

THE PEACEFUL SOLUTION
Character Education Program

**PARENTING
MANUAL**

a
hands on
approach



The Peaceful Solution

Character Education Program

Parenting Manual

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Character Education Program

Parenting Manual

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Note To Parents

The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program has promoted peace through education for more than twenty years. We focus on changing the hearts and minds. Whether in the home, a community or a nation, peace begins with individuals who have made a commitment to improve their interactions with others.

At this point in history, there is no nation that can boast of having found a means to achieve peace, contentment, and well being for its citizens. People are suffering severely from a lack of positive moral character. Yes, due to a lack of moral character, hatred, anger, conflict, and war exist. Consider, if a man had respect and compassion, would he mistreat his wife or children? If mankind had true forgiveness, would one group of people fight against another?

The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program is designed to teach children moral excellence in a world that is increasingly becoming morally bankrupt. With mounting scientific evidence of the ability to teach a child while in the womb, it stands to reason that the best way to produce children who think morally is to begin character education at the earliest and most impressionable time possible. However, even if you have older children, it is never too late to begin teaching positive character development.

Violent and aggressive behaviors are becoming evident in children as young as 4 and 5-years-old. Young people are also committing crimes such as theft, rape, and murder. Is there anything a parent can do to make a difference? The answer is, yes! Any parent who is motivated and wants to begin raising kinder, more respectful children can begin to teach a child even before he is born.

As parents, we can no longer afford to have double standards. The time to change and make the necessary improvements to our lives is now, while we still can. Don't let anyone tell you that you can't teach an old dog new tricks! Everyone is capable of learning. Remember, our parents did the best that they knew at the time in raising us. No matter what we were taught, we can make positive changes in our lives. It is a fact that we constantly role model either positive or negative behavior. There is no middle ground. We have to learn to be what we want our children to become. If we want them to have moral character and treat themselves and others with respect, we must role model these same behaviors for them.

In this manual, you will learn that the role of a parent, teacher, and educator can begin months before a baby's birth. As parents, we are our children's first and most influential teachers. Concepts such as respect,

compassion, and peace can be introduced to young children and carry through the teen years and into adulthood. Teaching character education is most effective when it is done wholeheartedly. The concepts of peace through self-respect and respect for others, self-control, honesty and compassion will become a part of your child's cognitive thinking, choices and actions only if they are adopted and modeled consistently by you, the parent.

Let's give our children the ability to make a better tomorrow.
~*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*

By modeling these behaviors now, it can become a habit in your life and ultimately the life of your child. Morals and values must be taught, practiced and lived everyday if they are to become a part of who you are, and who you want your child to become.

Why Start With Character Education?

Have you ever tried to shape a piece of clay that is dried? It is a frustrating, disappointing and futile effort. The ordinary person faced with this challenge would give up in frustration and throw the clay away, or wet it and try to make it usable. We can compare this analogy to our children. If we neglect to teach character education at the earliest possible age, it is much like leaving the clay out to dry. After our child's character has formed by the age of three, we then begin to teach morals and values that could have been taught before they were born.

Formal character education is a relatively new concept and is not taught officially until the first grade when the child is 6-years-old. By that age, a child's character and personality have already formed. It is also around this age or earlier that the child begins to exhibit behavioral problems and is labeled as stubborn, rebellious, defiant, or incorrigible. Parents and teachers begin to complain that they just don't know what to do with the child.

At this stage, parents do one of two things; either they begin asking themselves where they went wrong or they simply reason that the child is a "bad" seed. In other words, they throw the clay away. This is not to say that they physically throw the child away, but rather they accept that they have a "problem child" who won't behave no matter how hard they try. If there are other siblings, the parents will put their efforts into the other children in hopes of being more successful.

In the meantime, the parents grow increasingly more frustrated and disappointed with the child's behavior. They let the child continue in that

pattern of negative behavior, not realizing character education holds the key to changing hearts and minds at any age. The child, unaware of why he behaves the way he does, begins to see himself as a “bad” person incapable of changing. In essence, we can teach a child to give up on himself. We can also teach him that he is unworthy of love and respect. Resentful and deprived of hope, these children often resort to violence, aggression, or self-destructive behavior. It is common knowledge that if a child cannot get positive feedback, he will seek it in a negative way.

We can stop this vicious cycle by teaching our children character education, giving them the best possible start even before they are born, or at any other level of their development. With patience, persistence, determination, and love we can begin a process of learning that will bring peace, joy, and success to our children.

Lesson Plan One

So You're Going To Be A Parent!

Purpose/Objective

Students will learn that effective parenting begins at the onset of pregnancy. They will explore basic physical needs regarding pregnancy and early child care.

Materials

R*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*

RPencils/pens

Procedure

1. Introduce yourself to the class as an Instructor for *The Peaceful Solution Parenting Program*. Allow students to introduce themselves and give reasons/expectations for them taking the class. Emphasize that although this program begins with how to teach the unborn child, many of these concepts apply to older children as well, and can be carried through to adulthood.
2. Explain to class that throughout this course, they will learn different aspects of effective parenting. In today's lesson they will learn what to do from the moment they realize they are going to be parents. They will learn basic ways to help produce healthy children and how they can actually begin fostering positive character even in an unborn child.
3. **Activity:** Instruct students to form groups. Give groups five minutes to list what a baby needs before birth and as a newborn. Share and discuss answers. (*Answers may include: Even before birth a baby needs a mother who supplies the proper nutrients, one who does not smoke, do drugs, or abuse alcohol. A newborn needs shelter, diapers, clothes suited for the weather, bottles, etc. as well as love, care, concern and emotional support.*)
4. Read excerpts from **pages 1-2**, "Prenatal Care: A Women's Physical Needs." Discuss why proper prenatal care is so important. (*Knowledge of do's and don'ts of early pregnancy helps to keep both mother and baby safe, a healthy diet gives the baby nutrients to develop properly, etc.*)
5. Have students read the sections "Babies Can Hear And Learn While In The Womb" and "Learning And The Subconscious Mind" on **pages 2-5**.

Discuss the experiments that prove that babies hear and learn while in the womb. Ask students, how should this knowledge change the behavior of a pregnant woman? (*Possible answer: a loving, nurturing mother will want the best for her growing baby so she will be aware of all that could influence such development.*) By making moral choices and improving our interactions, we begin the process of teaching positive character to our unborn child.

6. Ask, why is it important to plan ahead for the delivery of a baby? (*So important decisions such as mother's and baby's needs may be discussed ahead of time, less stress on the mother once delivery begins, all necessary supplies have been gotten, etc.*) Ask students what they think could occur if parents are not prepared for some of the challenges of raising a newborn. (*Parents can become overwhelmed, frustrated and anxious, which can lead to abuse and/or neglect.*) Allow students to share what they think could occur if a baby's physical and emotional needs are not properly met. (*Baby may suffer long-term physical or emotional harm, may cause sickness or even death, etc.*)

7. Emphasize that there are many considerations when having and caring for your baby. Being both physically and mentally ready can ease the stress and uncertainty of being a first-time parent. Read or have a volunteer read excerpts from sections beginning on **page 5** entitled "How Do I Know It's Time?" through the section entitled "Sickness" on **page 9**. Lead a discussion, covering all main points.

8. Have students read "Keep This In Mind" on **page 9** and discuss that parenting is a lifelong job. It doesn't stop at the birth of the baby, or when there are setbacks within the family. A parent is responsible for the welfare of his/her child until the child is grown and has left your home. Even then, great wisdom can be shared with your children as they seek guidance on the important task of positive parenting.

9. Conclude the lesson by reviewing main points and encouraging students to take this course seriously so that they will learn how to be great parents and raise their children to have positive moral characters.

Lesson One

So You're Going To Be A Parent!

When does the role of a parent begin? Is it when your infant is newly born, is it when your infant becomes somewhat aware of the world around him? Or is it when your infant begins to crawl, walk, or talk? The correct answer is none of the above. Your role as a parent begins from the moment of conception. Remember a positive parent is responsible for the safety, health, well-being and education of her infant. Hence, when a woman comes to know the joyful news that she is pregnant, she will make changes in her lifestyle in order to ensure the safety and health of her unborn. For example, she may change the way she eats, incorporating more fresh and wholesome foods into her diet, walk more to increase her strength and stamina, and reduce unnecessary risks, such as the abuse of alcohol and tobacco products. Making these changes, and more, in order to ensure the best start to life for her unborn child, is the onset of positive parenting.

As soon as pregnancy occurs, changes begin within a woman's body. The baby is constantly growing and developing over the next nine months. We have the responsibility to ensure the healthiest lifestyle for ourselves so that we may have healthy babies.

Prenatal Care: A Woman's Physical Needs

As soon as you realize you are pregnant, it is very important to become educated on all you need to know beneficial for yourself and the baby. Whatever you choose, it is important to seek this care as early as possible so that you may receive guidance and advice throughout your pregnancy. Proper prenatal care can help you stay healthy and help your baby to grow strong and be delivered safely.

Throughout pregnancy, you should eat moderate amounts of healthy foods. This does not mean "eating for two." Your diet should consist of proteins, carbohydrates, vegetables, fruits, fats, vitamins and minerals. It is important to eat a well balanced diet. Fruits and vegetables are a must for development of your baby's skin, bones and eyes. Iron rich foods such as liver and greens may be beneficial. Try to drink sufficient water each day. Many women find drinking 1 to 4 cups of red raspberry tea every day to be very beneficial. There are other beneficial supplements you may take, such as calcium or iron.

Throughout the pregnancy, your body will go through many changes.

Changes such as moderate weight gain, minor fatigue, and skin changes such as acne are normal. Other changes, such as severe cramping or pain, moderate to heavy bleeding, and excessive swelling of hands and feet should not be ignored. Seek advice on any change that you are unsure or uneasy about.

Babies Can Hear And Learn While In The Womb

For many years we have erroneously believed that an unborn child floats in utero, totally unaware of the world around him. This is simply not true. Dr. Chamberlain, in his book *The Fetal Senses*, stated that “*The maternal womb is an optimal stimulating, interactive environment for human development. Activity never ceases and a fetus is never isolated.*”¹ Even prior to the external structural development of the ears at 16 weeks, the unborn child has the ability to hear and react to sounds. In one study done in Belfast, researchers working with 400 unborn children demonstrated that reactive listening begins eight weeks before the ear is structurally complete. By beaming a pure pulse sound at 250-500 Hz behavioral responses were clearly seen via ultra sound.² Since sound travels five times more efficiently in water than in air, the child, floating in amniotic fluid, can hear sounds five times greater.

**“We can build a
society of moral
citizens by
introducing
character education
in the womb.”**
~*The Peaceful Solution*
Character Education Program

“Many studies now confirm that voices reach the womb, rather than being overwhelmed by the background noise created by the mother and placenta. Intonation patterns of pitch, stress, and rhythm, as well as music, reach the fetus without significant distortion. A mother’s voice is particularly powerful because it is transmitted to the womb through her own body reaching the fetus in a stronger form than outside sounds.”

www.birthpsychology.com³

In a study done in the Netherlands, doctors also used sound to determine if a child could learn and remember while still in the womb. By using a specific noise they were able to monitor the child’s reaction and recognition to the sound. “They found that while a [fetus] moved when they first heard the sound, they later became used to it and did not react. According to the

doctors, this showed the fetuses were able to remember the sound and learn it was harmless...”⁴

The unborn child not only hears what is occurring in the external world but can learn while still in the womb.

The word **learn** means *to acquire knowledge, skill or a behavioral tendency through study, instruction, or experience.*

The process of learning is so complex, that science still cannot fully explain the process. It will suffice to say that information is received by the senses and sent to the brain by nerve impulses. By a series of electrical signals this information is sent from cell to cell along a pathway called circuits. This process allows the brain to store, remember and recall information. It is this process that makes learning and memory possible even in the unborn child.

Dr. Chamberlain reported that “Learning and memory are interlocked: learning depends on memory, and learning is evidence of memory...an accumulating volume of research demonstrates memory in the first years of life and in the prenatal period as well. Some children spontaneously recall birth events (even secrets) but expression of these memories are delayed until they can speak...Twins can be seen developing certain gestures and habits at twenty weeks gestational age which persist into their postnatal years.”⁵

Research also indicates that in addition to recognizing and responding to a specific sound, the fetus is also affected by the mothers emotional response to what she hears, feels and experiences.

“Experiments in Australia revealed that unborn babies were participating in the emotional upset of their mothers watching a disturbing 20-minute segment of a Hollywood movie. When briefly re-exposed to this film up to three months after birth, they still showed recognition of the earlier experience...”

www.birthpsychology.com⁶

This experiment demonstrates not only the remarkable physical and emotional bond that exists between mother and child, but also that violence, aggression, and hatred, all the elements of today’s popular entertainment, have a negative effect upon the mother and the unborn. The ability for a prenatal child to retain what he has experienced before birth and respond in like manner months after birth has far-reaching implications in teaching the unborn child. It also proves that the brain of the unborn child is functioning at a much higher capacity than was previously understood.

This also affects a child's character development later in life. Be aware of the environment the unborn child is in at all times.

"You may not realize it, but I hear every word you are saying."

~Your Unborn Child

Learning And The Subconscious Mind

Everything that the prenatal child experiences in utero is processed, analyzed and stored by the control center of the body. The brain processes the information that is acquired through sound and the emotions of the mother and stores it in the subconscious mind which has a primary function of absorbing and storing information.

"We receive 60,000 stimuli per second and it [the subconscious] starts storing all these from about the time the fetus in its mothers womb is thirteen weeks old...Information that comes through the senses [such as sound]...are stored forever and can be recalled."⁷ In other words, what we experience even from before birth is not only learned but becomes a permanent part of who we are.

Throughout our lives we make decisions that are based upon the information that is stored in our subconscious. Our choices are reflexive; often we are not even aware why we behave, think or react to a situation in a particular way. As we grow and mature in a positive nurturing environment, the conscious mind acquires, through experience and training, the ability to reason and weigh the consequences of our subconscious responses. If there is a conflict between the subconscious and the conscious mind, then the subconscious mind, being more powerful, always wins. Here is a common example, a child whose subconscious mind has been programmed to respond with violence as a way to deal with a problem will automatically strike out to gain control of a situation that is frustrating or displeasing to him. For instance, if something has been taken from him or he has been told "no," he may strike out by hitting, throwing an object or a tantrum. This is why so many parents complain that even though they redirect their child from aggressive behaviors, the undesirable behaviors persist.

Without this information it is easy to blame the child. Statements such as "He's so stubborn" or "He has discipline problems" are verbalized liberally in regards to children who persist in dealing with frustrations in an aggressive way. As we deal with children who are aggressive, it helps to keep in mind that their behavior may not be entirely their fault. Our genetics, as well as many other factors, even before we are born, all help to shape us.

This is not to imply that what a child learns *after* he is born is not important to the development of his character and personality. To the contrary, how we are parented, our experiences, and the environment we are raised in, all help to shape and mold the person we become. However, it is undeniable that the subconscious mind, influenced primarily by sound before we are born, is to our character, what our skeleton is to our body. The subconscious mind forms the foundation from which all of our thoughts, decisions, and behaviors are based. The importance of it cannot be ignored or minimized in regards to how knowledge is imprinted in the mind of the unborn child.

There's A Job For You Too, Dad!

For fathers, this is also an exciting time. You can participate by being there for the mother and plan together what you will need for the baby. You can also assist by encouraging the eating of healthy meals and reminding the mother to take her vitamins. This type of support is very important. It not only assists the woman in having a joyful pregnancy, but allows you to feel like part of the process.



How Do I Know It's Time?

A normal pregnancy lasts between 37-42 weeks, however every woman is different. If you are delivering in a hospital, ask about any routine procedures that may occur during a delivery as well as any medicines or supplements that are given to you or to the baby. Decide what you want and do not want before your labor actually begins in case you need to sign any waivers. Also ask these questions if you are delivering at a birthing center or with a midwife at home. By taking care of as many decisions as possible beforehand, your delivery may be less stressful.

Labor usually begins with tightening of the uterine muscles (contractions). Contractions usually start mildly and vary in length and duration. As labor progresses, contractions tend to become more intense and at closer intervals. Monitor your contractions. When they begin to come at regular intervals or increase in strength and duration, inform your doctor or midwife. It's important to pay attention to your body. Some women's contractions never come at regular intervals, but do become more intense and painful.

Other indications of labor may include:

- R**Pain in the lower back that spreads to the lower abdomen or legs.
- R**A bloody show (pinkish or brown streaked mucous).
- R**Rupture of the membranes (“water breaking”).
- R**Diarrhea or vomiting accompanied with sharp stomach pains.

If you are pregnant and are experiencing any of these things, consult your doctor or midwife immediately.

Your New Baby

The birth of your newborn is a very joyful and wonderful event. This little one has been cared for and nurtured inside your body for the last nine months and is now in your arms. Be prepared to comfort your baby after birth by holding her and speaking to her.



In the first weeks after your baby is born, it is vital to hold her as much as possible. This is time for both mom and dad to bond and build a firm foundation of love and trust. It is you who will teach your child what it means to trust. By showing her that you will be there to take care of her needs and to comfort her, she will have a strong foundation to assist her the rest of her life.

The physical needs of a baby include being fed, kept warm and clean, and being given comfort and emotional support. That’s not asking much, but it will take a lot of time and effort on your part. This is also a vital time for building on the foundation of positive character you have been teaching since your child was in the womb.

Feeding Your Baby

Breast feeding is the most natural way for a woman to feed her baby. Breast milk is the most easily digested substance a baby can eat. It also helps to build a bond of love between you and your baby. Breast feeding provides antibodies and boosts the baby’s immune system. Breast fed babies are almost never constipated. Breast feeding also may help you to lose the extra baby weight gain and return your body to its pre-pregnancy weight.

If you are unable to breast feed, you may consider another form. Seek advise on what is best for your little one. Of course, remember the bottles.

You and your spouse must decide what is best for your baby. If you are

unsure what is best, ask! There are a number of alternatives available.

If you are breast feeding, it is not necessary to supplement your baby with solid food for at least the first four months. Many babies will not desire solid food until eight or nine months. Some basic first foods for babies include mashed potatoes, carrots, oatmeal, green peas, bananas, applesauce and other soft fruits.

Sleeping

Allow your newborn to sleep as long as she likes. Be ready to adjust to the difference because her sleeping and eating patterns will not be like yours. Typically, newborns will wake up and eat and then go back to sleep. As the days and weeks go by, the baby will begin to sleep less and less. Dress your baby warmly for sleep (a footed sleeper works best) so that she does not have many blankets on or around her. Keep her room warm, but not too warm. Rotate her sleeping position each time you put her down to prevent her skull from flattening because the bones in her head are still very soft.

Holding Your Baby

The newborn's neck muscles are not fully developed at birth. Therefore, it is vital that you support the baby's head at all times in the first months. Always keep a hand on the back of her head and neck while holding her in an upright position. While you are nursing or holding her in a lying position, support her neck and head with your arm.

We must remember that even as the baby begins to grow and learn to support his own head that we should never shake him, throw him up and down in the air or flip him back and forth. Sudden violent movement of his head can result in Shaken Baby Syndrome, where the baby's brain slams against its skull, often resulting in death, or blindness, because the retina detaches from the eye. Show love to your baby by treating her with respect and care and protecting her at all times.

Proper touching is very important to a baby. Studies have shown that babies who receive no stimulation or appropriate touching to their skin grow at a slower rate than babies who are often touched and massaged. You cannot spoil a baby by holding her too much. Enjoy this time with her now for the days will be short and over quickly.

Bathing

For the first four weeks or so, sponge bathing works well for your new baby. Prepare a small tub with warm water and a little soap. You can add

about 1 teaspoon of salt per full tub of water. Wet a washcloth and gently rub her skin, making sure to get into all the little lines and creases. Keep her umbilical cord area clean. Applying a little honey at each diaper change will help the cord to fall off within a few days.

As the baby grows, begin washing her in a baby bathtub or sink. The water should be nice and warm but not too hot. Dip your wrist in the water. If it is too hot for your wrist to handle comfortably, it is too hot for the baby. Allow the water to cool.

Never leave the baby unattended while in the tub or sink. Gather everything you will need to bathe her before she is ever placed in the water. Be sure that the room where the baby is bathing is warm and not drafty, and remember to always support her head and neck.

Diaper Changes

Change the baby as soon as possible every time she urinates or has a bowel movement. Do not leave her in wet/soiled diapers for long periods of time as this can cause rashes and irritability. Warm washcloths are best to clean the baby off, but some people prefer disposable wipes. If you do use wipes, be sure to monitor the baby's skin to make sure the chemicals in the wipes are not irritating her in any way. Using a little cornstarch after each changing may help prevent diaper rash.

Although cloth diapers are the most natural and cost-efficient choice, some parents prefer disposable diapers because of their convenience. Use what works best for you and is tolerated best by your baby. Be sure to dispose of or wash all soiled diapers properly and always wash your hands after changing your baby.

Crying

Some think it's impossible to differentiate between a baby's cries, but most parents learn quickly how to do this. It is important to remember that babies do not cry without a reason. This is the only way they are able to communicate their needs to you and it is important that you tend to their cries and never ignore them. By doing so, your baby will learn that she can count on you to help her when she is in need and it will build a foundation of trust and security.

