

Patience

Take a few extra seconds when responding to poor behavior. This demonstrates compassion, empathy, and self-control on your part. Sometimes all you need to do is think about responding in the most patient manner to help re-direct your child. A few seconds can make a big difference.

1. Ask, Listen, Explain

Patience helps you to establish better solutions for difficult moments with your child.

If your child has a temper tantrum, for instance, take a few seconds to calm down before reacting. Then, ask questions to help determine what is really driving the behavior. Listen to what they say and then explain what they could have done instead.

Patience can lead to understanding and solutions. Be patient and ask the right questions to get your child back on track.

2. Give a Do-over

A do-over is exactly as it sounds – the chance to do something again. Using patience means giving your child the chance to act in a better way than they did the first time around.

The perfect time to implement a do-over is when your child says something out of anger, such as “You are not my favorite mommy!” A do-over begins by telling your child that this is not the proper way for them to speak to you. You may begin with, “Let’s do this over. What is a nicer way to talk to me when you are upset?” This gives them the chance to explain why they are upset in a different way. It may be as simple as they didn’t want to stop playing to eat dinner. Allow them the chance to re-phrase and then go from there, such as letting them know that they can play more, just after dinner.

When you allow your child a do-over, you use patience with your child and apply patience to the way that you react to their behavior.

3. Provide Teaching Moments

Many people assume that discipline means “to punish,” when it really means, “to teach.”

When your child makes a mistake, you can either punish, or you can discipline through patient teaching moments. In a soccer game, if a player misses the ball, the coach doesn’t yell and

get angry with them. Instead, they explain what went wrong and help the player by letting them know how they can improve the next time.

A parental teaching moment is the same. When your child makes a mistake, use patience to explain what they did wrong and provide them information that will help them improve or not make the same mistake again. A teaching moment provides options and solutions, while punishment does not.

The question to ask yourself today is how patient are you with your child. How many times do you give them do-overs? Try to give them as many do-overs as possible so they can learn how to behave and communicate better. In the long run, both of you learn valuable teaching moments through patience.