

DOWNTOWN BALTIMORE CHILD CARE, Inc.
 Park Avenue Center, 806 Park Ave., Baltimore, MD 21201-4807 • 410-669-1010
 University Center, 237 Arch Street, Baltimore, MD 21201-1526 • 410-659-0515

January, 2008

It's time to PLAY THE GAME, Why Won't My Child Listen to Me?

by Susan Sandstrom

Okay everyone . . . gather 'round . . .
 One of the toughest things for adults to do is deciding how to set limits for a young child.

To begin the game, please pick a Discipline Strategy Card . . . Good . . .

You picked the ALWAYS NICE AND CONSIDERATE card. The card says,

If you are always nice and considerate to your child, your child will in turn be nice and considerate back. It is a wonderful thought that if you are always polite, kind, fair, generous, benevolent and loving with your child, your child will develop into a kind, fair, generous, benevolent and loving child. We all know how important modeling is for young children.

You can keep the card or choose another card from the pile.

You choose to stay? Okay, let's watch the children and see what happens:

Uh oh! The children are angry, aggressive, wild, prone to tantrums, manipulative, increasingly uncontrollable and have a disdain for adults.

This strategy backfired. Why? It is also hard to remain nice and considerate all of the time and be "real." It is helpful for children to see an array of emotions and not just an artificial front of "niceness." Children will eventually see through the phony feelings. It is better to show your honest feelings even if you are sometimes grouchy and unreasonable, as we all tend to be at times.

It is also hard to remain nice and considerate when you are trying to set behavioral limits. Children without limits become insecure even if the adults are always nice and considerate. They are too little to have so much power and responsibility and will do everything they can think of to force the adult to set limits—including outrageous "STOP ME" behavior. Don't worry about emotionally harming children if

you are firm. It is more harmful to let out of control behavior remain out of control.



Tomas, age 4, peeking out of his block fort

Time to pick another card . . . Let's see . . . you've chosen the BEING STRICT card. It says, *Nothing worse than a bratty, spoiled child and if you are strict with your child you will have good behavior. When you tell the child something, the child needs to obey*

(Cont'd on page 2)



Thanks to all of you who have made a contribution to DBCC this year!
 It's not too late to make a contribution to DBCC's Annual Giving Campaign.
 Tuition covers only 90% of costs and we depend on donors to help us make up the difference. Thanks for giving what you can!



Why Won't My Child Listen to Me? (Cont'd from page 1)

or pay the consequences such as losing a privilege or sitting in time-out.

Now for your decision . . . do you want to hold this card or choose another? I can see it's a hard decision for you . . . but you are choosing to . . . c'mon, we need you to make a decision . . . Okay . . . you want to keep the card . . . Let's watch the children and see what happens . . .

Oh dear . . . the children are anxious and brooding. Their negative behavior is getting worse and there are signs of depression. Unfortunately, this strategy has backfired too. Young children need flexibility and understanding. Limits need to be firm but make sure your limits are *reasonable* (appropriate for your child's age and developmental level). For example, if you expect military responses from your young child, you have unrealistic expectations. Children need time – they are naturally slow to respond and they need to hear the same thing over and over again. If you expect children to listen and respond to you every time you tell them to do something your expectations are unrealistic. Children are messy, careless, rude and demanding. Know your child's developmental level. Learn what expectations are realistic for a child at that stage. Sure, you might be able to get your child to respond with military precision but your child will pay an emotional penalty.

Okay . . . pick another card . . . I see you're choosing from the bottom of the deck this time . . . You've chosen the DOING NOTHING OR BEING PERMISSIVE card. The card says, *Let the child do whatever she wants because she is young, will only be young once and there is plenty of time for discipline and conformity when she is older.*

You have chosen to keep the card. Good! Let's watch the children and see what happens . . .

Uh oh . . . Children who have had too few or no limits generally have behavior that will escalate to the outrageous point – aggressive towards parents and others, throwing things, climbing inappropriately, angry, uncooperative, everything is a fight. These children become so desperate for limits that they will do anything to get a reaction from an adult, including dangerous stunts ('cause that usually gets a reaction). Parents of toddlers often ignore bad behavior but even the little ones need a consistent reminder to use *gentle hands* or to beware of anything *hot*. Looks like another backfire!