One reason a baby may seem irritated or agitated is because the mother or father is irritated or agitated. These feelings can be transferred to the baby. It is important that you are calm and joyful when around your baby. It might be wise to have help to tend to her when you are down or tired. Even when your baby has been crying for an extended period of time, you must always treat her with compassion.

Social Interaction

Too many visitors and excessive noise may over stimulate newborns. During the first few weeks, it is best not to allow many others to hold her. Remember that newborns are susceptible to the germs of others. While you allow extended family and friends to look at your little darling, try limiting the holding of her to immediate family.

At around three months of age, your baby should be naturally desiring social interaction. She will be looking for others, smiling and reacting to stimulation. While she may enjoy getting to know new people, always be prepared to hold her and comfort her if she becomes frightened or overstimulated. As she gets older, she will become more confident and secure being away from you because she trusts that you will always be there if she needs you.

Sickness

Always seek wise counsel, advise, or guidance when dealing with sickness. This is for the health of the baby and can also be very comforting for new parents because it gives you someone you can call with questions or concerns. Sometimes just hearing that something is “normal” can go a long way to ease your mind.

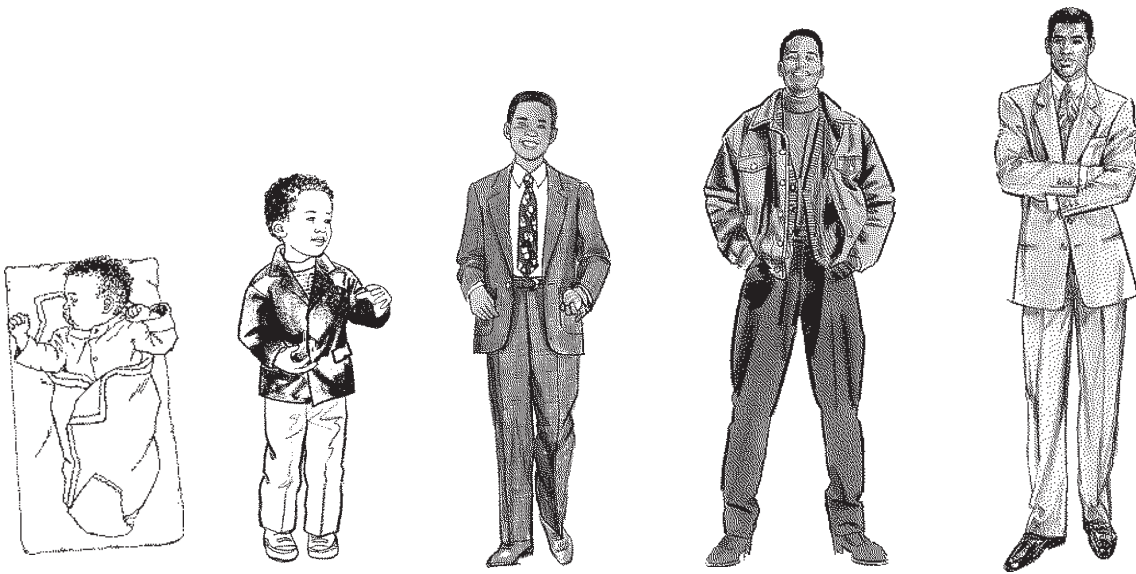
If you ever feel that your baby is acting abnormally in any way, ask about it. Some warning signs may include: she seems to be having difficulty breathing, she stops or cuts back on her eating or she is not having wet diapers or bowel movements. If you see any of these signs, seek immediate help.

Mom and dad, you are the ones who know your baby best. You will learn quickly what is her normal behavior. Remember, your baby trusts you to watch out for her and protect her. Don't be afraid or embarrassed to ask for help, ever.

Keep This In Mind

As a parent you have the ability to begin shaping your child's character even before he is born. Studies and experiments prove that babies can learn while still in the womb and what we learn even before we are born has the potential to affect our choices and our character. It doesn't stop there. The formative years, from birth to 3-years-old, are a time of rapid mental growth. Invest effort, time, and love into teaching your child diligently during these years so that he can develop a positive, moral character. Your investment will pay off. Even if your child is past the formative years, a pre-adolescent

or teenager, if you consistently teach, role-model, and practice moral interaction, you can begin the process of changing the heart and mind of your child to being respectful and having concern for others. The bottom line is, teach your children to have positive, moral character regardless of their age.



Any age is a great age to develop positive moral character.

~The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Lesson Plan Two

Effective Parenting Begins With Character

Purpose/Objective

Parents will explore the great responsibility of parenting and how negative influences affect children's character. They will also learn the importance of acknowledging parenting mistakes in order to find solutions.

Materials

- R***The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*
- R**Pencils/pens

Procedure

1. Briefly review **Lesson One, So You're Going To Be A Parent** by asking the following questions:
 - a. Why is it so important for a pregnant woman to receive prenatal care? (*To monitor her health and the health of the baby, etc.*)
 - b. What are some of the physical needs of newborns? (*Food, clothing, shelter, love, etc.*)
 - c. Why is it so important for a newborn's physical needs to be met properly? (*To help the baby grow properly and to develop a healthy mind, etc.*)
 - d. How can a mother's behavior affect the character development of her unborn child? (*Babies can hear and learn in the womb, so a mother must guard her words, actions, and environment.*)
2. Explain to class that in today's lesson they will continue learning what effective parenting consists of. We will analyze the deceptions and traps that society has fallen into, and we'll learn how to recognize and avoid them. We will look at the traits of effective parents, as well as common mistakes in parenting and their solutions.
3. Ask the question on **page 11**: "What do you think is the most important job on our planet?" Give students time to ponder and write down their answer(s) on the lines provided. Allow volunteers to give their answers. Have students turn to **page 11** and read the first paragraph. Emphasize the definition of parenting.

4. Tell students that in our modern world there are many factors that can affect our abilities to parent effectively. **Activity #1:** Allot 10 minutes. Have students form groups to brainstorm roadblocks to effective parenting. Have groups report to the class.

5. Lead a class discussion about the negative influences we are faced with. Emphasize that television is a big contributor to the condition of society today, and is a prime source of negative influences to both adults and children. Ask students how these influences have affected them personally. Help them to understand that it is within their power to guard and protect their children from these influences and their effects. Choose volunteers to read the remainder of **page 11**.

6. Ask students, what do all positive effective parents have in common? Paraphrase the first paragraph on **page 12**; emphasize and expound on the three common traits. Explain that positive parenting does not stop there. These traits are only the foundation. They will learn about many other traits, skills, and knowledge essential to positive parenting.

7. Read the first paragraph under the heading “Training Never Hurt Anyone” on **page 12**. Emphasize that effective parenting begins with being responsible and being trained. Allow students to write down some things they have been trained to do. (For example: driving a car, their job, cooking, etc. all require some form of training).

8. Allow volunteers to read the next two paragraphs on **pages 12-13**. Parenting requires training. Stress that just because people have the ability to have children does not mean they are ready to be parents. Discuss some basic things that a new parent would need to know. Ask: What are some things you had to learn as a parent that you did not know before?

9. Explain that when parents lack training in positive moral character they can become abusive to their children. Read the first two paragraphs under “Acknowledging Mistakes, Finding Solutions,” on **pages 13-14**. Briefly discuss the various forms of abuse and a few examples of each.

10. **Activity #2:** Divide students into groups. Instruct each group to brainstorm the short and long-term effects of abuse on children. Let them use some facts to create a TV ad entitled “No To Child Abuse.” Allow each group to share with the class. Choose a volunteer to read the third paragraph

on **page 14**. Emphasize that verbal, physical, and sexual abuse are not mistakes, they are willful acts of violence. Stress how damaging this is to a child when this is done. Emphasize that anyone engaging in these acts should seek counseling immediately.

11. Have volunteers read the last three paragraphs on **page 14**. Discuss and emphasize that many parents make the same mistakes in parenting as their parents made. We must focus on improving our character so that we can make better choices. Explain that in order to know what areas we need to improve on, we have to analyze ourselves. This can be a humbling, but beneficial process. Allow 5-7 minutes for students to complete the “Parenting Self-Analysis” on **page 15**. Instruct them to be very honest with themselves. Ask for volunteers to share answers to questions 1, 3 and 4.

12. Conclude by encouraging class to review what they have learned today. Summarize the quote on **page 12** and remind them that their goal is to become better parents.

Lesson Two

Effective Parenting Begins With Character

Parenting Is A Job... And The Prerequisite Is A Positive Character

What do you think is the most important job on our planet? _____

Parents are responsible for raising another person from a state of total helplessness and dependency to a mature adult with positive character who is respectful, responsible, and compassionate toward others.

Parenting: *caring or nurturing a child or children by providing for their physical and emotional needs.*

Negative influences can destroy a person’s way of thinking and being. Our children are not exempt. They, too, can fall prey to negative influences. So, it is no exaggeration when we say, “Parenting is a tough job”.

There are many factors that can adversely affect how a child is trained and what kind of person he or she becomes. Our knowledge, values, character, and experiences all play a role in how we train and how we affect our children. We also live in a society where we are literally bombarded with negative influences; violence, aggression, sexual promiscuity, vulgar language and jokes are practically everywhere, and come into our homes through all forms of media—television, radio, magazines, and the Internet.

Before the invention of television, immorality was not as prevalent. **Immorality** can be defined as *a lack of morality; an immoral act or practice; not discerning between right and wrong; teaching a conception of negative behavior; doing or saying something that brings harm to self, others, and the environment.* On the other hand, moral behavior can be defined as having respect for life, yours and others, property and the environment. Hollywood and its negative influences has become society’s role model.

Without the teaching of moral character education, it would be impossible to raise positive, moral children in today's world.

Although modern day parenting is filled with new challenges that our ancestors did not have, the elements of positive, effective parenting have remained basically the same since the beginning of time. Regardless of the times in which we live and the challenges that face us, effective parents have three common traits:

- They have positive, moral character.
- They understand the tremendous responsibility they have towards their children.
- They prepare their minds and hearts to nurture, protect, teach, and guide their children always from a moral perspective.

The all-important task of parenting is really about you developing a positive moral character and then teaching your child or children how to do the same.

Training Never Hurt Anyone

To be a great parent you must be responsible, and just as with any other responsibility, being well trained is an important part of being successful. Why should parenting be any different? Think about how many things you have been trained to do and write some of them below.

Many of us have become parents and are unprepared for the responsibilities that face us. The fact of the matter is, since parenting has become increasingly difficult in our immoral society, we need all the training we can get.

By learning how to become positive parents, we can acquire the skills to raise children who are moral, respectful, and caring toward themselves and others. Whether your child is in the womb, or you already have a household

of children ranging in ages from newborn to teenager, it is not too late to begin developing positive character traits and teaching your children to do the same.

Acknowledging Mistakes, Finding Solutions

An important step in your training to become a better, more effective parent is to acknowledge that there are areas you need to improve in, because even the very best parents can make mistakes. The many stresses of modern day living, coupled with a lack of experience in parenting, can lead you to say or do things you may regret for years to come.

The “mistakes” in parenting that we are referring to do not include verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, nor do they include being negligent towards the needs of a child. These types of abuses are not “mistakes”. They are willful and heinous violations of the innocence and trust of a child. If you or anyone else in your family have committed any of these abuses then seek counsel immediately and determine in your mind never to repeat any of these abusive behaviors again. Note the following examples of these abuses and the effects they produce:

Verbal Abuse

Yelling, scolding, demeaning, insulting, ridiculing or otherwise attacking a child with words are forms of verbal abuse. Research has found that children who are verbally abused have many of the same problems as victims of physical abuse. Verbally abused children suffered from anger management issues, violent behaviors, depression and other disorders common in physically abused children.⁸

Physical Abuse

Childhood physical abuse involves the physical injury or maltreatment of a child which includes hitting, punching, slapping, kicking, shaking, burning and other ways of inflicting pain, not giving a child food to eat, denying a child medical attention, and giving a child drugs and alcohol.

Physical abuse can have short and long-term psychological, emotional and physical effects. Short-term effects include physical injury and brain damage. Children may become withdrawn, sad, experience difficulties sleeping and eating, become irritable and aggressive towards their peers or younger siblings, have lack of confidence and self-esteem and start using alcohol and/or illicit substances. The long-term effects include difficulties forming and maintaining healthy relationships and a propensity [tendency] to be victimized or abused in future relationships.⁹

Children deserve love and respect, not abuse!

~ *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse of a child can include: ignoring, rejecting, isolating, exploiting or corrupting, verbally assaulting, terrorizing or neglecting the child. Children who are constantly ignored, shamed, terrorized or humiliated suffer at least as much, if not more, than if they are physically assaulted. Although the visible signs of emotional abuse in children can be difficult to detect, the hidden scars of this type of abuse manifest in numerous behavioral ways, including insecurity, poor self-esteem, destructive behavior, angry acts (such as fire setting and animal cruelty), withdrawal, poor development of basic skills, alcohol or drug abuse, suicide, difficulty forming relationships and unstable job histories.¹⁰

Sexual abuse

The sexual activities may include all forms of oral-genital, genital, or anal contact by or to the child or abuse that does not involve contact, such as exhibitionism, voyeurism, or using the child in the production of pornography. Sexual abuse includes a spectrum of activities ranging from rape to physically less intrusive sexual abuse.¹¹

The effects of abuse result from the abuse itself, from the family's response to the situation, and from the stigmatization that accompanies abuse. The symptoms can include post-traumatic symptoms, precocious sexualization, depression, anxiety, guilt, fear, sexual dysfunction, dissociative symptoms, eating disorders, substance abuse, prostitution, regressive behaviors such as a return to thumb-sucking or bed-wetting, runaway behavior, and academic and behavior problems.¹²

The mistakes in parenting that we are referring to are those times when you might respond impatiently when dealing with a child by using a harsh tone of voice instead of a kind, gentle tone. Examples of other mistakes are: not setting proper limits or rules for your child, such as not having a bedtime or allowing the child to do whatever he wants just to get him “out of your hair”; not correcting disrespectful behaviors, such as back-talk or having tantrums; and not setting a proper example. Children need guidance and structure in their lives in order to help them grow into productive well-adjusted people. Remember, they learn from our examples.

For many, parenting is trial and error. Many first-time parents are unsure of how to “train” their children in proper conduct or moral character. They often raise their children the same way they were raised, making the same mistakes their parents made. The problem with this type of parenting is that it seldom improves and the ones who suffer from our errors, sometimes their entire lives, are our children.

Correcting the mistakes we make in our lives, whether in parenting or any other role, takes determination. It also takes setting your mind in advance to find the solution and overcome the problem. Give yourself room to improve and grow as a parent through self-analysis, listening, and learning.

Parenting Self-Analysis

In your journey to become a positive, more effective parent it is important to honestly evaluate your needs and strengths as a parent. Complete the following exercise by filling in the blanks.



1. I want to become a better parent because _____

2. What areas do I need to improve in to become an effective parent? (For example: being more compassionate, organized, etc.) List at least 3 ways you would like to improve as a parent.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

3. Everyone has strengths, things they do well, that can be used to help them improve. (For example: budgeting, buying wholesome food, etc.) Realizing that you are responsible in one area can motivate you to be responsible in others. List at least three strengths you have as a parent.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

4. How do you think improving your character and skills as a parent will improve your family? _____

Keep in mind why you want to become a better parent, as well as the things you need to improve in and your strengths. Knowing what you need to work on as an individual and as a parent is the first step in finding a solution, rather than focusing only on the problem. Channel your energies where you need help the most.

Lesson Plan Three

Understanding The Connection Between Parenting And Character

Purpose/Objective

Students will recognize the difference between positive and negative character traits. They will also learn the difference between character and personality.

Materials

- R***The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*
- R**Pencils/pens

Procedure

1. Briefly review **Lesson Two, Effective Parenting Begins With Character** by asking the following questions:
 - a. What did we learn about negative influences? *(They can destroy a person's way of thinking and being, they are everywhere and come into our homes through all forms of media.)*
 - b. What are the three common traits of effective parenting? *(Positive moral character, understand the responsibilities towards their children, prepare themselves to guide their children.)*
 - c. Do we need training to become better, more effective parents? Explain your answer. *(Yes, there are areas we all need to improve in because even the best parents can make mistakes.)*
2. Read the first paragraph on **page 17**. Emphasize that parents must be responsible, patient, and respectful. Ask: how can these positive character traits help us to be effective parents? Have volunteers read the first three paragraphs under the heading "Character Is More Than Meets The Eye" on **page 17**. Emphasize that character helps us choose between right and wrong. It is the basis by which our every thought, action, and decision is derived. Personality has to do with our personal likes and dislikes, mannerisms, social skills, and interests.
3. Give class the following scenario to ponder: You are walking down the street and you see a wallet on the ground, what would you do? How they

answer this question tells about their character. Then ask them to consider their most preferred color and food. This tells about their personality. Emphasize that it is important to differentiate between a person's character and personality so we can make wise decisions about them. Share examples with the class and have them share some as well.

4. Choose volunteers to read the paragraph on **page 18**. Guide a class discussion. Ask the class to name some moral principles they are familiar with. (*Answers may include: do not murder, do not steal, treat others the way you want to be treated, etc.*) Stress that morals refer to beliefs or principles that govern the way people think and behave. Moral principles clearly separate what is right from wrong and they are the foundation of character. The combination of your moral principles, genetics, values, and influences are interwoven to make up your character.

5. **Activity #1:** Group students. Have them brainstorm the ways in which a lack of morality affects our society. Have students share with the class.

6. Discuss the positive and negative character traits and the paragraph that follows on **pages 18-19**. Emphasize that moral values promote positive character traits whereas a lack of morality results in negative character. Have students honestly evaluate themselves. Which traits (positive and negative) apply to them at this time? Have students place a check mark next to the traits that apply to them so they can re-evaluate themselves later in the course.

7. Ask, what is the first thing we should do to develop a positive moral character? (*Answers will vary.*) Discuss the first two paragraphs under the heading "Taking On A Positive Moral Character" on **page 20**. Inform class that the first step to developing a positive moral character is to evaluate their character based on their responses to moral situations.

8. Ask students for some examples of moral situations that we might encounter? (*Possible answers can include: Whether or not to return lost property, touching, using or borrowing someone's possessions without permission, taking a longer lunch break than we are scheduled for.*) Stress the importance of also evaluating our thoughts and behavior in order to weed out undesirable traits. Have volunteers read the next four paragraphs on **page 20** on their own time.

9. Draw students' attention to the paragraph under the heading "The First Step" on **page 20**. Have class read the scenarios on **page 21** and check *Always*, *Sometimes*, or *Never* as it best applies to them. Have them go back to **pages 18-19** to see how each scenario represents a positive or negative character trait. Based on their responses to the scenarios, have class answer the questions under "Analyze Your Response" on **page 22**. Discuss only answers that volunteers are comfortable sharing.

10. Choose key sections in the last three paragraphs on **pages 22-23** to reinforce the understanding that our actions speak louder than words. Have class reflect on the type of character they are setting before their children; will it develop a positive or negative character in them?

11. Conclude by reminding class that we have to develop a positive moral character so that our children can see the benefits and choose to do the same. Having the ability to change the hearts and minds of our children starts with us perfecting our character because we are their teachers and guides.

Lesson Three

Understanding The Connection Between Parenting And Character

Now that you know the elements of positive parenting, how does it relate to character? The roles of teacher, provider, and disciplinarian can only be successfully achieved when parents develop a positive character. Effective parents must be responsible. They must have patience, self-respect, and respect for their children. These are just a few character traits that are essential to becoming a positive, more effective parent.

Character Is More Than Meets The Eye



So what is character? Simply put, character is the combination of traits that enable us to choose between positive and negative behaviors. Character is the combination of morals and beliefs that governs how we treat others, our environment, and ourselves. It is the basis by which our every thought, action, and decision is derived, and it is the means by which we distinguish between right and wrong.

A positive moral character is developed through practicing and upholding moral principles (standards of right or just behavior). To have morals is to have a respectful, caring, attitude towards others, yourself, and the environment. Whenever we are faced with a moral situation, this is where a person's character will surface.

This is not to be confused with personality. Personality is the combination of qualities that make us unique. Personality traits are qualities that include our personal likes and dislikes, mannerisms, social skills, and hobbies. For instance, the type of food you like to eat, or your preferred color, make up your personality. The most important factor that separates and distinguishes character from personality is called moral principles.

In general, moral or ethical principles are universal. In other words, people from all over the world would agree with them and uphold them. Morals refer to principles or beliefs that govern the way people think and behave. Moral

Moral principles: thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors that clearly separate what is right from wrong. They are the foundation of character.

Genetics: the combination of your parents' genes that make up your fixed physical traits and changeable behavioral traits. These traits can be inherited from or passed on to the third and fourth generation.

Values: the principles or qualities that you consider to be important.

Environment: the combination of your family, how your home life is structured, your culture, your customs, and your community.

Influences: anything with the potential to affect the way you think, feel, or act.

principles clearly separate what is right from wrong and they are the foundation of character.

The combination of your moral principles, genetics, values, environment, and influences are interwoven to make up your character. Your character consists of traits that are similar to building blocks and can be categorized as either positive or negative. Positive traits are beneficial and advantageous to yourself and others. They support and uphold moral principles that govern your behavior. For instance, honesty, compassion, and respect are just a few of these positive traits. An honest, compassionate, and respectful person would never willfully cause harm to another.

