

# Don't Spank!

## Here's What You Can Do Instead!



*Many parents choose not to spank their children. But what can they do instead? Here are some ways you can "spare the rod" without spoiling your children.*

### Overlook attention-seeking behaviors

*Ignore behavior when possible. Overlook behaviors that will not harm your child or others, such as whining, bad language, and tantrums. It's hard *not* to do something, but sometimes our children act up because they want our attention.*

### Connect your response to the misbehavior

*Briefly take away privileges related to the misbehavior. For example, if your children fight over TV programs, take away TV privileges for a few hours or a day. If the punishment lasts too long, your child may forget the original misbehavior, and the lesson may be lost.*

*Use logical consequences to make the point. For example, if your child misuses a toy, take away the toy for a few hours. If your child spills crackers on the floor, have her help pick them up.*

### Encourage positive behaviors

*Rearrange space. Try creative solutions. If clothes and toys are often left lying about, start using baskets and low hooks for easier cleanup. If school notes are misplaced, assign a special table or counter for them.*

*Redirect behavior. Substitute a "can do" behavior for a "can't do" behavior. If your child draws on the walls, stock up on drawing paper and let her know where it is. If your child throws sand, provide a ball for him to throw instead.*

*Use the "when/then" rule. Tie what you want to what your children want. For example, *when* your children pick up their toys, *then* they can watch TV. *When* your children finish their baths, *then* they can have a storybook read to them.*

### Use timeout sparingly

*Use "timeout" to respond to dangerous and harmful behaviors such as biting, hitting, and purposeful destruction. Timeout is best used to help your child calm down and regain control. After timeout is over, acknowledge your child's good behavior when you can.*

*These parenting tips are adapted from material by Parents Anonymous® Inc., a national organization dedicated to strengthening families.*

### For related Web resources, see "Don't Spank! Here's What You Can Do Instead!" at <http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tips.htm>.



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