I see by the look on your face that you are ready to discard and pick a new Discipline Strategy Card

You've chosen the INCONSISTENT WITH THE RULES card. The card says, *Sometimes yes, sometimes no. Well, it depends on the situation so rules are always flexible (and let's face it, it's easier to give in than to fight and sometimes I don't have the energy).*

It looks like you do not wish to keep this card. I'll take the card back. Now let's see if it was a good decision . . .

Inconsistency is so confusing to a child. When you give in all the time you will have a child who nags obsessively, whines, is demanding, angry, uncooperative, aggressive and unpleasant to be around. It's hard to be consistent all the time so pick your rules carefully and adhere to them. You don't need *many* but the ones you have should be predictable and consistent. Consistency is extremely important so don't change your mind. Once your child *believes* that you won't change your mind most of the nagging will stop.

Good move! Now, there is one more card. Let's see what it says:

PICK A FEW RULES AND STICK TO THEM. Rules usually revolve around safety and health and are always consistent.

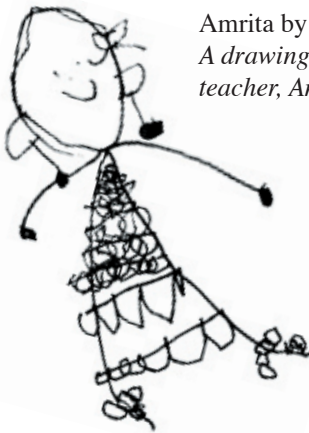
Okay . . . I can tell that you like this card . . . Let's watch the children and see what happens:

Children with consistent limits have a much easier time and are more fun to be with. Most of the unnecessary behavioral stuff is out of the way. The children don't need to have extremes of behavior to get attention, they don't need to worry about punishment or overly strict repercussions or inconsistent limits. Children who are used to a few firm rules will also nag, whine, get angry, demand, pout, etc. but, there will be a whole lot *less* of it. For example, most parents are very strict about children riding in a car. They must be in a car seat. There is no negotiation. Seat belts fastened, always and most parents have very little trouble with children in a car seat (except for maybe some testing behavior just to make sure you really mean it). Keep your "no's" to a minimum but when you say "no" mean it. You might want to allow for negotiation depending on the situation but *you* are in charge of ending the conversation.

So, no matter what you do, at times children will be difficult because you also have to factor in things such as fatigue, hunger, temperament, recent events, etc.

Unfortunately, there is no magic solution to make life consistently smooth with young children. However, you will have an easier time if your expectations are appropriate and you are consistent and predictable. If you can say “no” and really mean it and have a few clear rules, your child will understand your expectations. Careful you don’t reward misbehavior (i.e., child who cries long enough will eventually get what he/she wants). Oh yeah, most importantly - keep your sense of humor! That’s how to win the game every time!

Tomorrow’s game? *How To Get Your Child To Bed!*



Amrita by **Sadie Dodds**, age 3,
A drawing of Sadie’s
teacher, Amrita



Dancers by
Harry Zimmer, age 4
“Katala is dancing with me”

What Good is Play?

In one article in the Exchange book, Play — A Beginnings Workshop Book, Doris Fromberg reviews research on the value of play and spells out implications for teachers and administrators. In this article she reports...

“Cognitive development takes place during pretend play. When teachers or parents have intervened by playfully modeling, providing varied props, and raising play-related questions, young children have become more flexible planners, used more expanded language, and sustained play for longer periods of time. Researchers have found a relationship between enriched adult play intervention and children’s academic skills, as well as I.Q. with an improvement in systematic and processed-oriented problem solving. There is also evidence that the use of low-specificity toys is related to more interactive play and a longer shared play script.”

Reprinted with permission from ExchangeEveryDay

The Manicurist by
Kenna Mitchell, age 3

“This is me. I am
painting my friend’s
nails because
I am a nail
polisher.”



5 Year Club Revisited

How could we forget **Anna Kim-Dahl** as part of the 5 Year Club? Anna started at DBCC in the infant room and stayed for the next five years. Anna matured into an engaging, artistic and delightful big girl. She is now a successful kindergarten in her local public school.