The following is a list of positive character traits we can develop by wholeheartedly practicing moral principles.

Positive Character Traits

Honest	Being fair, straightforward, and sincere
Patient	Demonstrating self-control and remaining calm through setbacks
Steadfast	Determined not to give up or change what you have set out to accomplish
Courageous	The act of doing what needs to be done even when you are afraid
Trustworthy	Dependable and assured reliance
Disciplined	Using self-control to behave in a proper way
Respectful	To value others as important as yourself and to allow that to show through your actions and attitudes
Compassionate	To care about the needs of others
Merciful	To show leniency or tolerance even when others have behaved in a manner where they deserved to be given a consequence
Forgiving	To refrain from holding anger or resentment towards someone who has wronged you
Generous	Liberal in giving and sharing
Humble	Not proud or arrogant
Optimistic	The ability to look on the bright side of things; to anticipate the best possible outcome
Thankful	To be appreciative of the benefits that you have received
Considerate	Having regard for another's feelings
Modest	Not given to conceit showing decency in behavior, dress, and speech
Self-Controlled	Not yielding to impulsive thoughts and actions
Decisive	Able to come to a decision, make up one's mind and remain firm
Responsible	Always doing what is necessary to complete the task
Educated	Getting all the facts, making sure they are correct, before making a decision

Below is a list of negative character traits to watch for and work towards eliminating.

Negative Character Traits

Selfish	To be greedy or self-centered
Inconsiderate	Thoughtless or insensitive towards the feelings and needs of others
Indifferent/ Unconcerned	Uncaring and unsympathetic
Envious	To resent what someone has, and wanting what he/she possesses
Impatient	To be restless or short-tempered and easily aggravated
Uncompassionate	A lack of concern for the needs of others
Hateful	An intense emotion that results in extreme dislike and hostility
Unforgiving	Not forgiving others for wrong doings; cold hearted
Revengeful	To seek retaliation or desire to get even
Deceitful	To purposely mislead
Disrespectful	Lacking courtesy or esteem
Aggressive	Hostile violent behavior that can be both physical and verbal
Unreliable	Cannot be depended on
Disloyal	Unfaithful and uncommitted to a person or cause; treacherous and deceitful
Dishonest/ Untrustworthy	Cannot be trusted
Pessimistic	Chooses to see the negative side of any situation; always thinking negatively
Indecisive	Does not commit to a decision
Irresponsible	Not completing duties or tasks; not accountable for one's actions
Immodest	Conceited, improper dress and speech
Lacking self-control	Yielding to impulsive thoughts and behavior

Although these traits are clearly divided into positive and negative, a person's character is not easy to categorize. Our characters are made up of both positive and negative traits. Therefore, someone can be loving and compassionate, but also irresponsible. To develop a positive moral character, it is up to each individual to honestly evaluate both their positive and negative character traits, and then focus on strengthening the positive traits while eliminating the negative ones.

“Positive traits are to character what a strong foundation is to a house.”

~The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Taking On A Positive Moral Character

It is clear to see that the skills of an effective parent depend on having a positive moral character. Remember, a moral character is one that's caring and concerned about others, self, property, the environment, and all life. Traits such as responsibility, self-control, compassion, and patience will enable you to maintain a positive moral character and to make positive decisions in order to care for your children and provide them with all of their physical and emotional needs.

Negative traits, such as being disrespectful, impatience, irresponsibility, a lack of discipline and a lack of self-control can and will lead to abuse and neglect. Every year, more parents physically, sexually, and emotionally abuse their children. If these parents interacted using positive character traits such as self-control, patience and respect, these abuses would never occur.

To become a positive, effective parent, you must carefully evaluate your character in order to weed out negative, undesirable traits. Everyone has traits that are less than desirable, but that should not stop us from striving to overcome our flaws. We all have the ability to make better choices towards others and ourselves. There is a saying that we all need to internalize—“practice makes perfect.”

By rehearsing ways to handle everyday situations with self-control and respect, we can begin eliminating negative traits from our character. Then, when similar situations occur in real life, we can be ready to handle them with integrity. Integrity means that you will consistently choose to interact with others and solve problems using positive character traits such as compassion, humility, and responsibility.

Consciously developing moral character gives you the power to choose honesty rather than dishonesty, respect rather than disrespect, and to remain calm and in control rather than enraged or out of control.

You learn to change and take on a positive moral character through the keeping of basic moral principles. Through humility and determination you can change. The teaching of moral principles can change you and literally remake you from the inside out to become a successful person and parent.

The First Step

The first step to develop a positive moral character is to evaluate your choices based on your responses to moral situations. As you complete the following exercise, remember to be honest. Your goal should be to gain a greater understanding of your moral values for the purpose of improving yourself as a parent. Read the scenarios on **page 21**. Check *Always*, *Sometimes*, or *Never* as it best applies to you.



Character Scenarios

	Scenario	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	You give your child an instruction and he disobeys; you correct him or her immediately.			
2	When you are wrong you admit your mistakes.			
3	Even when you are upset you remain calm and deal with situations appropriately.			
4	Someone tries to help you but is unsuccessful; you still appreciate their efforts.			
5	You are willing to make sacrifices in order to accomplish a worthwhile goal.			
6	You set positive goals and stick with them.			
7	A cashier forgets to ring up an item and you don't say anything to correct it.			
8	When you become upset, you lash out or throw things.			
9	You readily apologize when you are wrong.			
10	Your child trespasses on one of your belongings and apologizes; you accept his apology.			
11	Your child expects you to pick him up from school; you are on time.			
12	When your child complains about his day, you listen quietly and allow him to express his feelings.			
13	Someone cuts you off in traffic; you blow your horn and call him a name.			
14	You arrive to work on time.			
15	You have a choice between paying a bill and buying a new outfit. You pay the bill.			
16	You are broke and find a wallet with money; you return it to the owner.			
17	You teach your children to respect others.			
18	You've asked your child to sit quietly, but she keeps getting up. You get so upset you grab her arm and yell at her.			
19	School began two months ago and you still have not supplied your child with his school supplies.			
20	You leave your child sleeping and alone to make a quick run to the store.			

Analyze Your Response

See page 24 for answer key.

The correct response for scenarios 1-6, 9-12, and 14-17 is “*always*”. “Always” answers indicate that you consistently practice the character trait associated with the scenario. See **pages 18-19** for the character traits that pertain to each scenario.

The correct response for scenarios 7-8, 13, and 18-20 is “*never*”. “Always” and “sometimes” answers should be taken seriously. They indicate that greater focus needs to be placed on changing these traits to positive ones.

What character traits do you need to strengthen? _____

What character traits do you need to eliminate? _____

What have you learned about your character? _____

When it comes to teaching our children how to have a moral character we must be 100% certain that we, as parents, are modeling positive traits in what we do, and what we choose not to do. As we go through our daily lives we are constantly making moral choices about how we treat others, their property, and ourselves. These moral choices determine our character and make long-lasting impressions on our children. The old sayings, “Do as I say, not as I do”, or “I can do it because I’m an adult” are only excuses for immoral, negative actions. This will also cause your child to lose respect for you.

What we are really saying with these excuses is that, in spite of our poor example, our children should nonetheless develop a positive, moral character. This is not only unrealistic, but also unfair. How can we expect our children to learn what is the moral and correct way to behave if we are not modeling right behaviors? For example, the parent who expects their child to be humble and obedient but discriminates, steals, or puts others down is teaching their child to be dishonest and disrespectful. In like manner,

the parent who tells their child not to say mean things about their sibling, but will gossip about their neighbor is teaching their child to disrespect others. The bottom line is that, as parents, we must be very careful what we say with our mouths and what we reflect in our actions. Our children are tuned in to every detail of who we are, and what they see and hear from us shape their characters.

Doesn't it make sense then, that we should develop traits such as self-control, respect, responsibility, and thankfulness, just to name a few, if we want our children to develop these same traits? As we wholeheartedly adhere to basic moral principles, we become perfect role models for our children. The old saying: "The apple doesn't fall far from the tree," or "He's a chip off the old block," summarizes the importance of developing a positive moral character so that our children can do the same.

"A great personality without a positive moral character is like building a beautiful house on a bed of quicksand."

~The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Character Scenarios Answer Key

	Scenario	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	You give your child an instruction and he disobeys; you correct him or her immediately.	✓		
2	When you are wrong you admit your mistakes.	✓		
3	Even when you are upset you remain calm and deal with situations appropriately.	✓		
4	Someone tries to help you but is unsuccessful; you still appreciate their efforts.	✓		
5	You are willing to make sacrifices in order to accomplish a worthwhile goal.	✓		
6	You set positive goals and stick with them.	✓		
7	A cashier forgets to ring up an item and you don't say anything to correct it.			✓
8	When you become upset, you lash out or throw things.			✓
9	You readily apologize when you are wrong.	✓		
10	Your child trespasses on one of your belongings and apologizes; you accept his apology.	✓		
11	Your child expects you to pick him up from school; you are on time.	✓		
12	When your child complains about his day, you listen quietly and allow him to express his feelings.	✓		
13	Someone cuts you off in traffic; you blow your horn and call him a name.			✓
14	You arrive to work on time.	✓		
15	You have a choice between paying a bill and buying a new outfit. You pay the bill.	✓		
16	You are broke and find a wallet with money; you return it to the owner.	✓		
17	You teach your children to respect others.	✓		
18	You've asked your child to sit quietly, but she keeps getting up. You get so upset you grab her arm and yell at her.			✓
19	School began two months ago and you still have not supplied your child with his school supplies.			✓
20	You leave your child sleeping and alone to make a quick run to the store.			✓

Lesson Plan Four

The Roles Of A Parent

Purpose/Objective

Parents will be introduced to the roles of teacher, provider, and disciplinarian as a part of effective parenting.

Materials

R*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*

RActivity cutouts

RPencils/pens

Procedure

1. Briefly review **Lesson Three, Understanding The Connection Between Parenting And Character** by asking the following questions:
 - a. What is the difference between character and personality? (*Character is the combination of traits that enables us to choose between right or wrong behavior, whereas personality defines our personal likes and dislikes, mannerisms, and interests.*)
 - b. What are morals? (*Beliefs or principles that govern the way people think and behave.*)
 - c. What is the first step to developing positive moral character? (*Evaluating one's self.*)
2. Tell students that in today's class they will learn that effective parents fill three main roles. Ask class to predict what these roles are. (*Answers will vary*) Choose volunteers to read the first two paragraphs on **page 25**. Tell class that a positive parent fulfills the three roles of teacher, provider, and disciplinarian. In fact, we often use all three at the same time. Have students brainstorm what each role would entail. Note: for times sake, allow students to present only a few ideas from each category.
3. Have volunteers read excerpts under "Your Role As A Teacher" and "Teaching The Very Young" on **pages 25-27**. Remind students that as parents our role as teacher begins even before the child's birth. Although there are many concepts to teach children, basic lessons on compassion, tolerance, and service to others can aid the growth and development of positive moral character in our children.

4. Have students answer the “Critical Thinking” question at the top of **page 28**. Discuss answers as a class. Explain that our character, whether positive or negative, develop as a result of both great and bad experiences and interactions. Now that we know the importance of a moral character, we can guard our children’s environment and carefully teach positive character development.
5. Choose volunteers to read the first three paragraphs under the heading “Your Role As A Provider” on **page 28**. Discuss the importance of providing a child with his physical and emotion needs, as well as an example of positive moral character. Have class answer the “Think About It” question on **page 29**, then discuss as a class. Explain that besides providing children’s basic needs, educating them in moral principles will give them a firm foundation on which to develop positive character.
6. Discuss the main points of the four paragraphs under the heading “Your Role As A Disciplinarian” on **page 30**. Reiterate the important points of those paragraphs and have students underline them. Emphasize that positive discipline provides consistent routine, guidance, and correction. It is ongoing, patient, and compassionate training. (For example: instead of aggressively grabbing a child by the arm and shaking him, call on him with a firm tone of voice and remind him of what proper conduct is.)
7. **Activity:** Divide students into five groups. Assign a topic from **page 4c** to each group and instruct them to determine what disciplinary measures they could use to curtail the behaviors they have been assigned. Let them share their ideas with the class.
8. Allow students to answer “Critical Thinking” questions on **page 31**. Discuss answers as a class. Remind them that they are responsible for teaching and training their children from a state of total helplessness and dependency to a mature adult who has a positive character and is caring, responsible, and compassionate toward others.
9. Read the section entitled “To Spank Or Not To Spank” on **pages 32-33**. Discuss the results of scientific research in regards to spanking young children. Emphasize that there is a morally correct way to spank. Discuss guidelines given for spanking. Encourage students to consider the benefits of spanking appropriately.
10. Conclude by reminding the class that they can better fulfill their roles as effective parents by adopting moral principles and by developing positive traits within their own characters. Remind students that the roles of teacher, provider and disciplinarian are often fulfilled simultaneously. We must be all three to be loving, effective parents to our children.

Lesson Four **The Roles Of A Parent**

Activity Cutouts
(Please copy before cutting)

Back talks and rolls eyes when corrected.

Leaves books/toys on the floor. Cries/gets upset when asked to put them away.

Has a very difficult time settling in for bedtime. Constantly gets out of bed.

Refuses to follow instructions. Throws a tantrum/cries.

Very oppositional and disobedient in public places (i.e.: store). Pulls away from adult and runs away.

Lesson Four

The Roles Of A Parent

What Does It *Really* Mean To Parent A Child?

To raise a child encompasses many different aspects. Most people agree that a parent must provide a child's basic physical needs such as food, clothing, shelter, and protection. They must also provide love, attention, and training in moral character education. Another important aspect of training a child is in teaching proper social skills. Teaching a child to ask "may I", say "thank you", "please", and "excuse me" should never be overlooked. All of these aspects are included in the definition of the word **raise**.

To effectively parent and raise a child, one must be able to successfully take on the role of teacher, provider, and disciplinarian. Although these roles will be explained as three separate functions, they are interdependent and many of the characteristics overlap. There will be occasions when you use all three at once. Let's take a closer look at each of these roles.

Law of cause and effect: to every action there is a reaction.

Your Role As A Teacher

To teach is to give or share knowledge so that someone else can learn. As a parent, you are your child's first and most influential teacher. Remember, your role as a teacher begins long before your child is born. Keep in mind that at sixteen weeks gestation, babies can hear their mother's voice in the womb with no distortions. Babies can also hear those in the immediate environment, as well as television and radio.



Teaching The Very Young

There are many concepts you can begin teaching even the youngest child, of which character education is the primary one. When you teach very young children, do not be concerned if they do not respond or give any

indication that they hear you or understand what you are doing. They *do* hear you, and all the information you give the child is being internalized. One day your child will say something that will make you realize he was listening all along. You will be amazed. So keep teaching. Give it time and you will not be disappointed. Read the following excerpt to better understand a child's ability to learn at a young age: "Babies know the difference between good and evil at six months, study reveals.... At the age of six months babies can barely sit up – let alone take their first tottering steps, crawl or talk. But, according to psychologists, they have already developed a sense of moral code – and can tell the difference between good and evil. An astonishing series of experiments is challenging the views of many psychologists and social scientists that human beings are born as 'blank slates' – and that our morality is shaped by our parents and experiences."¹³

The following are some practical ways to begin teaching positive character, whether your child is in the womb or in the classroom.

Teach your child to love learning. Even before your child is born, talk to him about the natural world—the blue of the sky and water, the colors of the trees and flowers. Sing to your child in a soft tone of voice. This can continue after your child is born and through their youth. Remember babies love the sound of their mother's voice. Also read to your baby and toddler. This, too, can continue throughout their youth; then encourage them to read to you. Keep in mind that conversations about our natural world can be extended to include older children as well. Take nature walks with them and make it a point to "discover" something new every day, week, or month.

Teach your child about compassion. The character trait of compassion allows us to care about the needs of others and to desire to relieve their suffering. Develop this trait by teaching your child to have concern for others, whether they are hurt, hungry, lonely, scared, etc. Role model the character trait of compassion at every opportunity. Ask your child how he would feel if he were in a similar situation; how would he want someone to help him? Encourage him to inquire of the health and well-being of family members.

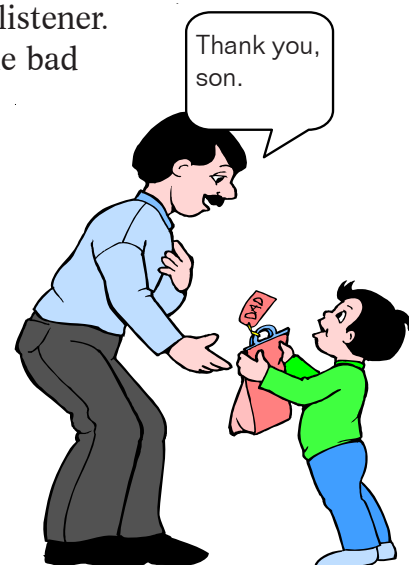
Teach your child to care about others, regardless of their nationality or ethnicity. Hate is a learned behavior. Babies are not born aware of the divisions that we create among ourselves. The variations in our skin color and nationalities only become important to our children if they are important to us, and those in our immediate environment. Search yourself to see if any prejudices and stereotypes about others exist within your ideologies. Then root them out. Ask yourself if you accept generalizations about groups of people and place them upon the individual.

Personally seek to embrace diversity by meeting people of different cultures and trying recipes from other nations. The world is filled with violence perpetuated by hate for others of different nationalities and ethnicities. By choosing to see the color of someone's character rather than the color of their skin and appreciating them for whom they are, you can begin to teach your child to embrace diversity by doing so yourself. Be sure to model these same behaviors after your baby is born by exposing him to different cultures.

Teach your child the importance of helping and serving others. Talk to your child about the joy you get from taking care of her and helping others. Give young children age appropriate tasks, from picking up belongings and putting them away to holding the hose to water the garden. Even young children can assist and help around the house. Praise their efforts. Verbalize what a great help they are and how much you appreciate their hard work. As your child matures so should his responsibilities; continue to give age appropriate tasks and never fail to communicate how much you appreciate him, even for the smallest tasks.

- Be patient, loving, and caring when teaching. This holds true whether you are teaching your baby or your teenager.
- Be prepared to repeat, repeat, repeat because children learn through repetition.
- Young children, and many older ones, are often visual and tactile learners. So when teaching concepts, use creative ways to stimulate their senses. Pictures, songs, and rhymes are all great teaching tools.
- Be willing to explain choices and situations in your daily life from a moral standpoint. For example, explain to your 2-year-old not to throw trash on the ground because we must keep the earth clean.
- Be willing to listen. A great teacher is also a great listener. No child should have to say: "Do you only see the bad that I do, don't you ever see the great things?"

Your goal as a parent is not to produce a prodigy. So what if a child can do calculus at the age of seven; yet is rude, disrespectful, and oppositional to his parents and everyone he meets. Effective parents must see to educating their child not only academically, but also in positive, moral character. Positive character traits must be instilled within their hearts and minds, and this is done through diligent, consistent teaching, and role modeling positive moral behavior.



Teach: to communicate skill or knowledge; to give instruction or insight; train, instruct.

Critical Thinking

Were you taught how to develop a moral character as a child? Explain your answer. _____

Your Role As A Provider

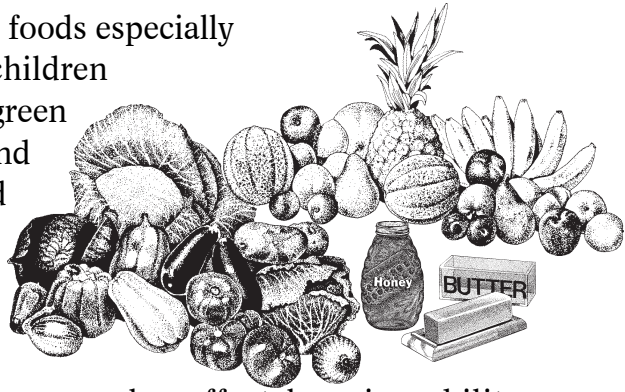
Providing for a child's needs includes making sure your child has nutritious food, clothing that is modest and appropriate for the weather, and a clean environment in which to live. But these are only the bare necessities. A caring parent will also provide protection, love, attention, health care, education, and positive moral character that a child can see and emulate. Neglecting to provide even one of these can spell disaster for a child's growth and development.

"You've heard the expression, you are what you eat. Well, children are what you feed them." —The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

It is the role of a parent to prepare a child to learn to the best of his ability. There are certain things one can do to strengthen a child's ability to learn. One way is by selecting a healthy diet. Not only is it important for the mother to eat properly while her baby is developing in the womb, but once the baby is born and growing up, what a child eats affects his learning ability and character development.

Food must supply the necessary nutrients that would include proteins, fats, vegetables, fruits, carbohydrates, and sugars. Also necessary are a variety of vitamins and minerals. Although it can be challenging to make sure our children are receiving a well-balanced diet at all times with diligence we can make better choices about food and teach our children to do the same.

Believe it or not, there are certain foods especially beneficial for the brain, yet most children rarely eat them. These include: leafy green vegetables, fruits, nuts, lean meats and fish. Of the leafy greens, spinach and kale rank highest. Also considered brain food are the omega vitamins found in raw butter, cod liver oil and flax seed oil.



