**About Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital**

Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital is the 244-bed pediatric hospital of University Hospitals of Cleveland. Dedicated solely to the care of children, Rainbow is one of the most trusted names in children’s health care. Parents have depended on Rainbow for more than a century, enabling the hospital to become one of the most renowned pediatric medical centers and a principal referral center for Ohio and the region. Rainbow has consistently been named the “Best Children’s Hospital” in the Midwest and a Top 10 children’s hospital nationally in surveys, including *U.S. News & World Report* and Child magazine. Rainbow also ranks among the top children’s hospitals in research funding received from the National Institutes of Health.

University Hospitals, through the Case Research Institute, and its academic partner Case Western Reserve University together provide the largest center for medical research in Ohio.

**Discipline**

- **Spanking vs. Beating**
  - **Spanking**: Hitting with an open hand on the seat of the pants without leaving bruises or lasting marks.
  - **Beating**: Hitting with a fist, belt, cord, switch or other object; hitting with an open hand anywhere other than the seat of the pants; spanking that leaves bruises or permanent marks.

**Discipline That Works**

If you choose spanking, use it rarely and only to put a quick to dangerous behavior. Other types of discipline work better for other situations.

If you find you are spanking or threatening to spank your child often, then spanking isn’t working. Think about trying other methods of discipline.

**Child Advocacy & Protection**
Distraction

**Purpose:** To redirect the child’s attention. Distraction works best for infants and toddlers who are too young to be able to reason.

**Why Does It Work?** Infants and young toddlers have a short attention span and can usually only focus on one thing at a time.

**How is it Used?**
- If your child is touching or playing with something he shouldn’t, remove it and put something else in his hands that he can play with or explore. You may also try moving the child to a new location.
- To distract children from an annoying activity or from arguing with each other, invite them to help you with something or give them something they have to think about (“Let’s see how many ways we can find that are red.” “How many animals can you name in one minute?”).
- As you distract your child and direct his attention to something new, you may choose to ignore the unwanted behavior, or make a simple comment about it (“No touching that.”).
- Remember, teaching is usually more effective than nagging or yelling. Positive attention is better than negative attention. When the child is being good, give him praise and attention.

**Time Out**

**Purpose:** To give the child time to cool down. It is not to punish the child. Time out works best for children age 3 and over for tantrums, arguing, hitting, throwing objects or breaking things. Time out doesn’t work if used too often, if the time out period is too long, or if the time out location is inappropriate.

**Time Out Location**
A good location is a chair in the corner. Do not use the bedroom or a busy place where there is television, music, people or toys. Do not talk to the child during the time out.

**How is it Used?**
- Decide together how many checks or stickers it takes for the child to perform the new or good behavior, place a check or a sticker on the chart or calendar.
- Whenever the child goes a certain period of time (hour, half-day, day) without doing the bad behavior, or every time he performs the new or good behavior, place a check or a sticker on the chart or calendar.
- Clearly state the expected behavior (“Put your dirty clothes in the laundry.” “Wear a helmet every time you ride a bike.” “Do not leave your toys in the living room.”)
- Make sure the punishments are reasonable.
- Always be willing to listen to the child’s reasons if she feels the rule was unfair in a certain case or if she feels that breaking the rule was beyond her control. Once in a while, she will be right.
- Choose the behavior you want to stop (or start).
- Choose the punishments for breaking the family rules. Make sure the punishments are reasonable.
- Decide together how many checks or stickers it takes to get an award and what the award will be. Rewards can be small gifts, later bedtimes, extra computer time or a family outing, for example.
- In addition to stickers, checks and rewards, give the child lots of praise.
- In one minute?“). Make sure the punishments are reasonable.
- Always be willing to listen to the child’s reasons if she feels the rule was unfair in a certain case or if she feels that breaking the rule was beyond her control. Once in a while, she will be right.
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- Decide together how many checks or stickers it takes to get an award and what the award will be. Rewards can be small gifts, later bedtimes, extra computer time or a family outing, for example.
- In addition to stickers, checks and rewards, give the child lots of praise.
- Do not get angry if the child fails. Encourage him to try harder the next time.
- Start small — make goals reasonable.

**House Rules**

**Purpose:** To agree on rules and punishments as a family. House rules work best for school-age and teenage children. They do not work if the children aren’t involved in setting up the rules and punishments, or if parents don’t follow through with punishment.

**How are They Used?**
- Sit down with the child and develop rules about curfews, chores, fighting, talking back, foul language, homework and telephone use, for example. There may be rules for parents, too!
- Avoid trying to set up rules for everything.
- Choose the punishments for breaking the family rules. Make sure the punishments are reasonable.
- When the rule is broken, calmly remind the child of the rule and the punishment. Make sure the punishment is carried out.
- Always be willing to listen to the child’s reasons if she feels the rule was unfair in a certain case or if she feels that breaking the rule was beyond her control. Once in a while, she will be right.
- Most of the time, even when the child protests, the rule was fair and the child had control over her actions. The punishment should then be enforced without the parent feeling the need to justify it. (“I’m glad you told me how you feel about this, but I disagree with your excuse and the rule stands.”)

**Logical Outcomes**

**Purpose:** To teach the child that unwanted behaviors result in natural, negative outcomes. (“If you don’t come to dinner on time, then you will go hungry.”) Logical outcomes work best with some toddlers and preschoolers, school-age children and teens. Logical outcomes do not work if the outcomes are acceptable to the child, or if the parent “saves” the child from suffering the unpleasant outcome. Natural outcomes should not be used if the outcomes are dangerous to the child.

**How is it Used?**
- Clearly state the expected behavior (“Put your dirty clothes in the laundry.” “Wear a helmet every time you ride a bike.” “Do not leave your toys in the living room.”)
- Clearly state the outcome (“If you ride without a helmet, the bike is taken away for a week the first time, a month the second time and for good the third time. There will be no new bike unless you buy it yourself.”)
- If the child breaks the rule, calmly enforce the outcome. Avoid getting into arguments or giving long explanations.

**Contracting**

**Purpose:** To correct a major, ongoing problem (for example, always late for school and curfew, or cheating on a diabetic diet and not taking insulin which results in trips to the hospital). Contracts work best with older school-age children and teens.

**How is it Used?**
- Sit down with your child and discuss the problem. Put in writing the desired behavior of the child, the duties of the parent, the punishment for failing to behave as agreed, and the rewards for meeting expectations.
- Compare it to a job contract that spells out the expectations between a boss and a worker, including outcomes for failure (like losing pay or getting fired) and rewards for doing well (like bonuses and promotions).
- Discuss what it means to sign your name and give your word.
- Have both parent and child sign the contract.
- Always enforce the terms and outcomes and provide rewards as earned.
- Ask for help if needed. A doctor, nurse practitioner or social worker may be able to help families set up and manage a good contract.