A special thank you to Steve Dahl who spent lots of time at the center upgrading our computers, fixing problems, buying us supplies including a new color laser printer, memory, cords, thumb drives, an All-In-One printer, etc., etc. He also wrote a sign in/out program for the staff and has continued to be “on call” for all of our technical problems.

Thank you Steve and Irene for choosing DBCC and trusting us to care for Anna!

😊 IT’S A BOY! 😊 IT’S A GIRL!

😊 Teacher Shannell Terrell is a big sister. **Jada Jeannette Scott** was born on September 11, 2007 and weighed 3 lbs. 11 oz. Congratulations to Shannell, Dana, Joseph and Jason.

😊 Jacob is a big brother! **Sophia Kathleen Seese** was born on September 22, 2007 and weighed 7 lbs. 9 oz. Congratulations to Christine, Kirk and Jacob!

😊😊 Liam is a big brother! **Caroline Julianne Thomas** was born on October 8, 2007 and weighed 6 lbs. 7 oz. **Rhys David Thomas** was also born on October 8, 2007 and weighed 7 lbs. 4 oz. Congratulations to Liam, Bethany and Dave!

😊 Brian is a big brother! **Jocelyn Marie Graham** was born on December 12, 2007 and weighed 6 lbs. 13 oz. Congratulations to Grandparents Charlotte and Jim, Brian, Kristy and Little Brian!

CHILDSPEAK

• **Charlie Meisner**, age 4, overheard some classmates talking about playing with their “action figures” and thought they were talking about “action fingers.” That night, he proudly showed his parents his new “action fingers”: his middle and forefingers, which walked around, jumped, flew, and issued commands such as, “The action fingers say it’s time for kisses!” (stated in a deep voice.) At last: an affordable toy that can never be lost and is always right at “hand”! ;-)

• **Micah Neff-McGready**, age 5: “Do they build bridges before or after they put water in the river?”

• **Emmet Neff-McGready**, age 2: “We’re going to go see all the monuments in Washington DBCC!”

• **Javier Love**, age 7, heard his mother complaining about her skirt. The hem was out.

Javier struggled to understand. “Is it broke?” “Is it going to fall off?”

Mom pulled the bottom of her skirt to show him the part of the hem that had come un-sewed.

Javier looked at his mother innocently and said, “Shouldn’t it be called a ‘her’?”

Jack Bevan, age 3, created a giant motorcycle out of the hollow blocks. He invited his teacher to sit on it with him. Unfortunately when the teacher sat on it some of it collapsed in a pile. Jack said very calmly, “You can never get on here with me again!”

ALUMNI NEWS

• **Elijah Racicot** is a shipwright (someone who builds or repairs ships) on the USS Constellation down at the Inner Harbor! Elijah is a talented woodworker and also an avid bicyclist.

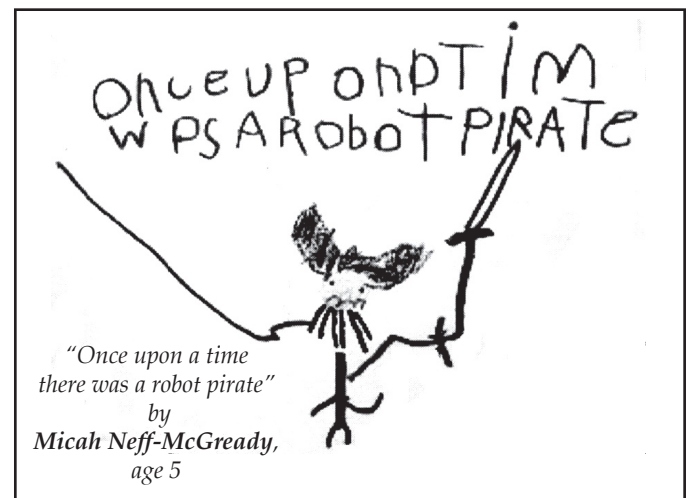
Elijah and Kim Mross will be married on May 8th. The wedding will be in the Virgin Islands! Congratulations to you both!