Drinking enough water in a day can also affect learning ability. Dehydration has been linked to poor learning and poor, positive character development. Make sure your learners get lots of opportunities to drink water throughout the day.

It is a fact that sleepy children don't learn well. Their concentration decreases and what they retain becomes minimal. Help your children get adequate sleep so they can wake up feeling refreshed. Having a routine in your children's daily schedule for eating, drinking and sleeping will greatly assist in their character development, learning ability, health and well-being.

In addition to all of these basic physical needs, you must also provide affection and attention. A child who is never told he is loved, is never interacted with, and is left in a playpen or in front of a television all day will not thrive. The emotional toll of this form of neglect could affect him for life. Even if the child is raised in a clean environment, changed frequently, and fed on time; he would still be lacking. Children need interaction, communication, and emotional support to develop into compassionate, respectful people.

The role of a provider is very important. If you really stop to consider everything parents must provide for children, this role can seem overwhelming. Sadly, millions of children are born every year to parents who never consider how they will provide for them. These are the children who are deprived of even the basic necessities, neglected, and abused. When parents successfully fulfill their role as providers, children are given the best possible opportunity to grow to be healthy, well-adjusted people, capable of leading productive lives.

Think About It !?

Why does being a great provider help children grow into healthy well-adjusted adults? _____

Your Role As A Disciplinarian

When you think of the word discipline, what comes to mind? Do you see someone being harshly corrected or gently trained? The word discipline has various connotations and can bring out different images in different people. This is because discipline can be done both in a positive or negative way. Negative discipline can result in physical, psychological and emotional damage. The use of physical abuse and name calling to force a child to behave in a specific way is wrong. *The Peaceful Solution Parenting Program* teaches how to positively discipline. Moral character education trains and molds a child's mind, behavior, and character. Positive discipline is respectful of the child and his or her needs. Someone who practices positive discipline will not call a child names or embarrass the child in any way. Simply put, your role as a disciplinarian is to positively train your child in the proper way to think, behave, and treat others and their property.

Many have the false concept that discipline is equivalent to consequences and punishments in the form of spankings, time out and loss of privileges. Although there may be times when you may find it necessary to incorporate these methods into a discipline plan, positive disciplining is so much more than this. Positive discipline is proactive. It provides structure, a consistent routine, guidance and correction. When you discipline proactively you can avoid major behavioral problems. Positive discipline is ongoing, patient, merciful, and compassionate training, whereas negative discipline is sporadic, inconsistent and aggressive.

Through gentle but persistent bending, pruning and training of the stem and leaves, you can train a plant to grow into a specific shape. As a disciplinarian you must remember this analogy, because children should be disciplined in much the same way. Gentle, but persistent teaching, training, and guidance will result in children who are not only well behaved and able to make positive decisions on their own, but who will respect you and learn from your positive example how to discipline their own children someday.

One of the most damaging errors we can make in parenting is to assume that children will learn how to acquire a positive character without being taught. Character traits such as self-control, honesty, responsibility, compassion, forgiveness, and respect must be instilled within their hearts and minds. By interacting positively with your child from birth; you can teach these and many other positive qualities to your child.



Discipline: train, instruct, correct; develop a pattern of behavior by repeatedly and carefully following certain rules or guidelines

Critical Thinking

1. How were you disciplined as a child? Do you use the same interventions with your child or children? _____

2. Are you satisfied with the way you discipline your child or children? Why or why not? _____

3. If not, in what ways would you like to improve? _____

4. In what ways is your disciplining style positive? _____

5. Would you like for your children to imitate your disciplining style with their children someday? Explain why or why not. _____

Disciplined: using self-control to behave in a proper way.

Question of the day...

To Spank Or Not To Spank?

Controversy over parents spanking their children has grown over the past twenty years. No doubt, the opposition stems from a real concern for the well-being of children. News reports reflect the heinous acts of child abuse and negligence that were discussed in Chapter Two. Spanking done correctly can be a positive moral discipline that is neither harsh, disrespectful nor abusive. It should not be considered as weak or of no benefit.

Studies reveal that spanking, when applied appropriately and in the proper manner, has actually benefitted the moral development of children. Read the excerpts from various articles below to evaluate the value of appropriate spanking.

“According to a recent Voter/Consumer Research Poll commissioned by the Family Research Council, 76 percent of the more than 1,000 Americans surveyed said that spanking was an effective form of discipline in their home when they were children.¹⁴ These results are made all the more impressive by the fact that nearly half of those who answered otherwise grew up in homes in which they were never spanked. Taken together, more than four out of five Americans who were actually spanked by their parents as children say that it was an effective form of discipline.¹⁵ In addition, Americans perceive lack of discipline to be the biggest problem in public education today, according to a recent Gallup poll.¹⁶ Several studies show strong public support for corporal punishment by parents.”¹⁷

A study that was reported January 5, 2010 indicated that young children who are spanked are more stable developmentally as teenagers. Please read the following excerpt:

“A U.S.-based study suggests that spanking isn’t harmful for children and, in fact, states that children who have been physically disciplined when they were young, between the ages of 2 and 6, grew up to be happier and more successful, performed better at school as teenagers, and were more likely to do volunteer work and to want to go to university than those who had never been spanked.”¹⁸

Research shows that spanking, when administered appropriately and in the proper manner by parents who practice positive moral traits such as self-control, respect, and patience assists in the training of a child’s moral development.

“Evidence suggests that it [spanking] can be a useful and necessary part of a successful disciplinary plan.”¹⁹

The emphasis is upon what is appropriate and proper when using corporal punishment. Using the moral guidelines suggested below, coupled with consistent positive moral character development, will assure greater success in our most valuable assets and future leaders, our children.

Moral Guidelines For Spanking²⁰

1. Spanking should be used for clear, deliberate defiance of a parent's instruction.
2. Spanking should only be used when a child receives at least as much encouragement and praise for positive behavior as correction for problem behavior. Although this may be hard to gauge, the idea is to praise children for their efforts, avoiding dwelling only on the negative behavioral issues.
3. Milder forms of discipline, such as mercy, compassion, patience, verbal correction, separation (calm down time/time out), and appropriate consequences should be used first. To reiterate, spanking should only be used when rigid, stubborn, rebellious noncompliance persists.
4. After ten months old and up to eighteen months old, one can use two fingers to firmly slap the hand of a stubborn child with a firm "no" in order to stop serious misbehavior. When distracting the child from touching an object has failed, a spank on the hand could deter the child from touching the object again. This is especially important with a dangerous immovable object like a hot oven or electrical outlet.
5. After eighteen months of age an open hand is appropriate to spank with. It should be less necessary after six years, and rarely, if ever used after ten years of age. At these ages there is no resentment toward the parent for such correction, because the child generally accepts that he did wrong.
6. Spanking must never be used on impulse or when a parent is angry, insulted, embarrassed, or lacking self-control.
7. Spanking should never be a spontaneous reaction on the parent's part, but should be a deliberate, reasoned out response that is consistent with the specified behavior. Inform the child ahead of time of the spanking if the problem behavior persists.

8. Spanking should never cause physical injury; nor should a child ever be hit with a closed hand or fist.

9. After any form of punishment, it helps to embrace the child and calmly review the offense and the desired behavior in an effort to re-establish a warm relationship.

In summary, a parent who has developed positive moral character and has followed the guidelines above will have a mind-set of true care and concern for the child's ultimate well-being, now and in the future.



Putting It All Together

So far you have learned about the qualities of an effective parent. The effective parent fulfills three roles: teacher, provider, and disciplinarian. You have also learned about the differences between a positive and negative character. How does a positive moral character affect your ability to become a better, more effective parent? To answer this question you will need to reconsider the roles of effective parents in connection with character.

Answer the following questions. You can refer to the lists of character traits on **pages 18-19** for reference.

1. To fulfill the role of provider, what positive character traits will you need?

2. Why it is absolutely necessary to be a great provider? _____

3. Which negative character traits could hinder someone's ability to provide for a child? _____

4. To fulfill the role of teacher to your children, what positive character traits will you need? _____

5. Which negative character traits could hinder your ability to teach your children? _____

6. What positive character traits would you need to effectively discipline your children? _____

7. Which negative traits could hinder your ability to effectively discipline your children? _____

Lesson Plan Five

Effective Parents Have Self-Control

Purpose/Objective

Students will learn that the most important character trait a parent can possess is self-control. They will also learn to identify what triggers them to react negatively and to develop a plan to stop them from doing so.

Materials

R*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*

RPencils/pens

RPaper

RMarkers/colored pencils (optional)

Procedure

1. Briefly review **Lesson Four, The Roles Of A Parent** by asking the following questions:
 - a. What are the roles of a parent? (*Teacher, provider, disciplinarian.*)
 - b. Briefly describe each role. (*Teacher: one who instructs, guides, and helps to develop the character of another; provider: one who supplies the needs of another; disciplinarian: one who positively trains in the proper way to think, behave and treat others.*)
 - c. Besides the basic necessities, what other things does a caring parent provide? (*Protection, love, attention, health care, education, and a positive moral character that a child can see and emulate.*)
 - d. What is the ultimate goal in parenting children? (*To raise children who can make positive, moral decisions on their own.*)
2. Tell students that in today's class they will learn about self-control and its role in parenting. Choose volunteers to read the first two paragraphs on **page 37**. Ask students to brainstorm ways we fail to practice self-control in our daily lives. List answers on the board. Emphasize that by analyzing our thoughts and behavior daily, we can learn to make better choices.
3. Paraphrase the next two paragraphs on **page 37**. Draw their attention to the bullet points about self-control. Emphasize that thoughts lead to feelings, which lead to actions, and actions reflect our true character. Ask students, what are some things that could affect our ability to practice self-

control? (*drug abuse, physical or emotional abuse, negative influences such as aggression or violence as seen in real life, TV, movies, video games.*) Emphasize that one has to remove these habits and influences from his/her life and begin making positive changes. This can only be done if we become aware of ourselves and our environment.

4. Select main points in the next three paragraphs to discuss on **page 38**. Have group reflect on how they were taught to deal with their emotions. Ask a few volunteers to share.

5. Cover key points from the section “The Overall Picture” on **pages 38-39**. Have class begin reflecting on their own triggers. Discuss things that may seem like a “big deal”, but aren’t really. (*For example: the cap is left off the toothpaste, the toilet seat is left up, a spilled drink, etc.*) Have students share other examples.

6. Explain that developing self-control and consistently practicing it takes diligence, patience, and a plan. Go over each of the “Additional Steps To Developing Self-Control” on **page 39**. Choose a volunteer to read the section: “Take It One Step At A Time” on **page 40**, then allow group to do the activity that follows. Ask volunteers to discuss their plans in class.

7. **Activity (optional)**: Have students design a poster as a visual reminder of their commitment to develop and constantly practice self-control.

8. Emphasize the last paragraph on **page 41**. Stress that they should not give up; because by working so hard to achieve their goals the more able they will be to teach it to their children.

9. Conclude by reminding class that by controlling their actions when they are angry or going through any other negative feelings or situations, they are role modeling proper moral behavior for their children.

Lesson Five

Effective Parents Have Self-Control

One of the most important character traits a person can develop is self-control. Think about it! How can we teach a child to have self-control if we are not practicing it ourselves? Have you ever noticed a parent who is screaming at her child because the child is yelling at a sibling? What about the parent who puts others down by talking bad about them in front of their children? These are only some of the ways that we fail to practice self-control.

Becoming a better parent starts with self-control, because it is the foundation of a positive character. It is also one of the hardest traits to develop. **Self-control** is *controlling our own emotions, desires, and actions in order to arrive at a decision that is morally correct*. So, be mindful, and do not do just anything you desire to do. With self-control you can choose to speak and behave appropriately regardless of the choices that are before you or the situation that you are in.

Although many of us would like to think we have complete control over our thoughts and emotions; life's little frustrations can shed new light on just how much self-control we really have. Anyone who is easily frustrated, lashes out verbally and/or physically, holds a grudge, seeks revenge or purposely chooses to do things that are unlawful or inappropriate, needs to develop and consistently practice this positive moral trait until it becomes second nature.

Self-control is about:

- Controlling what you think, because thoughts lead to feelings.
- Controlling what you feel, because feelings lead to actions.
- Controlling how you behave, because your actions reflect your character and can lead to rewards or consequences.

Developing self-control, the ability to control your thoughts, feelings and actions, takes focus, commitment, and diligence. Strive to solve problems/conflicts with others while maintaining self-respect, respect for others, respect for property, and the environment. You must also be aware of your surroundings and interactions with others so that if you find yourself faced with a situation that makes you angry or frustrated you can still respond politely by maintaining your composure and self-respect.

“Always choose to do what is morally RIGHT!”

The first step in developing self-control and making it a consistent part of our character is to realize that self-control governs all aspects of life. One of the greatest misconceptions about self-control is that it is only to manage the emotion of anger. Although anger is a powerful emotion, that if not controlled can turn to rage, other emotions such as jealousy, if uncontrolled, can cause harm to others, and like rage, can lead to consequences. The bottom line is: **Self-control is needed in every situation and with all emotions in order to make positive, moral decisions.**

For example, you are in a situation where you feel overwhelmed and confused. If you are practicing self-control you can remain calm, evaluate the situation, think about an appropriate way of dealing with it and, if needed, seek counsel to get the situation under control. If you are not practicing self-control, you could fling your hands up in frustration and declare you give up; or, you could become angry and allow your anger to turn to rage, taking out your frustration on inanimate objects or people around you.

Keep in mind that the way we handle anger is learned. Children who are raised in an environment where they witness others dealing with anger by allowing it to turn to rage are more likely to handle their anger in the same destructive manner. By controlling your actions when you are angry you are role modeling proper behavior for your children. Regardless of how angry we become, violent acts are never justified.

The Overall Picture

When you take an honest look at the situations where you have made inappropriate or negative decisions you will discover a pattern of behavior, and a chronicle of your ability to control yourself or lose your self-control. By taking an overall look at how you handle yourself when the heat is on, you can begin to pinpoint problem areas. These problem areas are called triggers. **Triggers** are *incidents that bring out specific responses from us*. When you experience these triggers you usually respond in the same or similar fashion.

If you do not prepare yourself in advance to deal with these triggers calmly and morally you could lose self-control and say or do something that causes harm to yourself, others or property and set a poor example for your children. Once you are aware of what your triggers are, you can

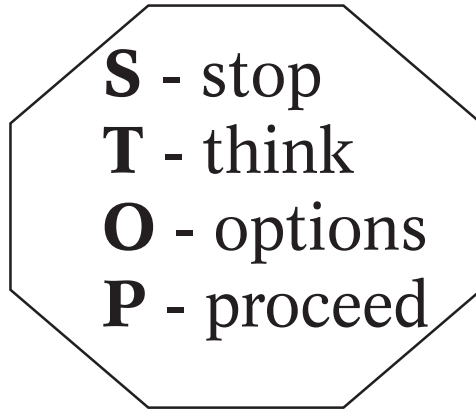
formulate a plan to handle them without saying or doing anything that could cause regret and embarrassment.

Have you ever noticed that once you have calmed down, what seemed like a “big deal” is no longer upsetting? Because you are no longer overcome by emotions you can think calmly and rationally and can now put the situation in perspective. When self-control is part of your character you will be able to control your emotions to make moral decisions from the onset of a problem, rather than in retrospect. Just think of all the time, energy and regrets that consistently practicing self-control can save you.



Additional Steps To Developing Self-Control

- First, acknowledge that there are triggers in your life that you have a difficult time dealing with appropriately. These triggers could be taking instructions from someone in authority or dealing with a disobedient child. Whatever has the potential to cause you to lose your self-control can be a trigger.
- Prepare yourself for the fact that triggers can surface unexpectedly. In fact, another name for triggers is “tests”. Often, the situations that test us can catch us off guard. But remember, our triggers/tests, when handled appropriately, help develop moral values, so handle them with self-control. Positive character is developed by constantly choosing to do what is right when faced with situations.
- Have a plan to handle your triggers appropriately when they arise. You want to remain as calm as possible so that you can think morally and not respond impulsively or emotionally. Having a plan and rehearsing it in your mind will greatly increase your rate of success.
- Use the **S.T.O.P** acronym to help you make moral, responsible decisions that demonstrate your self-control. It works great for all ages.



Take It One Step At A Time

When something occurs that triggers an emotional response from you, **STOP** and take a deep breath. Hold your breath for a couple of seconds if necessary, and then slowly exhale. Do this to calm yourself down. You may even walk away from the situation if you are able to. **THINK** about the situation that you are experiencing. Keep in mind that it is one of your triggers/tests. If you handle it respectfully, it will bring you one step closer to having positive, moral character. Consider all of your **OPTIONS**. Choose an option for handling it appropriately, morally and harmlessly. Then **PROCEED** with that option. Remember to remain as calm as possible to avoid responding impulsively and to stay in control.

We have to learn to make moral choices from the beginning of a problem, rather than after losing self-control. We need to learn to practice insight and foresight. Insight is knowing what the heart of the matter is; what you are dealing with. In other words, you are able to look past irrelevant information and focus on what is really important. Foresight is the ability to anticipate the outcome of a situation based on present facts.

Set Your Mind In Advance

In the chart on **page 41**, use Column I to write one of your triggers. In Column II formulate a behavioral plan for how to handle it. Your goal is to rehearse your behavioral plan so that when these triggers arise you can deal with them in a harmless, moral and positive way. Rehearse your plan mentally until it becomes second nature.

Column I	Column II
<p><i>Example: When I have given an instruction twice to a child and he/she does not move.</i></p>	<p><i>Call the child by name and ask whether he/she heard the instruction. Give it again if you must.</i></p>

Developing self-control and practicing it diligently in every aspect of your life will not occur overnight. It takes time, effort and energy to learn new ways to handle your emotions and then to act in a controlled fashion. Although success may be difficult at first, do not give up. If a situation arises where you failed to follow through on your plan, take an objective look at your actions and evaluate your behavior. What did you do wrong? What did you do right? Once you have evaluated your actions, determine in advance not to make the same wrong decisions if a similar situation occurs. Rehearse your plan or make a different plan for the next time you are faced with that trigger, and don't stop trying until you have achieved your goal of consistently using self-control in every aspect of your life.

Lesson Plan Six

Effective Parents Teach Self-Control To Their Children

Purpose/Objective

Parents will learn that one of the most effective ways to start teaching self-control to their children is by first role modeling appropriate behavior and then implementing rules and guidelines in regards to proper conduct.

Materials

- R** *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*
- R** Pencils/pens

Procedure

1. Briefly review **Lesson Five, Effective Parents Have Self-Control** by asking the following questions:
 - a. What is self-control? (*Controlling one's emotions, desires and actions in order to arrive at a decision that is morally correct.*)
 - b. How do we apply self-control? (*Controlling what we think and feel, and how we behave, because thoughts lead to feelings, which lead to actions, which reflect our true character.*)
 - c. What are triggers? (*Incidents that bring out specific responses from us.*)
 - d. Name some steps to developing self-control. (*Acknowledging triggers, preparing yourself by setting your mind in advance for when triggers arise, having a plan to handle triggers, using the STOP acronym.*)
2. Have volunteers read the section "Teach Self-Control To Your Children" on **page 43**. Emphasize that as long as they are working on developing self-control they are teaching it to their children.
3. Select key points from the section "It's Never Too Early Or Too Late To Start" on **pages 43-44** to expound upon. Have group brainstorm possible rules and guidelines they could begin implementing in their homes.
4. Review the damage of negative influences on our children. Emphasize that one of the greatest sources of negative influences comes from the

television. Have students read and discuss the section entitled: “Simple Steps To Developing Self-Control” on pages 44-45.

5. Read the paragraph under the heading “Think About It!” on page 45. **Activity:** Have students form groups. Instruct them to brainstorm or create activities they could do with their children that do not require TV, computers, video games or radios. Allow groups to share with the class.

6. Examine the first two paragraphs and the steps under the heading “The Importance Of Rules In Developing Self-Control” on page 45. Stress that consistency is key to training. Once the rule has been established, do not allow it to be broken. Enforcing the rule one day but not the next will only cause confusion in the child’s mind.

7. Choose key points from the next three paragraphs on page 46 to read. Have volunteers share some of the rules they have established that work in their homes. Discuss the section “A Few Rules About Developing Rules” on page 47. Be sure class understands each rule. Have class do the assignment on pages 47-48. Discuss answers.

8. Tell students that they can also teach self-control by the way they communicate with others and with their children. Discuss the section “Effective Communication” on pages 48-49. Stress the need to communicate respectfully and to teach children to do the same.

9. Conclude by telling class that by training their children to adhere to rules of proper conduct they are setting a standard by which their children can measure their own behavior.

Lesson Six

Effective Parents Teach Self-Control To Their Children

Teach Self-Control To Your Children

You are probably thinking, “I’m still working on developing self-control myself. How am I going to teach it to my children?” The great news is that as long as you are *working* on developing self-control, you are already teaching it to your children. When it comes to parenting, your example counts for more than you realize.

Just as self-control is applicable in all areas of your life, the same is true in your child’s life as well. Children need self-control to manage emotions such as anger, frustration and disappointment. But they also need self-control to learn how to follow instructions, to accept “no”, and to sit quietly during meal times and special events. Parents who teach their children, regardless of how young, the proper way to behave will foster better relationships with their children and have fewer disagreements and conflicts.

