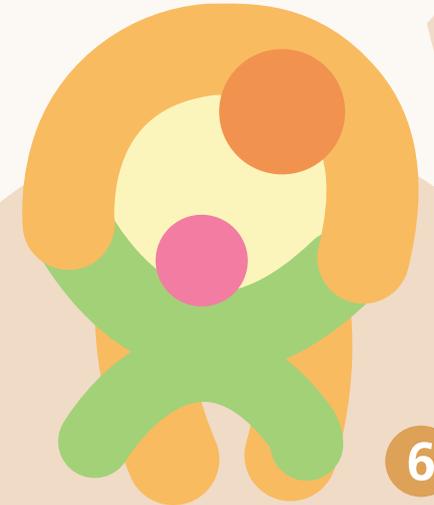
This brochure is the sixth in an eight-part series on fun and learning with your baby or toddler:

1. Care for Yourself
2. Cuddle, Talk, and Read with Your Child
3. How Your Child Develops
4. Be Playful with Your Child
5. Show Your Child the World
6. Teach Self Control
7. Practice Health and Safety
8. Healthy Eating

"Keys to Great Caregiving" has been adapted for use in Connecticut from "Keys To Great Parenting", University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

To request Keys brochures call 203-207-3267 or visit:
www.thekeys.uconn.edu

Printing courtesy of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Inc.



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TEACH
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College of Agriculture & Natural Resources

In partnership with 2-1-1 Child Care Infoline,
Connecticut Department of Social Services,
Danbury Children First, Inc., EDUCATION CONNECTION,
New Haven School Readiness Council

TEACH SELF CONTROL

It is not easy to set limits for a young child who is just learning right from wrong. As parents, one of our main concerns is our children's behavior. We want them to respect others and have positive relationships.

Positive discipline teaches your child to behave in acceptable ways and to develop a sense of self control. It is important to start early in shaping a child's behavior with routines, consistency, love, and understanding.

Babies Need Respect and Love.

Babies are wonderful new human beings, but they are not ready to understand your feelings or rules. They will learn to trust and depend on you if you respect them and meet their needs. Respond to your baby's signals. Her face and behavior will tell you if she's had too much activity or not enough. Act on her needs.

Toddlers Need Respect, Love, And Guidance To Learn Self-Control.

As babies become toddlers with minds of their own, it is time to begin teaching them self control and about getting along with others. At this point, positive discipline techniques are helpful.

Make Your Home Child Friendly:

Childproof your home. Remove unsteady furniture, dangling electrical cords, breakable objects and slippery rugs. Put expansion gates across the bottom and top of stairs. Put covers on electrical outlets.

Rearrange areas in your home to give your child free space to wiggle, squirm, roll, crawl and toddle. Also, find safe outdoor spaces for him.

Provide consistency for your child by following a regular routine for playing, eating and sleeping.

Reduce angry outbursts from your child by letting him know about change ahead of time. Talk about a coming event to prepare him. Your toddler may still complain, but your gentle words will help him learn.

Make it a point to catch your little one behaving well, and encourage him with your smiles and loving touch. You are likely to see positive behaviors if you pay the most attention to those behaviors. Express your love for your child every day.

Build Trust and Respect: a trusting, loving, respectful relationship with your child is the foundation for self-control:

- Set a good example. Your child is learning from you all the time. Try to be loving, patient, calm and firm so that your child learns about self control.
- Be consistent in providing comfort, food, clean diapers, rest, and play.
- Stay in tune to your baby's needs and feelings. Respond promptly to your child's cries. He is crying for a reason.
- Celebrate your baby's accomplishments! Clap, sing, smile or praise!
- Provide choices between two good options. Then accept his decision. Ask, "Do you want the red socks or the blue ones?"

Have Realistic Expectations:

- Learn what your child can do at various ages. If you feel worried or angry because your child is not behaving the way you think he should be, ask an experienced parent or professional for help.
- Children cry when they need your help. They are not trying to bother you. Your child relies on you to understand and take care of him.
- As young children learn to creep, crawl and walk, they discover a whole new world. Supervise your child carefully and, when necessary, set limits to keep her safe. When you set a limit with your child, be sure to tell her why. Then show her something else that is okay to do.
- When your toddler refuses to do something or says "No!" she is learning to assert herself and make her needs known. When you see things from your child's point of view, you are more likely to have patience and understanding.