• Priority #1 for Latin America •

The Copenhagen Consensus Center (www.copenhagenconsensus.com) analyzes the world’s greatest challenges and identifies cost-efficient solutions to meeting these challenges. With the process of prioritization, the center aims to establish a framework in which solutions to problems are prioritized according to efficiency based upon economic and scientific analysis of distinct subjects. In October, 2007 the Center and the Inter-American Development Bank convened in San José, Costa Rica an expert panel of nine distinguished economists. Over three days this panel was presented with more than 40 solutions to Latin America’s challenges of education, employment, environment, finance, health, poverty, inequality, violence, and crime. The panel then ranked the solutions in priority order. The number one solution they identified for the challenges facing Latin America was “Early Childhood Development. “...In explaining the importance of early childhood development, the panel observed... “These are interventions that improve the physical, intellectual, and social development of children early in their life. The interventions range from growth monitoring, day care services, preschool activities, improved health and hygiene services, to parenting services. Besides improving children’s welfare directly, the panel concluded these programs create further benefits for family members, releasing women and older siblings to work outside the home or to further their own education. Evidence shows that the benefits are substantially higher than the costs. Promoting early childhood development is a regional solution that provides both immediate and long term benefits.”

Reprinted with permission from ExchangeEveryDay



OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE

The critical role of the early years is highlighted in an article, “Economic, neurobiological, and behavioral perspectives on building America’s future workforce,” by Eric Knudsen, James Heckman, Judy Cameron, and Jack Shonkoff in the July 5, 2006 issue of **PNAS magazine** (www.pnas.org/content/vol103/issue27/).

In the conclusion the authors observe ...

“The implications of this rapidly evolving science for human capital formation are striking. The workplace of the 21st century will favor individuals with intellectual flexibility, strong problem-solving skills, emotional resilience, and the capacity to work well with others in a continuously changing and highly competitive economic environment. In this context, the personal and societal burdens of diminished capacity will be formidable, and the need to maximize human potential will be greater than ever before.

“The evidence presented in this paper indicates that the most cost-effective strategy for strengthening the future American workforce is to invest greater human and financial resources in the social and cognitive environments of children who are disadvantaged, beginning as early as possible. The greatest return derives from investing in disadvantaged children because their home environments are impoverished. Therefore, for them, the difference between the stimulating intervention environment and the environment they would otherwise experience is extremely large....

“The cognitively stimulating experiences in early childhood that are most important for the promotion of healthy development are provided through attentive, nurturing, and stable relationships with invested adults. When development is jeopardized by impaired relationships or other sources of environmental disadvantage, the biological and financial costs increase with age. Thus, although adaptation generally remains possible well into adult life, the decreasing plasticity of the maturing brain indicates that early intervention to mitigate the effects of disadvantaged environments is more efficient (in both energy costs to the nervous system and program costs to society) than later remediation for individuals with limited skills and problematic behavior. Stated simply, skills beget skills, success breeds success, and the provision of positive experiences early in life is considerably less expensive and more effective than the cost and effectiveness of corrective intervention at a later age....”

Used by permission ExchangeEveryday



Ask Aliceanna...

Dear Aliceanna,

There is no easy way to say it—my child is willful. He will hit me when he’s angry and throw things and is basically uncooperative. His teachers tell me he is right on target but I disagree. I am convinced that he knows exactly what he is doing and that he is being willful. He’ll be two this winter. I think it is never too early for children to have good behavior. His teachers tell me he is no problem in the classroom but I can’t believe it. What do you think?

Signed, Trying To Do The Right Thing

Dear Trying,

It is very clear to me that you are trying very hard to do the right thing. Now, let’s start with some basic child development. Children this age cannot be treated as if they are little adults. You will continue to have problems with your son if you pit your will against his. This is called a power struggle and you want to avoid power struggles when at all possible. If you stay on this path of forcing your will on your child, his behavior will escalate until you really have a problem child. Parenting military style is always a mistake!

You say his teachers tell you he is no problem. Sounds like if he is treated like an almost two year old, his behavior will be appropriate for an almost two year old. Toddlers are by nature willful and trying to assert their independence. It’s all part of growth and development.