It’s Never Too Early Or Too Late To Start

Whether you have a child who is an infant, 6-years-old or 16-years-old, one of the most effective ways to start teaching self-control is by first role modeling appropriate behavior and then implementing rules and guidelines in regards to proper conduct. It is up to you to know what behaviors you want from your child, to verbalize the rules that govern those specific behaviors and to consistently guide, discipline and instruct your child through repetition.

“Should I start teaching my baby self-control?” Yes, you should! One of the most common mistakes we make as parents is thinking that infants are incapable of learning. Remember, there have been numerous studies and experiments done that prove infants can learn while still in the womb and as newborns. A perfect example of this is how a child learns to speak a language. By hearing speech, the infant learns to talk. The process of a child learning how to speak begins in the womb and continues after birth. A toddler does not suddenly wake up one morning with the ability to speak; he or she has been learning all along.

In the same manner, by controlling your behavior and tone of voice, by verbalizing rules of proper conduct, and by carefully modeling the correct way to behave from the onset of birth, you will begin the process of training your infant to develop self-control.

Simple Steps To Developing Self-Control

☑ Speak in a calm tone of voice when speaking to your child, no matter how old he is.

☑ Guard the environment of your child. Remember the environment encompasses everything that externally affects the child. The physical surroundings, as well as the people in them, are all part of your child's environment. People who are violent, aggressive and vulgar are negative role models and your child is just as likely to learn from them as from you. You would not allow rapists, murderers, thieves, drug dealers, prostitutes, child molesters or any other criminal or deviant persons into your home, so why allow them on the television. You have the power and choice to keep all of these negative influences outside your home.

☑ Don't use the television as a babysitter or companion. Often, busy moms allow their children to indiscriminately watch television. This is one of the most damaging things a parent can do. Remember, the content of many popular television shows is sexual, violent, and aggressive. In fact, violence has become popular and commonplace. Is this what you want your children to learn? If your answer is no, then do not allow the television to become your children's babysitter or companion.

☑ Do not allow your child to play violent video games or listen to violent, sexually oriented music. This type of entertainment has blatant, as well as subliminal messages that can negatively influence your child. Read narratives, recite poems and sing songs about moral values daily to your children. The *Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* has narratives, poems, and songs available for you.

☑ Consider how many traditional nursery rhymes we sing and recite to our children, as we bounce them on our knee, bathe, and feed them. Are we teaching anything of value to our children by singing these rhymes and songs, or listening to music that is demoralizing? The answer is no! Aside from being entertaining they teach nothing of moral value. Why not recite

poems and sing songs that will help your child become familiar with positive character traits, such as self-control, respect, and honesty? Consider the following:

The Polite Way

As we sing and work today,
we need to ask the polite way.
“May I”, “please”, “thank you”, too,
This shows love to me and you.

These alternatives are not just as entertaining but they will also start the process of introducing rules and guidelines for proper behavior to your child. There are songs and rhymes listed on [pages 87-92](#) that you may use. And don't forget, you can create some of your own with moral values that you want your child to learn. The earlier you begin to train and guide a child to develop self-control, the less likely you are to deal with serious, problematic behaviors later on.

Think About It! !?

Children who watch TV excessively can become withdrawn. Their ability to communicate and socialize with other family members and peers can be affected. When you interact with your child, you become a part of your child's life; you share conversations and learn about life together. It takes planning ahead to accomplish this. Schedule time together doing something you both, or even the whole family enjoys. Remember, time with your child is precious and limited, so make it a priority in your life and use it wisely. When there is more than one child in a family, schedule time with each individually so there can be one-on-one interaction. Bedtime is a great time for this. You can listen to or reflect on all the events of the day and offer guidance and encouragement as needed. It makes for a secure, peaceful night of rest.

The Importance Of Rules In Developing Self-Control

As your child matures, constantly evaluate his or her behavior and determine which rules and guidelines will help to develop proper conduct and social skills. The process of evaluating your child's behavior takes into consideration developing rules and consistently implementing them. This is an important part of your child acquiring self-control.

For example, you notice your child leaves her belongings on the floor after using them. You want her to learn to pick up her belongings and put them in the appropriate place. What course of action should you take to teach her to pick up her belongings?

- The first step is to decide on an appropriate rule: “Pick up your belongings and put them away after you have finished using them.”
- The second step is to patiently explain why you want her to keep the rule: “Someone could trip over your belongings and get hurt, or they could get broken.”
- The third step is to patiently and consistently remind her of this rule.
- The fourth step is to establish a reasonable consequence for outright rebellion and carry it out, and sometimes, you could give an appropriate reward when she does keep the rule.

Notice the terms “patiently explain” and “patiently and consistently remind”. These terms indicate that you, as the parent and role model, must also practice self-control when implementing rules for proper behavior. Instead of getting frustrated, yelling or threatening because belongings are left on the floor, you can choose to remain calm and teach your child the value of taking care of his belongings. A calm demeanor allows the child to focus on your words and not your tone of voice and actions. A parent who is yelling and threatening creates an element of fear, and children should never fear us. By staying in control when instructing your children you gain their respect as well as their understanding, and you teach self-control.

Once the rules are in place and you have explained their importance, a simple reminder if the child fails to follow the rule is often all that is necessary for the child to complete the task. For example, you notice that your child left a belonging on the floor. You could simply ask, “Did you forget to do something”? The child will likely stop and think for a moment and then realize he did not put away his belonging. Eventually the child will get to a point where he will put his belongings away without being told. When this occurs you would have taught the child the ability to consider what should be done without having to be reminded and to choose the right course of action.

Of course, picking up belongings and putting them away is only one example of how implementing rules and training your child to follow them can help to develop self-control. Rules also pertain to mealtimes, riding in the car, interacting with others, appropriate behavior in public places, and these are just to name a few. By training children to adhere to rules of proper conduct you are setting a standard by which they can measure their own behavior. With time and patience they will develop the ability to stop and consider the rules that are for a given situation, if they are following

the rules, and whether they are obeying the rules as they have been instructed. This is one of the simplest ways to teach a child of any age how to develop self-control. If we follow the pattern set by *The Peaceful Solution Parenting Program* we can have success in teaching our children self-control.

A Few Rules About Developing Rules

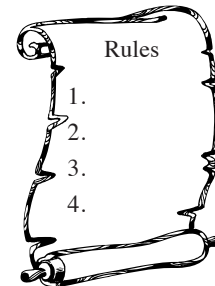
➤ Make sure that rules are thoroughly considered and evaluated before they are implemented, in order to avoid confusing the child. When rules are not clear, not only are the children confused, they are more apt to resist them.

➤ Keep the rules positive and focused on the desired behavior you want from your child. For example, instead of “do not shout” you could say “speak with a quiet voice”.

➤ Keep rules simple. They are easier for children to remember. As opposed to: “No running in the house you could break a vase, fall or get hurt”, simply say, “Walk when in the house”, it’s uncomplicated and easy for children to remember.

➤ Be careful not to present too many rules at once. Work on one or two key behaviors at a time. Then gradually add more rules as circumstances demand.

➤ Do not expect your child to remember or embrace the rules immediately. Constant reminders and consistency on the part of parents are absolutely necessary.



Assignment

Use the lines below to list areas in which you would like your child/children to develop self-control.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

What rules can you implement to help your child/children reach the desired behavior? Write a positive rule that corresponds to each entry above.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What are your reasons for implementing these rules? Write the rationale for each rule.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Effective Communication

Communication skills are essential to positive parenting. A moral person will take the time to respectfully listen to what the child has to say. When it is your turn to speak, be specific in what you want to communicate.

Use the following list to help improve your communication with your child.

Do...

- state the problem in a calm, but firm voice.
- use correct language (as opposed to baby-talk) and speak slowly.
- kneel, stoop or bend down to your younger child's level.
- implement the "spoon technique" (see [page 49](#)).

Do not...

- name call, accuse, argue with or put your child down.
- curse at or around your child; you would not want him to repeat the curse words.
- yell at your child; otherwise, he may begin yelling at you and/or his teachers.

"Speak to your child in a calm tone of voice no matter how old he or she is."

~The Peaceful Solution
Character Education
Program

The “Spoon” Technique

The spoon (or any other chosen object) technique is a great way for the entire family to learn how to take turns speaking. Everyone must agree to abide by the speaking/listening rules. The spoon is passed around allowing each person the opportunity to speak fully, feeling satisfied he/she has expressed his/her point of view, for the moment. The one holding the spoon is permitted to speak without interruption. The rest of the family agrees to listen with an open mind, valuing what is being said. This method can peacefully resolve conflict and helps to build positive character traits such as:

- **PATIENCE:** you can only speak when you are holding the spoon. Others must patiently wait their turn to speak.
- **RESPECT:** you must show respect to the person who is speaking, and the person who is speaking must speak in a respectful tone of voice. No foul language should be used.
- **SELF-CONTROL:** all involved must practice self-control. The person who is speaking must do so respectfully and those who are listening cannot interrupt or distract the speaker.

Using this method prevents conversations from becoming screaming matches. Participants are more aware of what they are saying and the tone of voice they are using. All family members, including small children, should get an opportunity to speak. Everyone should value what the others have to say and listen attentively.

Communicating effectively takes patience. Remember, children also need to verbalize their needs, concerns, fears and hopes. Encourage them to “talk out” rather than “act out” when they are frustrated, annoyed, or impatient. Teach them to use words that will effectively describe their feelings. If we consistently practice positive role modeling, maintain appropriate rules, use effective communication, as well as protect the environment, then our children will have a great opportunity to develop self-control.

Take the time to listen You won't regret it!

~The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Lesson Plan Seven

Teaching Anger Management

Purpose/Objective

Students will learn techniques to help manage anger.

Materials

R*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*

RPencils/pens

RActivity cutouts

Procedure

1. Briefly review **Lesson Six, Effective Parents Teach Self-Control To Their Children** by asking the following questions:

- a. How early should we start teaching self-control to our children? (*From the womb.*)
- b. What are some steps to developing self-control? (*Speaking calmly, guarding our child's environment from negative influences, using training tools developed by The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program, etc.*)
- c. Why are rules important? (*They help to develop proper conduct, social skills, and self-control.*)
- d. What is key to training a child? (*Consistency*)
- e. What are some things to keep in mind when developing rules? (*Keep the rules age appropriate, positive, simple, and don't give too many at once.*)

2. Inform students that in today's class they will learn how to help children manage anger. Tell students that heredity, environment, and environment, affect our ability to appropriately manage anger. Explain that even children can exhibit uncontrolled anger resulting in disastrous consequences. We can begin teaching anger management to even young children so that they can learn to make responsible rather than impulsive choices. Discuss the main points on **page 51**.

3. Ask for volunteers to read the article: "Does Kindergarten Need Cops?" on **page 52**. Ask students what they would do if they were in the same situation. Allow as many answers as time permits. Have other volunteers

read the next two paragraphs on page 52 and the last part of the article. Reemphasize the importance of carefully screening what our children see on TV for violence and sexual content, because violence and aggression are primarily learned behaviors.

4. Have volunteers read the news article entitled: “Be True To Your School” and the paragraph that follows on page 53. Stress that although these incidents are now commonplace in classrooms and homes throughout the world we should never accept them as normal. We have an obligation to expect more from our children so that they can grow into morally responsible, productive members of society.

5. Draw students’ attention to the points under the heading “Let’s Take It One Step At A Time” on pages 53-54. Discuss the importance of evaluating our own feelings before dealing with an angry, out-of-control child. Stress that taking the time to explore our own feelings, as well as the needs of the child, can prevent impulsive behaviors that could lead to abuse.

6. **Activity:** Ask students to predict what an effective anger management plan might consist of. Record answers on the board. Have volunteers read the “General Tips for Teaching Anger Management Skills” on pages 54-58. Focus on the tenth point “Be creative when giving out consequences.” Have students form groups with 3-4 people in each group. Distribute a cutout from page 7c to each group and instruct students to brainstorm creative consequences for the behavior on their cutout. Allow time for students to share their answers with the group.

7. Discuss the four steps under “As your children mature...” on pages 59-60. Emphasize that when we teach children not to hide their needs behind the emotion of anger, we are strengthening their ability to practice self-control. Go over with students “Here are a few ways you can teach your child to let go of anger” on page 60. Emphasize that we must model the correct behaviors for our children to emulate.

8. Conclude by encouraging the class to diligently teach their children how to manage anger as a means of developing self-control. Remind them that consistent teaching and role modeling of appropriate anger management techniques will result in children who can behave harmlessly even when angered.

Lesson Seven

Teaching Anger Management

Activity Cutouts

(Please copy before cutting)

Your 8-year-old has gotten into the habit of taking snacks from the shelf whenever you are at the store, and makes an ugly fuss about getting them. You have told him many times that you want this stopped but he continues to do it.

You tell your 10-year-old to clean his room before supper. After half an hour you check his progress, only to find his room untouched and him reading a book, and eating a chocolate bar. This is an ongoing problem.

Your 6-year-old daughter's teacher has contacted you several times to report that your daughter is constantly getting out of her seat and talking in class. You have spoken to her before about following all school rules.

Whenever you correct your 4-year-old, he throws a tantrum, kicks and screams. The last time he behaved in this manner was at his grandmother's house, where he knocked over and broke an expensive vase.

Your 14-year-old keeps abusing her phone privileges. You remind her over and over about the phone rules. But, you still feel she needs to have a phone for the sake of communicating with you and for safety reasons.

Lesson Seven

Teaching Anger Management

Another important aspect of developing self-control in your child is in helping him learn how to manage anger. Anger management is the way in which we control anger so it does not turn to rage and become harmful or destructive to self, others, possessions, or the environment. The way in which children are inclined to handle the emotion of anger is based on heredity, environment and influence. If handling anger in violent or destructive ways is one of your family legacies, if your children have been exposed to violent TV shows, movies, video games, or reading material; or if you have noticed a tendency in your child to become aggressive when angry, then the need to teach anger management is critical. Anytime you watch, or allow your children to watch a violent movie/TV show or play a violent video game, *you* and *they* are becoming “desensitized” to aggression and violence.

Even in a child’s life, anger that is uncontrolled can result in stress, oppositional and destructive behaviors and alienation. Just as with adults, children who lack appropriate skills for coping with anger ultimately make poor choices that can result in hurting others or themselves. Having never learned the coping skills to handle frustrations, or having run out of coping skills, a young person’s anger can manifest itself by throwing a tantrum, back talking, using profanity, throwing things, hitting and kicking. These behaviors can then trigger an angry response from the parent. If the parent also lacks self-control and effective coping skills, the result could be emotional, verbal or physical abuse to the child.

What do you think is the main reason why a young person gets angry? If you are thinking frustrations brought about by not getting his or her “own way”, you would be right on target. Consider the 2-year-old who is told he cannot go outside, the 10-year-old who feels he has been treated unfairly, and the 16-year-old who feels he is not getting enough independence. It is our job as parents to assist our children in developing self-control to deal with anger appropriately.

It is a proven fact that people tend to be more at peace with themselves and others when they can control their anger in healthy ways, regardless of the degree of intimidation or amount of provocation they are faced with. The earlier we



teach the proper anger management skills to our children, the less likely they are to develop the poor coping skills and aggressive tendencies that have become so prevalent in our society today.

Read the excerpt from the following article:

Does Kindergarten Need Cops?

The youngest school kids are acting out in really outrageous ways. Why?

By Claudia Wallis

“Temper tantrums are nothing new in kindergarten and first grade, but the behavior of a 6-year-old girl this fall at a school in Fort Worth, Texas, had even the most experienced staff members wanting to run for cover. Asked to put a toy away, the youngster began to scream. Told to calm down, she knocked over her desk and crawled under the teacher’s desk, kicking it and dumping out the content of the drawers. Then things really began to deteriorate. Still shrieking, the child stood up and began hurling books at her terrified classmates, who had to be ushered from the room to safety...

“I’m clearly seeing an increasing number of kindergartners and first-graders coming to our attention for aggressive behavior,” says Michael Parker, program director of psychological services at the Fort Worth Independent School District, which serves 80,000 students. The incidents have occurred not only in low-income urban schools but in middle-class areas as well. Parker says: “We’re talking about serious talking back to teachers, profanity, even biting, kicking and hitting adults, and we’re seeing it in 5-year-olds.” And these are not the kids who have been formally labeled emotionally disturbed, says Necedra Clark, who works in Parker’s department. “We have our E.D. kids, and then we have our b-a-d kids.”...²⁰

One of the first and most effective ways to assist young children in learning to control anger is through role modeling of proper anger management skills. In the article above teachers were surprised that children as young as 5-years-old were capable of violent, aggressive behavior, as if five years is not enough time to learn how to behave inappropriately.

Let’s consider all the things children can learn in the first five years of life: they learn to walk, talk, jump, run, hold utensils and eat on their own, use the restroom without assistance, bathe and dress themselves. Some even learn how to read, write, do arithmetic, and recite their address and phone numbers and these are just some of the things they learn to do by the age of five. Why then are we surprised that they can also learn harmful, destructive ways to handle anger? As previously mentioned, violent aggressive acts are learned behaviors.

Continuing with the previous article:

“...Hinshaw and other experts on child behavior also point out that aggressive behavior in children has been irrefutably linked to exposure to violence on TV and in movies, video games and other media. “Dozens of studies have shown this link. Probably hundreds” says psychologist Jerome Singer, co-director of the Yale University Family

Television Research and Consultation Center. “The size of the effect is almost as strong as the relationship between smoking and cancer.”

There is little doubt that very young children are watching loads of TV before they even reach kindergarten. In October the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation released the results of a survey of 1,065 parents with children ages 6 months to 6 years. The stunning finding is that 43% of the kids age 2 and younger watched TV on a typical day and that 26% had a TV in their room. The median amount of time spent watching: two hours a day.

And that’s two hours a day that are not spent doing what toddlers most need to do: interacting with people who love them and can teach them how to behave.”²¹

Be True To Your School!

In a New York public school, several students who were upset with their 6th grade teacher attacked her. It seemed that the teacher would not allow the class to see a “Jerry Springer Show” on TV. The students “slapped, kicked, pushed, and spat” on the teacher! The preteen students were outraged at the minority teacher, because she wanted the class to watch an educational film on TV rather than the more entertaining Springer Show.

This event of classroom anarchy says volumes about the deplorable state of the nation’s public school system. Not only is the watching of television common in public schools, instead of the traditional three Rs but the students felt that it was their right to revolt in class and attack the teacher like a pack of wild dogs to satisfy their desires.²²

In addition to watching TV, how we handle our anger in front of our children can be equally as damaging. How do you behave when your children do not act the way you want them to, when a car cuts you off, or you have misplaced something you need? Do you or others in your household, rant, rave, scream, curse, slam objects, and bang doors? If these behaviors are displayed in the presence of your children, they are learning from you and others around them poor coping skills and a lifetime of poor anger management skills. Keep in mind that our ultimate goal is to control our anger so that it does not cause harm to ourselves or others. The next, and equally important goal, is to teach our children how to control their anger so that it does not lead to harmful, resentful behaviors.

Note: We can have immoral, negative behavior without being angry.

Let’s Take It One Step At A Time



Let’s be honest, an angry disobedient child can be frustrating to any parent. But regardless of how frustrated we become, we must maintain our self-control so that we can role model and teach positive anger management

skills. Before you deal with a child who is angry, rude and disrespectful, ask yourself the following questions:

■ **What am I feeling right now?** This question puts you in touch with your own emotions. If you are angry and your anger is brimming out of control, how will it affect your interaction with your child? Will you be able to effectively teach a child to manage his anger if yours is out of control? Be sure to have your anger under control so that you do not become verbally, physically or emotionally abusive toward your children.

■ **What does the child need?** This question allows you to evaluate the needs of the child. Is the child lonely? Maybe he needs attention. Is the child disappointed? Maybe he needs reassurance. Is the child hungry or tired? Children can become irritable when running on empty, just like adults do. When we take the time to ask ourselves these questions we realize that not every situation where a child is misbehaving should be handled in the same manner. Many parents deal with misbehaviors by spanking. It should never be the first means of intervention.

In addition to evaluating your needs and the needs of the child you also need to keep the following in mind:

- Anger is a normal emotion which manifests itself throughout our lives, but we can handle it appropriately and control it.
- Anger is not an invitation to seek revenge or hold a grudge.
- Anger is not an excuse to hurt yourself or others, nor is it an excuse to destroy property or show disrespect to others, especially to those in authority.
- Managing anger helps build positive interactions and allows one to solve conflicts peacefully.

General Tips For Teaching Anger Management Skills

1. **Keep your cool.** Remember who is in charge. You are the authority and the mature adult who should model how to handle every situation in a positive, moral way. When a parent “flies off the handle” it teaches his child to do the same. Stay calm and in control. Use a low tone of voice when directing any angry out-of-control child. Raising your voice will only make the situation worse. Bend down to a young child’s level and maintain eye contact when instructing a child that has lost his self-control.

2. **Be patient.** Every parent needs a big dose of the positive character trait

of patience, because no lesson is taught just once. Children learn through repetition, so expect to patiently teach and re-teach.

