

H E A R T O F
connecting
BY HAYLEY GOLDBERG, LMFT

10 Top Things To Know About Behavior

1. What you focus on grows. Notice good behavior and give attention to it. Any behavior that you see that you want to happen more often, let your children know that you like it. You can improve behavior by up to 80% by pointing out what your child is doing correctly.
2. Behavior is communication and serves a purpose. Children are not born with difficult behavior. A child's problematic or inappropriate behavior is a sign that he is upset and that something is not right.
3. Behavior is not random. There is always a reason for problem behavior. Children sometimes have trouble communicating, because they may not know the words to describe how they are feeling or know what to do in a difficult situation. At these times, children may act out their feelings or needs. The reasons for behavior might be trying to gain access to someone or something, they are trying to avoid something they don't like, or they are trying to change the level of stimulation in their environment.
4. There can be many reasons behind one specific behavior.
5. A child who has tried several times to communicate to adults about what he needs, but whose needs remain unmet, will increase problem behavior as a way of sending a very loud message.
6. Adults can learn to understand and interpret children's challenging behavior.
7. Our response to our children's behavior will determine if a behavior will happen again or not. Change your behavior and your child will change theirs.
8. Children do not learn when presented with punitive consequences. Punishment is reinforcing for adults because it stops behavior in the moment. Punishment does nothing to teach children appropriate behavior. Children learn better ways of behaving by being taught directly and receiving positive feedback.
9. For every year that a behavior has been in place you should plan to spend at least one month using appropriate interventions consistently to see a change in behavior.
10. Challenging behavior is not rooted in a desire to ruin your day!

 *your parenting counts!*

H E A R T O F
connecting
BY HAYLEY GOLDBERG, LMFT

10 Tips For Better Behavior

1. Invest in one-on-one time with your kids every day. The best thing you can do to improve your children's behavior is spend time with them individually each day. Give them the positive attention and emotional connection they are hardwired to need.
2. Provide routines. Children thrive on clearly defined routines, especially for the most challenging times of the day - mornings, mealtimes and bedtimes.
3. Get children involved in the family. Give them tasks to do so they have a sense of purpose and a feeling of leadership in the family.
4. Sleep. Children need an adequate amount of sleep each night. Tired children are more cranky. Cranky children behave more poorly.
5. Family Rules. Clear family rules implemented consistently reduces the need for children to test the limits.
6. Find opportunities to say yes. Much of the time our first response to our children is to say no. When you can, say yes.
7. Learn to understand and interpret children's challenging behavior. When you understand what your child is trying to communicate with their behavior you can find the right strategies to correct the behavior. Don't ignore the communication behind the behavior.
8. Children's challenging behavior can be reduced with support, not punishment. Focus on discipline and teaching new skills rather than punishment.
9. Yelling at a child for a behavior may stop behavior for the moment, but it does not give the child support or provide alternate ways to act in difficult situations. Teach children important social and problem solving skills that will help them throughout their life.
10. Connection before correction. Always, always, always take time to connect with your child on an emotional level before correcting behavior. Nothing is more important than the relationship you have with your child.

 *your parenting counts!*