Please don’t let your child hit you. Be firm, not angry, but firm. Say, “I won’t let you hit me” and stop his arm. Say, “I can tell you are angry.” Then, change the subject and, if necessary, pick him up and move on. You don’t want to dwell on things with a one year old. Keep things light and playful and positive.

Sometimes there isn’t time to finesse a transition. Sometimes you have to simply pick him up and move him. You can apologize, “I’m sorry. I know you weren’t finished with that but we are in a hurry.” No anger. Then try to distract him. “I think your teddy bear is in the car. Let’s see if we can find that ole teddy bear. I know you like that bear.” Keep your voice soft and the child will have to be quiet in order to hear you. You don’t want to get into a verbal debate with a toddler.

It sounds like you have lost your sense of humor which is understandable in this stress-filled world. Try very hard to find it again. Toddlers are fascinating people. While they are emotionally very delicate, they are interested in everything and they respond very well to love and encouragement.

[Aliceanna loves to hear from you! Email questions to uc@dbckkids.org and put Aliceanna in the subject line.]



DONORS, 2006-2007

DBCC is grateful to all our FY 2006-2007 supporters! Your generosity enables us to continue the important work we do . . . advocating, facilitating and providing the highest quality child care and early education for young children and their families living and working in the Baltimore metropolitan area. (We have combined Annual Giving and United Way.)

"Magnanimous" Godparents (\$1000 or more)

Greg Ball and Peg McCarthy
Rachel Cox and Chris Shenk
Tina Hall and Ann Ramsey
Martha Holleman and Jim French
Anne Modarressi

"Great" Grandparents (\$500 - \$999)

Mark Benson and Andy Frank
Joy and Jack Heyrman
Cecilia and Aaron Meisner
Maggie de Cuevas and Eric Schott
Sky Woodward and Art Arthur

"Super" Parents (\$250 - \$499)

Dorothy and Jon Baker
Susie Chisolm
Sally Gold and Elliot Zulver
Wendy and Andy Lane
Joanne Nathans
Lori Paine
Gloria and John Sandstrom
Regi Schmidt and Stephen Goldberg
Anne Walker
Michelle Wellens

"Favorite" Aunts and Uncles (\$100 - \$249)

Rachel Akins
Debbie Andrew and Doug Barrick
Tanisha W. Aye
Rebecca and Michael Bainum
Deborah Andrew and Doug Barrick
ReGena Booze
Michelle and Ruffin Brown
Mont Brownlee and Rebecca Snyder
Laura Carlson
Margaret Claybour
Michael Coar
Buzz Cusack
Karen Detling and Tom Edsall
Cobber Eccles
Jim Gabriel and Ellen Rosenthal
Rivalee and William Gitomer
Alex Nones and Rafael Irizarry

Alexis Johns
Shahir and Nancy Kassam-Adams
Nancy and Bob Kramer
Scot Kuo and Jean Schroeder
Esther and Bob Lambert
Erika and Mike Matunis
Jessica Mong and Audrey Carrion
Amy Morse
Roni Neff and John McGready
Jim Olin and Jane Marvine
Lisa Pupa and Sara Turk
Beth and Jeff Raymond
Mary L. Ryce
Rachel Rivest and Steve Averbuch
Beth Rockcross
Paul Romney and Sharon Kingsland
Donna and Monica Schoch-Spana
Trina Schroer
Sally Scott and Jimmy Potash
Margo Sipes and Susan Sandstrom
Sandra Skolnik
Pat and Jim Slantis
Rebecca Snyder
Walter Sondheim
Elaine Swift and Ken Finegold
Theresa and Kate Swift-Scanlan
Karen and Jim Taylor
Colette Veasey-Cullors and Arlen Cullors
Catherine Washburn and Dean MacKinnon
Maria Rosa Watson and Richard Jibrin
Denise Weber and Chris Popa
Pat and Robert Welch
Margaret Williams and Allan Fisher
Cynthia Wilson

"Best" Friends (up to \$99)