3. **Take the time to teach as well as correct.** Many parents are quick to correct, but we can also use a child's misbehavior as a teaching tool. Look for opportunities to explain to your child why something is wrong, the consequences of their wrong choice and the benefits of making a right choice. This doesn't mean going into a long lecture, in fact for toddlers keep your explanation short and simple, because young children have short attention spans.

4. **Use Active listening.** Active listening is a powerful tool that helps children "talk out" rather than "act out". Oftentimes, when a child feels disappointed, rejected or envious, these primary emotions are covered up by anger. Active listening hears not only the words that are being said, but also the intent or true feelings behind the words. Active listening also conveys concern, love and acceptance. The Peaceful Solution *Self-Control Unit* for schools goes into great detail about how to practice active listening. We suggest that you use it as a resource.



5. **Don't expect perfect results right away.** Give your child the guidance of what is expected and then allow him an opportunity to correct his behavior. Think back to when you were first learning to improve on a positive character trait. Did you perfect your behavior right away? No, of course not. So don't set your expectations of your child beyond realistic goals. Keep your expectations age appropriate as well. You cannot expect a 2-year-old to respond like a 12-year-old.

6. **Talk to your child about his/her behavior and how you plan to help him demonstrate proper conduct.** Don't try to explain a new behavior plan when your child is out of control. The time to do it is *before* the child's next outburst, when he is calm. The child's ability to listen and comprehend will be seriously compromised if he is upset and out of control. When you talk with him tell him in a loving tone that you are concerned about his behavior, because kicking, hitting, name-calling, or throwing things even when he is angry is wrong and unacceptable. Let your child know that you want him to behave appropriately even when he is angry. Tell your child about the "Rules and Reward System", as well as a "Calm Down Time". Explain, in

simple terms the purpose of the reward system and what behaviors will result in having Calm Down Time.

7. Institute Calm Down Time. This is a very effective way to help a child regain his or her self-control. The Calm Down Time for children should mirror adults' time who before a fit of anger, stops to count to ten, in order to calm down. When first initiating this behavioral intervention, it is best to explain and tell the child that you are giving her some time now to "calm down" and stop the crying, screaming, kicking or hitting. In this manner, the child will learn that controlling her behavior is the reason for the Calm Down Time. When directing a child into Calm Down Time, bend down to the child's level and maintain eye contact. Speak in a firm, low tone of voice. Do not yell or scream. You can physically put the child into the designated calm down area gently, but firmly if she will not walk there on her own. If the child comes out before you see a change in behavior, simply put the child back.

Calm Down Time can vary depending on the situation or age of the child. When he shows that he has regained his composure, talk with him about his behavior. Use the child's 'Calm Down Time' to calm yourself down as well. Remember to handle the situation appropriately by maintaining your composure.

8. Remember to use Rules and Rewards System. If your child's behavior is problematic, with 2-3 episodes of throwing a tantrum, hitting or kicking in one day, develop rules and reward systems to target those specific behaviors, or add a rule that concerns anger management to an existing reward system. For example, a rule that would address the behavior of hitting and kicking is "Keep hands and feet to yourself."

9. Process the experience. If you must utilize the Calm Down Time, be sure to talk to your child once he has regained composure. Ask the child to process his behavior and the consequences of his actions. Use a firm tone of voice and maintain eye contact while you are speaking. Be sure to ask the child why he was given 'Calm Down Time'. Ask him which rule he broke and what he will do the next time. Lastly, be sure he apologizes for this behavior. Here is an example of a typical processing dialogue:

Mother: I am glad that you are now practicing self-control. Can you tell me why you had to calm down?

Child: I was angry and threw something.

Mother: What is the rule about throwing things?

Child: Not to throw things.

Mother: The next time I give you an instruction, what will you do?

Child: I'll do what you tell me to do.

Mother: What does it show about yourself when you follow the rules that I have set for you?

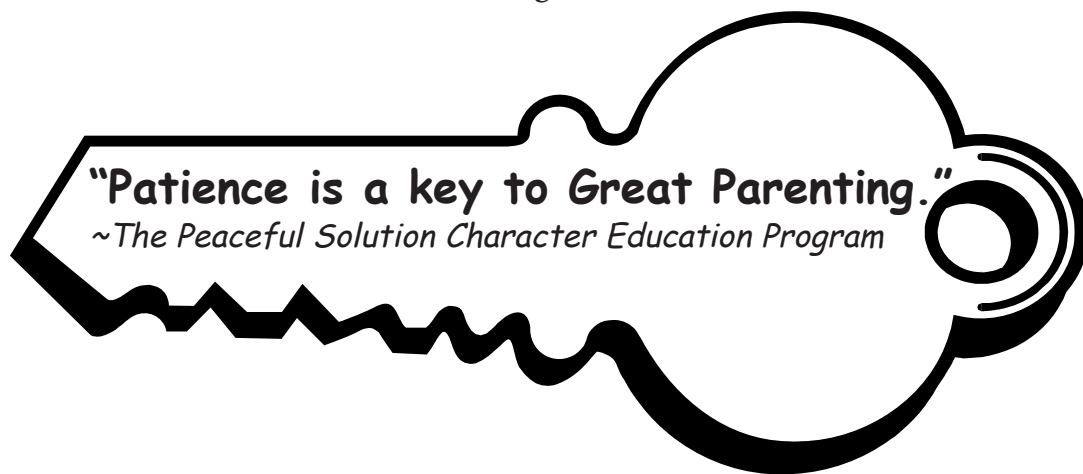
Child: It shows that I'm obedient, and that I'm showing you respect.

Mother: What else do you need to say?

Child: I apologize Mother.

Mother: I accept your apology. I know you will do better the next time.

Will the dialogue with your child go this smoothly on the first few attempts? Probably not. In fact, trying to process the situation sometimes results in the child throwing a tantrum all over again. If this occurs, place the child back in Calm Down Time and wait until he or she is calm. It usually takes only a few times for this to occur before the child understands that you are serious about what behaviors you expect. Remember, patience is the key. Always take the time to process the experience, make sure that the child knows why she was given a consequence and is able to plan a better way to handle the situation when it occurs again.



10. **Be creative when giving out consequences.** Not every misbehavior deserves the same consequence. Stop and think about what consequence can best *teach* the child. For example, your 10-year-old argued with you when you told him that he was not allowed to leave your supervision. Even after you instructed him to stop arguing, he persisted. Of course, this is outward rebellion, so technically he could receive a spanking, but a far more beneficial consequence would be to instruct him to write an essay about the importance of obedience and why it is important to be supervised. Be sure that you curtail all other activities until he completes the essay to the best of his ability. Taking away privileges for a short period of time is also an appropriate consequence. But a note of caution: you should never deny a child food or water as a consequence for misbehavior. Denying food and water to a child is abuse.

11. **Be consistent.** This tip is the last on the list, but certainly not least in importance. This is like the glue that holds all positive parenting together. Your consistent, positive intervention tells children that you love them enough to always correct, teach, and guide them to proper behavior. Never let inappropriate behavior “slide”. It will diminish your effectiveness as a parent and role model.

Many of the previous tips are applicable for children of all ages. Generally speaking, children should be beyond the stage of throwing a tantrum by the age of 6. But throwing a tantrum is only one manifestation of anger; children show anger in many different ways. Consider the following:

- “Well...she hit me first!”
- “He kept calling me names, so I called him a name too!”
- “It’s not my fault. He tripped me, so I got up and punched his lights out.”
- “If he didn’t want to get hit, he shouldn’t have yanked it from me. It’s mine!”
- “The bus was late, and my teacher started to hassle me about being tardy. So yeah, I told her to get off my back!”

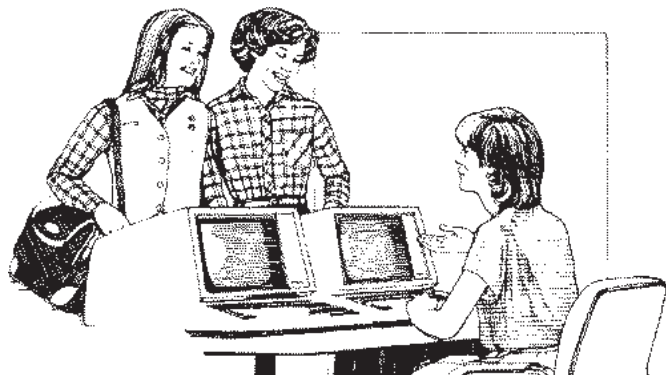
Without self-control and effective anger management skills, we justify the poor ways we handle anger, often blaming it on people and circumstances in our lives, and at times we even seek to take revenge. Children of all ages need to understand that they cannot blame the way they respond to anger on the things that others do and that it is immoral to retaliate in any way.

Therefore, another key element in teaching anger management to children, especially to those who are older and more mature, is to help them realize that they are responsible for the way they respond to situations that make them angry. Children also need to know that retaliation is wrong and will make the problem worse. In other words, you may not be able to control the fact that someone tripped you, but you can control your response and not hit back. You choose how to respond to anger.

Retaliation in any form, whether verbal or physical, should never be an option to how we respond to anger. Children often feel that if they do not retaliate in some way, others will take advantage of them. But the truth is: retaliation only brings on more retaliation, and in today’s society children as young as six have brought weapons to school to get even with a peer. Start now to teach your children that two wrongs never make a right. Teach them also that one of the true measures of being wise is to be able to think their way out of a situation, for truly anyone can resort to violence to deal with a conflict. Only making wise choices, however, can solve the conflict and bring it to a peaceful conclusion.

As your children mature teach them to:

1. **Acknowledge the situations that make them angry.** Everyone feels anger for different reasons. Knowing what upsets them will help them plan appropriate ways to handle frustrating situations when they arise. For example, it is normal to get angry if someone takes your belonging without first asking and receiving permission. Knowing that this is upsetting to you, you can kindly remind others to ask before using your belongings. A gentle reminder can avoid a conflict.
2. **Accept that they cannot control how other people behave or the choices they make.** As much as we would like to control how other people behave, we can't. Teach your children that the only people they can control are themselves.
3. **Deal appropriately with anger.** This can be done in several ways:
 - a. **Encourage your child to talk to you or some other trustworthy person when they feel angry.** This is your opportunity to use active listening to help your child understand his or her feelings. Teach your children that it is okay to ask for help to handle a situation that overwhelms them. Help them identify those who they can ask for help. For example, when siblings have a conflict at home, they can seek help from mom or dad. If they are in a work situation, a supervisor, or in school a teacher or counselor is appropriate. Encouraging older children, especially teens, to get guidance from other approved adults helps them to see other views of making the wrong, right.



- b. **Speak respectfully and control the tone of voice even when angry.** Being angry does not give anyone the right to yell or curse. Teach your child from a young age to use the phrase: "Thank you for pointing that

out to me,” when being corrected. For example, when speaking to someone in authority, a child should never raise his or her voice, curse or strike out. Teach your child from a young age to respect others even when he is angry.

c. **Never accept violence (verbal or physical) as an option to deal with anger.** Children who are taught to respect others and their property even when they are angry, will not be the ones perpetuating violence and aggression. Emphasize that anger is no justification for disrespect or violence of any kind.

d. **Use character to find a solution when children are angry.** Ask your child what positive character trait should they display to solve the problem. Have your child talk about ways that using that positive trait could bring about a peaceful solution.

4. **Let go of anger.** Teach your children not to hold on to anger. When we hold on to anger we are more likely to behave immorally by hurting ourselves, harming others, or destroying property.

Here are a few ways you can teach your child to let go of anger:

Encourage children to:

- Use self-talk to help them control their thoughts.
- Be merciful to others and forgive to avoid retaliation.
- Focus on calm, positive thoughts.
- Try to see things from the other person’s view and be compassionate.
- Learn not to take the behaviors of others personally.
- Find a way to see humor in the situation.
- Accept the fact that, like them, others have difficult times also.
- Count the ways they are thankful for that person or situation to be in their life.
- Handle anger correctly to develop positive, moral character.
- Accept that life may not always seem fair but that they will always have peace of mind if they practice moral values from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.

As parents, we can train our children to succeed in all aspects of life, but we cannot teach what we do not know and what we are unwilling to practice ourselves. When it comes to self-control we must have a “do as I say and as I do” attitude. We must be what we want our children to become, because they are looking to us as parents, teachers, providers and role models to be an example for them to see.

Lesson Plan Eight

Teaching Children About Respect

Purpose/Objective

Students will learn about respect for self and others, and how to teach their children by their example.

Materials

R*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*

RPencils/pens

Purpose

1. Briefly review **Lesson Seven, Teaching Anger Management** by asking the following questions:
 - a. What are some indications that anger management is needed? (*Violently or destructively expressing anger, exposure to violent entertainment, aggression when angry, etc.*)
 - b. What steps can you take when dealing with an angry, rude, disrespectful child? (*Determine what you are feeling and evaluate the child's needs*)
 - c. Name some of the tips for teaching anger management skills to a child. (*Be patient, teach as well as correct, be consistent, etc.*)
2. Inform class that they will learn what respect is, how to have respect for themselves and others, and how to teach respect to their children. Ask for someone to define **respect**. (*To show honor, esteem, care and concern for others, property, the environment, and ourselves.*)
3. Have volunteers read the first two paragraphs on **page 61**, then discuss. Focus on the fact that children are exhibiting disrespectful behaviors at increasingly younger ages. Choose volunteers to read and discuss the last two paragraphs on **page 61**. Tell students that disrespect manifests itself in crimes and many social ills in our society.
4. **Activity:** Have volunteers form groups to brainstorm various forms of disrespect shown by children to parents and parents to children. Allow students to share with the class. Stress that disrespect in any form should never be tolerated and that we as adults must hold ourselves to the standard we learn based on the positive moral values. These we must teach to our children, regardless of age.

5. Choose a volunteer to read the first paragraph on **page 62**. Have parents reflect and share on whether the media influenced their choices when they were younger. Discuss the main points on **pages 62-63**. Draw a vertical line on the board, creating two columns. Label one side “Then” and the other “Now”. Have students brainstorm ways in which society is different today from just fifty years ago, showing how what is considered acceptable behavior today was unacceptable then. Write their findings on the board.

6. Read the section “It Starts With You” on **page 63**, then allow students to take the test on **page 64**. Encourage them to answer each scenario honestly. This assignment is for each individual to evaluate themselves; it will not be shared with the class. Read the section “Analyzing Your Respect IQ” on **page 65**. Have students take note of their areas of concern. Encourage them to continue to strive to obtain the very important character trait of respect for themselves and others.

7. **Activity:** Have students form groups. Instruct them to brainstorm the various ways to demonstrate self-respect (*Answers may include: proper grooming, cleanliness, interactions with others, dress, work ethic, etc*). Have students share with the class.

8. Select key points from the section “Taking A Closer Look At Self-Respect” on **pages 65-66**. Discuss how having a lack of self-respect can result in risk taking behavior that can actually endanger a person’s life and the lives of others. Paraphrase the section “It’s About Clothing Too” on **page 66**. Discuss how “fashion” has contributed to moral decline and a lack of self-respect.

9. Summarize the first paragraph under the heading “Positive Goals Help Build Self-Respect” on **page 67** and allow students to write in their goals on **pages 67-68**. If time permits, allow a few volunteers to share with the class. Read and discuss the section “A Few Tips For Teaching Respect” on **pages 68-69**. Emphasize that as adults we must make a conscious, diligent effort to not only teach respect, but to make sure that our children demonstrate respect to themselves, others, property and the environment.

10. Conclude by reading the last paragraph on **page 70**. Encourage students to always set the example of positive, moral character for their children to learn by, to restrict or eliminate negative influences via the media, and to insist upon respectful actions and words from their children.

Lesson Eight

Teaching Children About Respect

Another important positive character trait that every parent must have is respect. **Respect** is to *show honor, esteem, care and concern for others, property, the environment, ourselves, and all life*. Like self-control, respect is a pillar of positive, moral character and is therefore vital to the life of each individual and to our society as a whole. When members of a family demonstrate respect for each other, there is mutual concern and care from all members.

Theoretically, it should be simple to outline what is respectful conduct between parents and children, but the reality is that we now live in a society

Respect is like an investment. You get so much more out than you put in.

~The Peaceful
Solution Character
Education Program

where disrespect is already condoned; blurring the lines between what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior even within families. It is no longer uncommon to hear of children as young as three striking their parents and older children refusing to comply with curfew, do chores or follow other instructions. Nor is it uncommon to hear parents literally cursing their children in public, yanking them by their arms if they are lagging behind, or physically and sexually abusing them behind closed doors.

The breakdown of the family unit is only one way disrespect has manifested itself in our society. If we evaluate the problems we see in society based on the principles of respect—honor, kindness, and compassion—we can clearly see how the lack of respect has affected all areas of society. The increasing number of domestic violence reports, school bullies, robberies, car thefts, rapes, murders and overflowing prisons all attest to the fact that as a society, self-respect and respect for others are sorely lacking.

A decline in moral values has greatly contributed to the lack of respect that is now interwoven into the fabric of our society. As parents, our greatest challenge is to raise morally respectful children in an environment that is saturated with all forms of disrespectful behaviors. The vast majority of these behaviors are blatantly displayed for all to see and emulate on television. Recent studies have proven that the availability and popularity of television make it one of the most powerful sources of negative influence in our society.

- By the age of 72 the average American would have spent a total of 11 years in front of the TV.
- By the age of 18 the average child would have witnessed over 200,000 acts of violence.
- Teens that watch 3-5 hours of TV each day witness about 2,000 sex acts per year.

As parents we can no longer afford to be desensitized to the disrespect in the world around us. We need to become aware of how it is affecting our children and us. To become truly effective in our role as parents, we must acknowledge the dangers of allowing our children to watch objectionable material on TV, read about it in books and magazines and see it on the Internet. We should never underestimate the power of negative influences on the moral development of our children. Remember, parents have the most important job on the planet. We are responsible for raising, nurturing and teaching the next generation. With so much depending upon our diligence, we cannot afford to be negligent in our duties. It is a parent's responsibility to guard what their children see, hear and experience to the very best of their ability.

How can parents teach their children to develop the character trait of respect?

Children are taught to develop the character trait of respect when parents value it as a positive character trait in their own lives, and then consistently promote, model, and teach it to their children.

Children love to mimic and imitate their parents. You can see this in their pretend play. "Mommy" takes care of the "baby", "Daddy" knows how to mow the lawn or fix the fence. What your children see you doing, and the kind of lifestyle you live, will influence the choices your children will make as they grow older. Their choice to show respect to themselves and others will depend primarily upon the emphasis you place on it.

Imagine that your life is in full view of your children except for very private moments. Think of it as though they were in a theatre watching you on the screen. Is the way you conduct yourself the way you want your children to behave? Is the way you treat others the way you would want to be treated? All of these things need to be considered if we want to send the right messages to our children.

We also need to learn as much as we can about what true respect is, and how to teach it to our children, especially since we live in a society where the concept of respect has changed so drastically over the years.

One thing to keep in mind as you prepare to train your children how to develop a respectful character is that even though certain ideas and behaviors are accepted in our society, it does not mean they are respectable. It is up to you, as the parent and the one responsible for the moral upbringing of

Just because society accepts it doesn't mean it is respectable.

*~The Peaceful Solution
Character Education
Program*

your children, to determine what is the right and proper way to conduct yourself and then teach this to your children regardless of the disrespectful behaviors that are commonly accepted in the world around us. The bottom line is: although we live in a disrespectful world, we do not have to raise disrespectful children. Even with the challenges that face us, we can raise children who are prepared to treat themselves, others and the world around them with respect.

It Starts With You

If we take a closer look at respect, and how it applies to individuals, our community and even our nation, we see that respect can be divided into four main categories:

- 1) Self-respect
- 2) Respect for others
- 3) Respect for possessions (yours and others)
- 4) Respect for the environment

**Opportunities to
teach respect are
all around you.**

*~The Peaceful Solution
Character Education
Program*

Every choice we make can be sorted into one or more of these four categories. For example, when you wake up in the morning and prepare for the day by bathing, grooming and choosing clean, appropriate clothing you are demonstrating self-respect. Making sure that your child also bathes, grooms himself and chooses clean proper clothing teaches him to also have self-respect. Simply reminding him to turn the water off while brushing his teeth, teaches respect for the environment, and encouraging him to make his bed or wash his breakfast dishes, teaches respect for his belongings and yours.

We can teach our children to develop respect by the choices we make in our daily lives. This is why it is so important that we show respect for others and ourselves regardless of the mood or situation we are in. We should never intentionally choose to disrespect others, property, the environment or ourselves. There is never a legitimate time when it is acceptable to be disrespectful. Even anger does not give us the right to disrespect others.

Respect, the ability to show care and concern for ourselves, the well-being of others, possessions and the environment, should be unconditional. One of the most erroneous beliefs of our time is that respect must be earned. The truth is, respect should be automatic, for even a stranger deserves respect. These are the concepts of respect that we need to teach our children through our daily choices.

What's Your Respect IQ?

The choices you make send a clear message about the importance of respect in your life. Read the following scenarios and check *Always*, *Sometimes* or *Never* as it applies to you.

