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How to Set Limits Your Child Will Respect

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State Limits Clearly and Calmly

Being direct is key. Make your statements clear, so your child knows exactly what to expect.

- **Be Direct.** Use clear statements: "It is time to put shoes on."
- **Limit Options.** Offer choices that fit within your limits: "Do you want to brush your teeth before or after pajama time?"
- **Be Consistent.** Explain the same rule every time for clarity.

Positive Framing Makes a Difference

Focus on what to do rather than what not to do. Positive language encourages compliance.

- **Frame Positively.** Shift "Stop running" to "Use walking feet inside."
- **Encourage Cooperation.** Ask your child to help you clean up: "Let's put the toys away together."
- **Praise Good Behavior.** Acknowledge when they follow your limits.

- ☐ State limits directly: Use clear statements.
- ☐ Frame limits positively: Tell your child what to do.
- ☐ Give one warning before enforcing limits.
- ☐ Use logical consequences that relate to the action.
- ☐ Hold firm with empathy, validating feelings.
- ☐ Maintain rules consistently, without exceptions.
- ☐ Stay calm even in challenging situations.
- ☐ Model the behavior you want to see.
- ☐ Avoid negotiating once a limit is set.

When to Seek Help

If you feel overwhelmed, or your child shows aggressive behavior, it could be time for professional advice. Handling boundaries isn't always easy.

WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR

Consult a specialist if your child exhibits explosive aggression when boundaries are set, routinely destroys property, or completely refuses to comply with basic safety commands.

Creating and enforcing limits can be tough, but it's essential for your child's well-being. You're doing great, keep it consistent and don't hesitate to reach out for support!