Sara Arthur
Ruby Bainum
Lori Brady
Rachel Brewster
Margaret and Joe Cellucci
Brenda Coakley
Susan and Michael Coe
Clint Conrad and Hope Jahren
Margaret Earle
Jenny Ehrhardt

Sandy and Robert Fink
 Elizabeth Frank
 Robin Kolodny and Glenn Gaddy
 Janie Gordon and Carlos Zigel
 Eric Grote and Qin Fu
 Karen Hansen
 Anne Hooper Caplan
 Ron Huffman and M. J. Tooley
 Cris Imle and Colin McKenzie
 Abner Kaplan
 Larry and Sue King
 Eric and Suzie Lindstrom
 Tracey L. Litt
 Tierra K. McCutcheon
 John Nethercut and Emily Hunt
 Lisa O'Connell and Simon During
 Michael Ogletree
 Luciene and Andy Parsley
 Sharon and Tim Pula
 Cathy and Jim Raggio
 Donna Raimondi
 Tricia Rubacky and Bill Merritt
 Walter Schmidt
 Roman Sherbakov and Thora Johnson
 Donna Shindell
 Jeff Singer and Nancy Fink
 Joy and Steve Sakamoto-Wengel
 Marc and Terri Riding
 Jean Spanos
 Patti and Doug Spegman
 Georgette Stafford
 Corey Ward
 Alex Washington
 Sharon and John Webb
 Helga Wegener
 Jerriann and Don Wilson
 Cynthia Wilson
 Quay and Jim Wolfe.
 John Zic and Sarah Waters

**DBCC appreciates generous
 Scholarship Grants from:**

The Johns Hopkins University
 First & Franklin Presbyterian Church
 The Board of the Jane Egerton Home
 University of Maryland Baltimore

♥ *DBCC would not exist without the volunteer efforts of Board members, parents, grandparents and friends (past and present). Your priceless gifts of time, energy, ideas, skills and knowledge have greatly enriched DBCC's programs since our beginnings. We love all of you!*

Note: Almost all of DBCC's United Way contributions came to us as anonymous donors. Please accept our gratitude—we wish we could have thanked each of you personally.

DBCC is grateful for a generous
 donation from:
 University of Maryland Baltimore

Restricted Grants
 MSDE and Judith P. Hoyer Educational
 Sinsky-Kresser-Racusin Memorial Foundation

**DBCC is grateful for the generous
 Spring Fling Sponsorships:**
 Miles and Stockbridge P.C.
 Struever Bros. Eccles & Rouse
 Constellation Energy Group
 The M & T Charitable Foundation
 The David Kornblatt Company

**DBCC is ever grateful for our
 In-Kind donations**

Robert and Nancy Kramer
 Steve Dahl
 David Wells
 Devon Shayne

★ Thanks to **Steve Dahl** for all of this technical assistance. Besides keeping University Center's computers running smoothly, he also generously bought needed equipment for the office and staff room and even wrote a computer program for us—all with good humor and patience!

★ Thanks to **Anne Walker** for her donation on behalf of her sons, Ira and Zeke!

If your name is missing, we apologize and ask that you contact us at 410-669-1010 so that we may correct our records.

**Thanks Wachovia Securities
 For their Matching Gift!**

... THANKS TO ALL!

WE'VE MADE THE QUARTER CENTURY MARK!

DBCC is celebrating its 25th Anniversary this year!



Jun, age 5 - Katala, age 4 - Kenna, age 3 - Harry, age 4

We started with 5 children in 1983 at the Park Avenue center in Room 2. Susan Sandstrom (who is still at DBCC) and Bonnie Bain were the teachers. Nancy Kramer (who retired as Executive Director in 2001) was the director and Pat Hillers (now, Slantis) was the administrative assistant. Gwendolyn Chesley who is currently a teacher in Room 2 at Park Avenue, came in the middle of that first year. Those first 5 children are now nearing 30 years old!

Stay tuned to upcoming Newsletters as we tell stories from DBCC's beginnings and fill you in on our 25th Anniversary celebrations!



Downtown Baltimore Child Care, Inc.
806 Park Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21201-4807

Address service requested

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BALTO. MD.
PERMIT NO. 5402



*Childhood should be
a journey, not a race.*