Scenario	Always	Sometimes	Never
I teach my children to accept people from different cultures.			
I ask for and receive permission before touching or taking the belongings of others.			
I teach my children to throw garbage only where it should be.			
I believe that life is worthwhile.			
I teach my children to set and accomplish goals.			
I have purpose and direction in my life.			
I clean my home regularly and keep it organized.			
I keep the outside of my home neat and free from clutter and garbage.			
I bathe daily and wear clean, appropriate clothing.			
I teach my children to practice cleanliness and wear appropriate clothing.			
Eating healthy, nutritious food is important to me.			
I readily apologize if I have offended or hurt someone in any way.			
I refrain from using vulgar language.			
I am willing to admit when I am wrong.			
I listen to the needs of others when it is my responsibility to.			
I refrain from interrupting others when conversing with them.			
I instruct my children to never tease or call their peers names.			
I am courteous to others even when I am angry.			
I teach my children to care for their belongings by putting them neatly away.			
I politely listen to others as they speak.			

Analyzing Your Respect IQ

The test you have just completed was comprised of twenty questions that can be categorized into the four main categories of respect: self-respect, respect for others, respect for property, and respect for the environment. The correct answer for all of the questions is *Always*. Any *Sometimes* or *Never* answers should be acknowledged as areas of concern. These are some of the areas you need to focus on in order to fully develop the character trait of respect.

Keep in mind that you fully develop the character trait of respect, only if you are respectful in all four categories. For example, the person who has self-respect, but discriminates against others is not a respectful person. In like manner, the individual who cares for his own belongings, but would willfully steal or destroy the property of others is not respectful.



Taking A Closer Look At Self-Respect

What does **self-respect** mean to you? Does it mean keeping yourself clean and eating healthy, nutritious food? If so, you are right on target. Self-respect is all of these things, and so much more. Self-respect is a quality and ability that enable us to make choices showing care and concern for our own health, well-being and life in general. Self-respect is manifested in many different ways. Did you know that keeping a home clean and organized is also a form of self-respect? A clean home shows that you care enough about your health to live in an environment that is as sanitary as possible. A person who keeps her home clean and organized is more likely to be healthier and less stressed than someone whose home is a toxic dump site.

Another form of self-respect is in avoiding risky behaviors, such as promiscuous sex, extra-marital affairs, excessive drinking, and experimenting with illegal and legal drugs. All of these risky behaviors can lead to sexually transmitted diseases, addictions, regrets and death. Engaging in these types of behaviors is not showing care or concern for one's health, well-being or life.

Several years ago there was a news story about a woman who left her two children, a toddler and a 9-month-old, alone for a few days, so she could buy drugs and party with a new boyfriend. When she returned home, she found her children dead from starvation and dehydration.

Although this is an extreme case, it shows the harm that can occur when individuals lack the important angle of self-respect, that is, mental growth or development; where one is able to make wise, moral decisions.

Our self-respect is also evident in the way we address others, especially

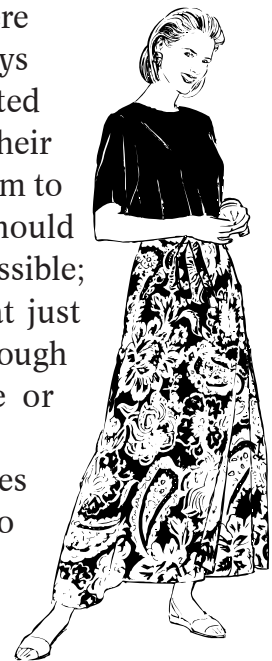
when we are frustrated. Our words and tone of voice demonstrate not only the respect we have for other people, but how much respect we have for ourselves. For instance, an employee becomes upset and curses his boss. The employee may think that he is embarrassing his boss, but instead he has really proven how crude and ill-mannered he is.

Using foul language, making fun of others, name calling and teasing are practiced routinely by adults, often in front of their children. All of these show horrible disrespect for others, but as previously mentioned, they're indicative of the respect we have for ourselves. Someone who has self-respect would not want to be considered as rude, crude or offensive. Having self-respect means being careful of the words that come out of your mouth, because they really say a lot about you.

It's About Clothing Too

Have you ever heard the saying, “clothes make the man”? There is a great deal of truth in these simple words. How we dress says much about our character. Clothing has always been associated with dignity. In fact, one of the first acts done by captors to their captives is to strip them of their clothes; thereby, reducing them to shame and open humiliation. How ironic then, that we should voluntarily choose to leave our homes as scantily clad as possible; thereby, humiliating our own selves. The bottom line is that just because some designer says that wearing short, tight, see-through clothing is fashionable, does not mean it is acceptable or respectable.

It is up to each person to stop and think about the messages they are sending with their choice of clothing. If you had to hire someone to be an ambassador for a country who would you choose, the person with an impeccable academic record, dressed in a two piece suit and blouse, or the person with an impeccable academic record dressed in a miniskirt, halter top and knee high boots? What message do we send to our children, when they see us dressed inappropriately? Remember, children learn through our example. They have a natural desire to want to be like their parents. Therefore, it is important that we maintain our self-respect by choosing modest clothing that will reflect our desire to improve our moral character. It is just as important that we dress our children modestly and teach them to choose clothes that are modest so that as they grow older, they will desire clothing that reflects their moral values.



Positive Goals Help Build Self-Respect

Other important aspects of developing self-respect are to have purpose, goals and a strong work ethic. Having purpose gives you a general direction in which to focus your thoughts and energy. Desiring to lead a productive, fulfilling life is one example of what it means to have purpose. Without a positive purpose, life tends to lose direction and it becomes easy to drift aimlessly from one day to the next. Purpose gives us the determination to meet deadlines, accomplish tasks and lead useful lives. Along with having purpose, it is also important to have positive, achievable goals. A goal is an end that you strive to attain. By taking this parenting course you are working towards the goal of becoming a positive, more effective parent. What other positive goals can you set and work towards achieving? The great thing about setting goals is that it is up to you how many goals you work on.

Pursue and achieve your goals with integrity.

Goals of self-improvement, such as controlling one's temper, getting to work on time, and spending more time with your children are worth pursuing and achieving. By assessing your needs and wants you can determine the goals you would like to accomplish.

When it comes to setting and achieving goals, having a positive work ethic can make the difference between success and failure. A positive work ethic enables you to pursue your goals with moral character. Traits, such as determination, honesty, responsibility, discipline, self-control and perseverance are only some of the moral character traits that constitute a positive work ethic.

Armed with these key character traits, setting and achieving goals to better your life and the lives of your children is possible. But, a word of caution, achieving an objective should never override your ultimate goal of developing a positive moral character. For example, if someone's goal is to graduate from college and he cheats on the final exam, then he is not using positive character traits to achieve his goal. The individual with positive character will study and achieve his goal honestly. When you have purpose in life, set positive goals and pursue them with a strong work ethic you are demonstrating self-respect for your life and well-being.

Complete the following exercise by filling in the blanks

1. My purpose in life is _____

2. List three goals in order of priority that you want to achieve. _____

3. What changes will you need to make in your life to accomplish your goals? _____

A Few Tips For Teaching Respect

Children are like sponges. They soak up the values of those around them. In an environment where respect is valued and practiced, children can become respectful individuals, with the ability to make sound decisions that will not compromise their integrity. There are many ways you can teach children to have respect, even from a very young age, but keep in mind that children learn through repetition, so be prepared to patiently teach, instruct and guide over and over again. Implement the following tips and techniques daily to teach your child(ren) respect.

1. Family members should never start off their day by ignoring each other. Greet each other every morning. Ask family members if they slept well or if they had a great night.

2. Teach children to say “please” when they need something, “thank you” when they have received something or someone has done something for them, and “excuse me, please” when someone is in the way.

3. Teach children to answer when you call them. Do not accept “What!” as an answer. Instruct them to say “Yes Mom”, or “I’ll be right there, Dad”.

4. Do not allow children to talk back. If your child has gotten into the

habit of back-talking, firmly and sternly tell the child he is not to continue speaking; continuing will result in a consequence or loss of a privilege.

5. Teach children to care for their belongings. Have hooks low enough for children to hang up their coats and a designated place for shoes and knapsacks.

6. Teach children to care for the things in the home. For example, no writing on the walls or putting feet on the furniture.

7. Never allow a child to speak to you in a disrespectful way. If this occurs have him repeat the statement in an acceptable tone of voice. For example:

No: tone of demand - "Get me a glass of water."

Yes: speak politely - "Would you get me a glass of water, please?"

8. Teach children to respect the concept of ownership. Usually we are unaware of the concept of ownership until someone uses one of our belongings without asking for and receiving our permission. Respecting ownership is not something that we are born with. Everyone, babies especially, have a natural curiosity about objects they see. Colors, shapes, and sizes are all very attractive to the eye. Teaching a child to ask and receive permission before touching someone else's belongings is essentially teaching them not to steal.

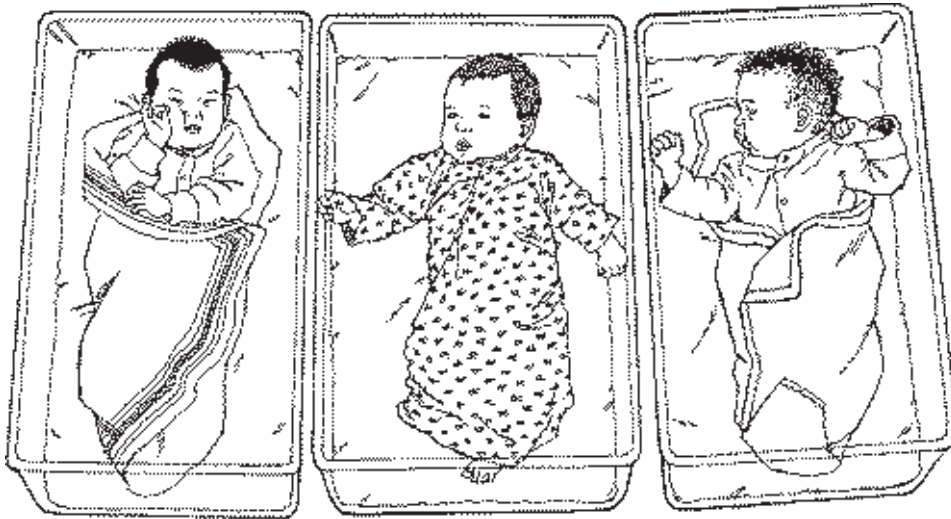
When we consider the conflicts that arise between even the youngest toddlers because one took the other's belonging without asking, to the school age child whose crayons were stolen, to the junior high child whose bike was stolen, to the adult whose car was stolen, we see the need to begin training children to develop the habit of asking permission before touching the belongings of others. To begin teaching this important habit you must first become aware that everything you see belongs to someone. Begin to develop this habit of asking permission first in order to respect the belongings of others' and encourage those around you to do the same.

9. Teach children to respect the environment. Never allow children to throw garbage on the ground or out the car window. If walking a dog in a public area, be sure to pick up and dispose of the dog's waste.

10. Teach children respect for all people by encouraging them to use positive words when describing or talking about others. Words that devalue others due to their nationality or ethnicity should never be allowed. Mistreating others because they are physically or mentally disabled should never be

tolerated. Developing tolerance and respect for others will make the world a better place.

Encourage children to look for an opportunity to accentuate the positive in all people, regardless of where they are from, what they look like, or what they believe. This is best role modeled by you, the parents. Your respect for others will ripple outward to children as well.



Our most precious possessions are our children.

~The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Lesson Plan Nine

Teaching Children Responsibility

Purpose/Objective

Students will learn techniques to help them teach their children how to be responsible.

Materials

R*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*

RPencils/pens

Purpose

1. Briefly review **Lesson Eight, Teaching Children About Respect** by asking the following questions:
 - a. What does **respect** mean? (*To show honor, esteem, care and concern for others, property, the environment, and ourselves.*)
 - b. What are some factors that contribute to a lack of respect? (*entertainment, fashion, decline in moral values, etc.*)
 - c. What are the four main categories of respect? (*self-respect, respect for others, property and the environment*)
2. Explain to students that in today's lesson they will learn how to help their children become responsible. Ask for volunteers to tell in their own words what being responsible means to them. (*Answers will vary.*)
3. Paraphrase the first two paragraphs on **page 71**. Explain that in many ways children are a reflection of their parents. Have students express what they would like to see reflected in their children. Have a volunteer read the section "Responsibility, What Is It?" on **page 71**. Have students write down ways they are responsible. Volunteers may share with class.
4. Allot time for students to independently read the section "Teaching Responsibility" on **pages 71-72** and answer the question to each scenario on **pages 72-73**. Discuss scenarios and answers as a class. Stress the importance of maintaining self-control to make responsible choices.
5. Have volunteers read the section "What Does Work Ethic Mean?" on

pages 73-74. Discuss how drastically society has changed in the past fifty years concerning work ethics. Children used to be expected to help with household chores; it was part of being a family unit. As a class, brainstorm different life skills parents could teach their children.

6. **Activity #1:** Talk about the section “Assigning Chores” on **page 75**. Have students break into five groups. Assign an age range (*ages 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, 11-12 and 13+*) to each group and have them determine appropriate chores for the age range assigned. Have them brainstorm how they can help children in that age range be responsible for their chores. Allow them to share with the class.

7. Tell students that we also have a responsibility to build a rapport with our children. Maintaining positive communication and interaction will enable us to continue guiding them to make moral choices to become better people. Select main points from **page 76-77** to discuss additional ways to build friendships with our children, to love them and to find joy in all of their developmental stages.

8. **Activity #2:** Have students reconvene into groups, with corresponding age ranges. Instruct students to brainstorm family activities to involve their children. Have students share with the class.

9. Conclude by encouraging students to continue to practice all that they have learned during this course. The concepts will assist them in changing their lives and the lives of their children by incorporating positive moral character in all they say and do.

Lesson Nine

Teaching Children Responsibility

As parents, we have a great responsibility to prepare today's children for tomorrow's world. By modeling positive character, children will follow our examples and make choices that will benefit themselves and society. It is a fact that who children become and what they deem important depend largely on what they are taught and what they put into practice. It is a parent's responsibility to instill within their children the need to practice positive character in all aspects of their lives.

It takes self-control
to be responsible.

~The Peaceful Solution
Character Education
Program

Parents who are accountable and responsible for their choices will be able to raise children who choose to be accountable and responsible as well. This will develop a greater sense of self-worth and confidence in their ability to make right choices. They will earn the reputation of being dependable and trustworthy people who take responsibility for their actions.

Responsibility, What Is It?

Just like any other positive character trait, responsibility must be developed over time. Being responsible means you are someone others can count on to fulfill your duties and obligations, but most of all, you can count on yourself to make choices that are positive and supportive of your moral character development. Now doesn't that sound like something you want to instill in your children?

Responsibility is developed through everyday tasks, interactions and experiences. Some tasks can seem tedious and boring—just try to get your child to consistently keep his bedroom clean or take out the garbage without constant reminders. Teaching responsibility in this day and age is very challenging because society promotes entertainment, rather than family values, positive work ethic, honesty and service to others.

Teaching Responsibility

Build the positive character trait of responsibility by establishing and maintaining routine in your child's life. It has been proven that we function best when we establish routine in our lives. This holds true for children as well. Children like to know what is expected of them. They don't operate at

their best if they are not sure what will occur next. For example, one day they may get up at 7:00 am, having 50 minutes to get ready for school, and the next day at 7:45 am with only 5 minutes to get to school on time. Maintain a steady schedule of activities and plan to stick to it as much as possible. Of course, always be prepared to handle the “curve balls” that come your way to derail you from your routine, but then get right back on schedule.

Life is full of surprises. How well do you handle situations that throw you off schedule? Do you become frustrated, impatient, demanding, angry or start yelling; or do you remember the positive character traits of patience and self-control? Read the following scenarios and circle the best answer as you consider where you can make improvements in your own life.

1. It's 7:35 am. You and your three children should be in the car, backing out of the driveway. Your oldest completed his book report that is due today and can't find it. Your middle child is putting the dog on his leash to take for a quick walk, and your youngest needs help putting on her shoes. What could you do?

- a. Start yelling and screaming for everyone to get in the car, quick.
- b. Remain calm and patiently continue to help your youngest put on her shoes, while directing your oldest child to various places he may have left his report, and remind the middle child that this is not the time to walk the dog and to put him in the back yard.
- c. Scream, “You all always make me late!” Grab your youngest roughly tell her that she will never learn how to put her own shoes on and that she always makes you late; then tell your oldest that he probably will get a low grade on his report anyway, so just don't bother finding it, and threaten to get rid of the dog.

2. You had a long day at work. The workload is piled up and overdue. When the family comes home, everyone needs your attention. Supper is late, and everyone has homework they need help with. What could you do?

- a. Tell everyone to fend for themselves, you quit.
- b. Take a few minutes to plan out with the family how everyone can pitch in to get chores done before supper, fix something that is simple and quick for supper, and then afterward assist with homework.
- c. Tune everyone out, sit on the couch, and start watching TV.

3. Today is the day your family planned a special activity. You wake up your youngest, to find out he has a fever. Everyone is disappointed. On top of that, you find out the bathroom toilet is backing up and spilling all over the floor. What could you do?

- a. Call your spouse and start complaining about how rotten your day is going and could he come home and fix the toilet and watch the sick child so the rest of the family can do their special activity.
- b. Remain calm, turn off the water to the toilet, mop up the mess and then sit the family down to explain that because the youngest is sick, there will be a slight change in plans.
- c. Allow the sick child to do the special activity with the rest of the family and let the toilet continue to back up.

If you chose “b” answers for each scenario, you would have practiced self-control to make responsible choices. Remember to make responsible choices when life throws you a “curve ball”. We need to remain calm to make the best choice for all involved.

What Does Work Ethic Mean?

Don't let the word **work** scare you. It is an essential part of everyday life. You may not have thought about it, but children must be taught how to work. As always in the role of a parent, your example will be the most powerful teaching tool in this area. Of course, your child usually doesn't witness what you do when you are away from home at your “other” job. Think about what you do when you come home from work. Do you come home and sit yourself in front of the TV, eat your supper there and eventually fall asleep, or do you continue to model a work ethic, teaching your child different life skills?

Remember, children learn best by doing, not watching others do for them. Start when the child is young. Have the child pick up the blocks or books and put them back on the shelf. Help him carry the dishes to the sink and wipe the table. The simplest tasks can become building blocks for laying the foundation to becoming a willing worker. Don't fall into a common trap for parents—doing it all for them. This can damage character development and take years to overcome when they become adults.

Avoid training a child to only work for “pay”. This sets in the mind a desire to only do something when there is something received in return. Teach a child to want to pitch in and help, just because the help is needed. This takes the focus off of “self”, “me”, “what will I get for this”, and instead develop a desire to help others.

Keep in mind that the younger you begin teaching your child to be responsible in doing work, the less trouble you will have with the older teen who claims he is bored and hates doing anything to help around the house.

You can teach a child to enjoy work!
~The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Consider this typical scene: dad is in the kitchen fixing supper after a long day of work; the laundry is piled on the chair needing to be folded and put away. There is a stack of dirty dishes in the sink, and the lawn needs mowing. Yet, the children are sitting around watching a movie, calling to dad: “when’s supper? I’m hungry!”

Work is plenteous and should be our first priority to fill our time, and then allow for other activities later. Teach children to share the load, and not expect parents to do it all for them. A mother or father with children old enough to help should never be the only ones doing chores in the home. Children can be helpful, even at a young age. Be patient with your children while they make efforts to assist with chores. There isn’t anything a child can’t reasonable learn to do, according to their age. In other words, never underestimate the potential of a child. Neither should you give a child more than he is capable of doing. Your positive attitude can help your children to develop a strong work ethic, and can turn the time into a pleasant experience.

In summary, there is never any shortage of work to be done in the home. Just think of the never-ending chores of laundry, house cleaning, or dishwashing. When your child becomes an adult and leaves the home, these skills will already need to be learned. This is your responsibility as a parent and teacher to train them in how to do these skills before they move out of the home. Don’t let them leave thinking someone else will be there to do it for them. Do you plan to still do their laundry and clean their room when they have their own place?

List below life skills you could teach your child. For example: ironing, mending, cooking, etc. _____

Assigning Chores

Assigning chores should be a common practice within the family unit. Everyone should have appropriately assigned jobs they must do to contribute to the maintenance of the home. Remember though, that just because it's not anyone's particular job to do something, like pick up the scrap of paper from the floor, everyone has a responsibility to pick it up when they see it. When it comes to giving your child chores to do, use these basic guidelines to help bring success:

1. Make sure chores are age appropriate. For example, a young toddler would do better with just a simple chore and a big dose of patience and praise, whereas an older child could have a list of chores to do.
2. Explain in detail what you want your child to do.
3. Do the chore with your child; explain each step and why it is necessary.
4. Once your child can do the chore on his own, leave him alone and allow him to do it by himself.
5. After he is done with the chore, have him show you what he did. Lovingly offer any tips for improvement and offer praise for a job well done.

Use a chart, such as the example below, to record your child's progress with his or her responsibilities. Of course, chores will vary according to age and ability.

Name:	S	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
make bed	✓						
put dirty clothes in hamper	✓						
put clean clothes away							
set table	✓						
remove dishes from table	✓						
pick up belongings							
sweep/vacuum floor		✓					
clean/tidy bedroom							

Show appreciation to your child by thanking him for his help when he does his chores responsibly. Praise is a great motivator. There is no need to "buy" your child by rewarding him with gifts. It is everyone's responsibility to assist in keeping the home clean and orderly.

A Few More Thoughts On Responsibility

As a parent, you have a responsibility to spend quality time with your children. Keep in mind that positive, moral character is not developed overnight. So, as you strive to eliminate negative character traits from your own life, remember to be patient and determined to improve yourself for the benefit of your children. It really is about the children. They are the future and are worth every minute we invest in them. Along with teaching them through your example and positive role-modeling, remember to develop a rapport or friendship with your children. For example, when your child brings home worksheets from school, take the time to review them with him. Praise him for his efforts. You can even showcase them for a period of time on the refrigerator or in a special area on the wall of his room. Showing appreciation for his efforts builds a rapport with him that will encourage and motivate him to continue to excel by putting forth his best efforts in everything he does. Of course, you will not be able to keep every worksheet or drawing he brings home. The day will come when you will have to throw some away. At this time you have two choices:

- a. Discreetly throw away the excess work without your child's knowledge.
- b. Explain that you cannot keep all of the work and allow your child to choose a specified amount that he wants to keep. If he is unable to part with any of it, then go back to Step A.

Building a friendship with our children should never devalue our roles as effective parents. Rather, it should accentuate it. We want our children to be comfortable talking to us, to trust us, and to turn to us when they have doubts or questions. Here are a few ways you can build a friendship with your children.

- ☑ Take note of what their interests are and encourage those that are positive. Of course, guide them to get rid of those that are not beneficial.
- ☑ Do special activities with them that they would enjoy—bake a cake, plant a garden, draw, sing, learn an instrument.
- ☑ Listen to them. Use active listening, not only when you are correcting but also to build a positive relationship.
- ☑ Correcting is important, but it is just as important to point out the great things about your children. Be generous with kind words.
- ☑ Laugh often.
- ☑ Greet your children when you first see them and ask how their day went. Show them you care.

☑ Hug your children. They need to be hugged by their parents. To not hug your child affects them developmentally.

As our children grow and mature, they will become productive, self-sufficient people. They will need us less and less as parents, but they will always need us as friends and role models.

Make the best effort to spend quality time with your children and teach them all you can. Give them time, guidance, and love, because this is the only way you can hope to raise a successful, hard-working, cheerful child with a firm foundation of positive, moral character.

When it comes to parenting, failure should never be an option. Never give up! Don't allow your life to be full of regrets as a parent. Take the time to build a relationship with your children. Love them unconditionally. Create pleasant memories and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing you have done everything in your power to raise your children successfully.

Live life successfully... develop a positive character and teach it to your children!

~The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Lesson Plan Ten

Rewards And Consequences Really Do Work

Purpose/Objective

Students will learn how to instill positive change in their children by using simple reward systems.

Materials

R*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*

RActivity cutouts

RPencils/pens

Procedure

1. Briefly review **Lesson Nine, Teaching Children Responsibility** by asking the following questions:
 - a. What is being responsible? (*Able to fulfill duties and obligations; able to make choices that are positive and supportive of moral character development.*)
 - b. What are some steps to developing responsibility? (*Develop a positive work ethic, assign chores, be accountable for what you have been asked to do, etc.*)
 - c. Why is it important to praise a child for being responsible? (*It motivates the child to continue developing the positive character trait of responsibility, it shows respect, it shows you care, etc.*)
2. Tell students that they will learn about using rewards to positively influence a child's behavior. Ask volunteers to share any rewards they have used with their children and their effects. Discuss the main points in the first three paragraphs on **page 79**, and the benefits of developing a reward system. Have students brainstorm real life situations where it would benefit to implement a reward system. (*Answers will vary.*)
3. Select key points from the next three paragraphs on **pages 79-80**. Stress that a reward system can help both parent and child focus on the positive. This method has the potential to bring about a more caring and peaceful relationship between parents and child.

4. Go over with class the “Pointers For Formulating A Rewards Chart” on **page 81**. Discuss the rewards chart.
5. Have volunteers read the last two paragraphs under the heading “Be Consistent” on **page 82**. Reiterate the importance of consistency when training children.
6. **Activity:** Tell students that they will get an opportunity to practice creating a rewards chart. Divide students into five groups and give each group a cutout. Explain the following hypothetical situation: Despite implementing positive disciplinary measures to deal with the behavior you’ve been assigned, the child persists in demonstrating the problematic behaviors. Devise a reward chart that fits the positive behavior you desire to see. Determine reasonable rewards and consequences for the child’s age. Have students share with the class.
7. Conclude by encouraging parents to begin implementing a rewards chart that will help change their children’s undesirable behaviors to acceptable behaviors, and put them on the path to developing positive, moral character.

Lesson Ten

Rewards And Consequences

Really Do Work

Activity Cutouts

(Please copy before cutting)

Your 4-year-old cries, hits and kicks when he/she does not want to do as asked. Other disciplinary measures have not worked.

You have an 8-year-old and a 6-year-old who treat each other disrespectfully. The older sibling is abusive towards the younger and will push or hit him/her. They can't seem to spend more than five minutes together without complaining, yelling and screaming at each other. Other disciplinary measures have not worked.

The teacher of your 10-year-old has informed you that your child is very disrespectful and disruptive at school. This is interfering with him/her getting schoolwork done. Other disciplinary measures have not worked.

Your family moved to a new area and your 13-year-old is having a hard time adjusting to the new school. You struggle trying to get him/her out of bed in the morning and to school on time. On top of that, you keep getting reports from the teachers of a lack of interest in subjects. Other disciplinary measures have not worked.

Your 6-year-old lies whenever he/she does something wrong and stubbornly refuses to tell the truth or admit that he/she is wrong in anyway. Lately, he/she has started blaming a sibling for things. Other disciplinary measures have not worked.

Lesson Ten

Rewards And Consequences Really Do Work

There are times when children may be resistant to following the rules or changing their behavior. In cases like this, you may want to consider a simple reward system to focus on specific, problematic behaviors. For example, your son has a problem sitting quietly during events. His behavior is disruptive to others around you. Although you have tried to patiently explain and remind him of the rules and expected conduct, his negative behavior persists. At this point you have three choices; you can become frustrated and ignore his behavior, never take him out of the house, or start a rewards system that focuses on motivating him to sit quietly during events.

In several of my seminars, I spoke about the effectiveness of rewards in changing behavior. I spoke of dangling a carrot in front of a donkey to motivate it to plow a field. The same premise holds true for motivating children to change their behavior. When you reward a desired behavior, it reinforces and strengthens the child's desire to perform that behavior over and over again. In time, performing that desired behavior will become second nature and the child will then demonstrate it without special focus.

Rewards for positive behavior can take many different forms. A compliment, praise, a sticker, or a small treat is an appropriate reward that can be used as part of a reward system. Many children need nothing more than verbal acknowledgment of their positive behavior or to see a bright sticker each time they behave appropriately. These verbal or visual reminders of their effort to control themselves is reward enough. Bear in mind that the ultimate goal of a reward system should never be to lavish your youngster with gifts, but rather to focus on changing behaviors that cause problems for others and himself. Rewards should not be payments for jobs done, but rather they are tokens of appreciation of a cooperative, respectful child.

For the older child, it is effective to take the time to discuss the problem respectfully but frankly and then come to an agreement about a plan of action to help him or her achieve the desired behavioral change. This may even be in the form of a contract or agreement written up and signed by both parent(s) and child.

*“The rewards of
positive moral
character can last a
lifetime.”*

*-The Peaceful Solution
Character Education Program*

For example, your teenager chronically gets out of bed late in the morning, making everyone in the family late for their schedules. The parent(s) can sit down and discuss the effects of making everyone late with the child, and brainstorm together a solution to the problem bringing in realistic rewards and consequences. This is where consistent accountability on the part of the parent(s) comes in. Every day the teen gets up at the right time and everyone is on schedule, you could offer a specified amount of money that will help him earn something desired. For every day he makes everyone late, the consequence of paying the parent(s) a specified amount of money is agreed to. The key is in making the rewards and consequences practical and realistic. Success comes with following through with the agreement or contract until the desired behavior is achieved.

One aspect of the reward system is that it helps parents focus on their children's positive behavior more than the negative. When a child is misbehaving three and four times a day, or for an extended period of time, parents tend to slip into "correction only" mode. In other words, the only real interaction and attention they give the child is when the child is misbehaving. This can create a vicious cycle. The more attention that is given to a child when he is acting out, the more likely he will be to think this form of attention is normal and it will be the only type of attention he will seek after. By focusing on positive behaviors, you emphasize self-control and following the rules at the same time discouraging disobedience. In time, the child will practice the positive behaviors that will result in positive attention without any intervention from you.

Before you put the reward system into action, take the time to sit down and explain to your child why you are starting a system and what you expect of him. Always remember that children are capable of understanding so much more than we give them credit for. Tell your child how much you love him, that you know he can choose to be obedient when he is corrected and that from now on, whenever he is corrected for (name the specific behaviors you want him to change) without crying or acting out, he will get to put a sticker on his chart, or receive a privilege. Tell him that this system will help him to conduct himself appropriately. Motivate older children to take ownership in how to improve the behavior. This will help them put more effort into fixing the problem.

Along with giving rewards for positive behavior there must also be consequences for inappropriate behavior. Inappropriate behavior must not be tolerated. Of course, the consequences must be age appropriate and suit the behavior. Be sure the child is made aware of the consequences beforehand; therefore, there are no surprises.

Pointers For Formulating A Rewards Chart

- ☑ Be clear about what behaviors you expect and want reinforced. Talk to your child about the positive behaviors that you expect to see, which would indicate that he is following the rules.
- ☑ Choose no more than four specific behaviors to focus on at a time. The younger the child is, the less number of behaviors to work on at a time.
- ☑ Choose a reward. This can be putting a sticker or some other visible reminder on the chart to represent the positive behavior. Periodically, a specified amount of stickers can be traded in for a small privilege or activity that is desirable to your child. For example, after you get ten stickers in a row, you can get a healthy snack or treat.
- ☑ Give the reward only after your child demonstrates the desired behavior.
- ☑ Keep the reward system active as long as the problem(s) exists. When the child becomes an “expert” at demonstrating a desired behavior, you can remove that rule from the reward system, or replace it with a new rule that focuses on a different problematic behavior.
- ☑ Consequences are as important as rewards, but they must be age appropriate, suit the behavior and the child must fully understand them. Do not be excessive when giving out consequences. For example, the child failed to pick up his clothes from the floor. The consequence of “no dessert for a month” would be considered excessive for one infraction. A more reasonable consequence would be not getting the agreed upon reward (sticker). Several infractions could result in a loss of a privilege. Always give the child something to work towards.

The following chart can be used as an example to set up your behavioral chart. Each time your child follows the rules listed, allow him or her to put a sticker in the box. When the entire chart is filled in, an additional reward could be given for having completed the chart. Also, don't forget to give lots of verbal encouragement and praise along the way.

Rewards Chart for: Child's Name

Does assigned chores					
Asks permission before touching others' belongings					
Stays close to mom/dad when in public.					

Reward for completing a row: One sticker

Reward for completing the chart: Ice cream cone

Be Consistent

One of the most important aspects of teaching children self-control with this simple method of implementing rules is to be consistent. Consistency is often one of the hardest traits to maintain. For many people, they start off a new venture with zeal and excitement, but after a while their interest slowly decreases and eventually they lose interest. When it comes to training our children, we cannot afford to lose interest. We must be consistent when implementing rules and holding children accountable for their behavior. In this way we will maintain credibility in the eyes of our children. For example, everytime your child stands up on a chair, remind him to sit down because it is not safe. Do not neglect to remind him of what the correct behavior is. Rewards or consequences can be added to help him make the right choice.

A lack of consistency on your part says to your child that you are not serious about helping him change his behavior and are willing to tolerate his poor conduct. Never use the excuses of being too tired, pretending you didn't notice, embarrassed to correct your child around others, or just too lazy. Here's a news flash: *Children are not clueless. They are perfectly capable of figuring out that if you allow them to break the rules you are not serious, so why should they be?* Make sure any negative behavior is pointed out and dealt with appropriately every time. Consistency and perseverance are very important in practicing moral standards. *We should not grow tired of doing what is right, for in due time we will have great rewards, if we do not give up.*



Lesson Plan Eleven

A Special Note About Young Adults

Purpose/Objective

Students will learn how to encourage their young adults/teenagers towards positive character development.

Materials

R*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program Parenting Manual*

RActivity cutouts

RPencils/pens

Procedure

1. Briefly review **Lesson Ten, Rewards And Consequences Really Do Work** by asking the following questions:

- a. What are some benefits of a rewards system? (*It's a measure of motivation, it helps parent and child to recognize growth in positive character, helps parent to focus more on child's positive behavior, etc.*)
- b. Name a few pointers for formulating a rewards chart. (*Be clear about behaviors you expect, focus on about four behaviors at a time, give reward for demonstration of desired behavior, have consequences that are age appropriate and fit the behavior, etc.*)
- c. In implementing rules, what is the hardest yet most important trait to maintain? (*Consistency*)

2. Ask the class how many of them have teenage children. (*Note: Even though some may have only young children in their families, encourage them to focus on the lesson, because soon their young children will be approaching adolescence.*) What are some of the challenges they are faced with during the children's adolescent and teenage years? (*Answers will vary.*) Tell students that in today's class they will learn that they can help their young adults to develop a positive moral character, even if they have made poor choices in the past.

3. Emphasize that one of the first steps in helping our young adults is to take responsibility for the mistakes we have made in parenting them, then desire and make steps on changing or fixing those mistakes. Choose students

to read **page 83**. Reinforce that heredity, environment and influences help shape the character and personality of our children. Allot time for students to complete the activity on **pages 83-84**. Choose volunteers to share their answers with the class.

4. Explain to students that it is important to remember our young adult's positive character traits, even when he/she is being oppositional and/or disrespectful. Choose students to read "Tips For Young Adults" 1-4 found on **page 84**. Reemphasize the need to become role models of positive moral character, and to practice active listening skills to encourage your children to speak out, rather than act out.

5. Talk about the importance of friends and role models to our young adults. What are some concerns parents may have about their children's friends? (*Answers will vary.*) Ask: What are some of the role models children have in our society today, and are they positive or negative? Paraphrase tips 5-6 on **pages 84-85** and talk about some of the interventions we can use to help children make better choices.

6. Discuss tips 7-9 on **page 85**. Stress that young adults can also benefit from having specific rules posted on the wall. It takes some of the pressure from having to give constant reminders, and helps the young adult become more responsible. Emphasize the importance of praising children for putting forth effort.

7. **Activity #1:** Have students form groups. Give each group an activity cutout. Instruct them to brainstorm some creative ways to deal with the situation and help young adults make a better choice.

8. Choose volunteers to read tips 10-11 on **pages 85-86**. Elaborate on the importance of work ethic, and instilling this value into our children. Ask: what are some skills a young adult should learn in preparation for adulthood. (*Answers will vary.*) Emphasize that it is our job to prepare them to become successful adults.

9. Discuss tip 12 on **page 86**. Explain that many programs advocate trusting young adults to make right choices. Tell students that the only thing they should trust in is their determination, as caring parents, to teach and guard their children to the best of their ability. Ask volunteers to talk about some of the negative influences/risks young adults fall into. (*Answers will vary.*)

Stress that we can use their challenging behaviors as opportunities to teach them to make better choices.

10. **Activity #2:** Choose 2 volunteers per scenario to demonstrate. Instruct them to discuss the issue with the “adolescent”. Encourage them to use active listening and to find creative ways to deal with the situation.

- a. A parent finds stolen items in his possession. How would the parent handle it?
- b. An adolescent is being disrespectful and hurtful to a sibling. How would the parent handle it?
- c. A parent finds an objectionable text message on her phone. How would the parent handle it?

11. Discuss “The Bottom Line” on **page 86**. Encourage students to diligently apply these tips when interacting and communicating with their young adults to see dynamic changes in their behavior. Remind students to set goals with their adolescents, and to never give up in assisting them in meeting their goals.

12. Conclude the lesson by encouraging students to develop a positive moral character one choice at a time, and to patiently and lovingly teach their children, regardless of their age, to do the same.

Lesson Plan Eleven
A Special Note About Young Adults

Activity Cutouts

(Please copy before cutting.)

Disrespects authority (parents, guidance, teachers, etc.)

Disregards curfew

Disrespectful when corrected (back-talking, slamming door to room)

Dresses inappropriately

Lazy (sleeps until noon, refuses to do chores and homework)

Lesson Eleven

A Special Note About Young Adults

Even if your adolescent is exhibiting challenging, oppositional or disrespectful behavior, it is not too late to instill moral values and to help him see the importance of developing a positive character. You can teach even your older children the value of respect, responsibility, self-control, and humility. It is a sobering thought, but when our children fail to develop or consistently practice positive character we are often to blame. In other words, children do and say what they are taught.

Remember, it is the combination of genetics, environment, and culture that shapes us into who we are. Are specific character and personality traits dominant in your family? What about influences? Was your child allowed to watch violent, sexually suggestive shows on TV? Do you live in an environment that is dysfunctional or a community where safety is a concern?



All of these factors can have an overwhelming impact on children that can manifest itself in defiant, lackadaisical, or immoral behaviors.

Also keep in mind that we are all a combination of both positive and negative traits. Therefore, as challenging as the adolescent years may be, your child still has many great qualities that you can accentuate while helping him to eliminate the negative.

Evaluate The Situation

Have your example and choices contributed to the concerns you now have with your adolescent? In what way? _____

List some of your adolescent's positive character traits: _____

How would like to see the behavior of your adolescent change? List them below.

Positive character should never have a generation gap.

~The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Tips For Young Adults

It is very important that we keep in mind that our adolescents are worthwhile people, with positive character, and great value and potential, even when faced with their oppositional and disrespectful behavior. Here are some tips to help your adolescent develop positive moral character:

1. Demonstrate positive moral character at all times. Impress upon your adolescent that you are making positive changes in your life to become a better person and a better parent.
2. As much as you are able to, change your environment to reflect your new values and life styles. Do you have a collection of violent or inappropriate movies? Get rid of them. Replace them with family oriented activities such as learning hobbies together, cleaning the garage, or learning an instrument. Or just take the time to find out what is new in your child's life.
3. Talk to your child about your high expectations for him. Don't assume that he understands what you want for him. Talk to him about what he sees for his future, his goals, and his plans. Then help him see what it will take to get there.
4. Listen more than you talk. Allow your child to speak to you, with respect, and use your active listening skills to encourage him to talk. Look for the intent of the words. Only when you are aware of his feelings, needs and concerns, or what gives him joy, sadness or pain, can you guide him in a positive direction.
5. Be aware of who he emulates and who his friends are. Know who he is with and what he is doing. If his choice in role models is objectionable, talk to him and actively listen to his reasoning as to why he chose this person as a role model. Point out your concerns, and that you desire to see him make

a better choice. Do not yell, threaten or accuse. Doing so will only alienate him and could very well drive him further away from you.

Questionable friends? The same rules apply. Use your self-control to discuss your concerns and listen with an understanding heart to his perspective. Find activities that could allow him to make new friends. Most of all, teach him what true friendship is. Use real life examples of people who were negatively influenced by friends and the consequences to their lives.

6. Do you know someone who could be a positive role model to your child? You can speak up! Find out if he can speak with your child or mentor him. Take him to see a motivational speaker who has positive moral character and has overcome diversity to have a successful life.

7. Have rules for your teens, too. Do not think that your teen is too old to have rules posted on the wall. Visual reminders help. It stops you from having to remind and helps him develop responsibility. If he rebels against the rules, remember that along with rules come consequences and rewards. Rewards and consequences can motivate a stubborn adolescent to comply with the rules. See the chapter on Rewards for more guidelines. Be serious about helping your young adult follow the rules. Develop an attitude of zero-tolerance if the rules are broken. Voice your concerns and allow your child to voice his, but always in a respectful setting. Give consequences as applicable.

8. Be creative when giving out consequences. This is especially true for older children. For example, behavioral contracts can be very effective in changing specific behaviors. Let your young adult know what you expect from him, and what you can do to help him reach his goal, put your agreement in writing and then both of you sign it. Encourage him to do his part while you do yours to bring about the desired result.

9. Regardless of how old you are, a little praise can go a long way. Praise your adolescent's effort to make changes. Never overlook or ignore his attempts to improve his behavior. Encourage rather than criticize; motivate rather than devalue; uplift rather than disregard. Choose your words wisely so that he would value developing a positive moral character. You might find yourself learning some things from him about your own positive character development. Value his input and respect his ideas.

10. If you haven't already started instilling within him a positive work ethic talk to him about the importance of working together as a family or as

a team to accomplish a goal. Point out how much of a help he is and how much you need his help. Do projects together, working side by side. This will give you opportunities to talk to, and listen to him. Remember, listen more than you talk.

11. Use the “Spoon Technique” (see [page 49](#)) to help diffuse conflict, rather than escalate the situation. This will role model self-control and help him learn to practice it and other positive character traits as well. The spoon technique will also help stop back talking and could help him develop better communication skills.

12. It’s okay to check up on your teen. In fact, in today’s world with so many negative influences, it is wise to check up on your teen. No parent should ever feel guilty or the need to apologize for checking her teen’s room and belongings. Let’s face it, children sometimes do things you would never expect of them. By the time a parent finds out what is going on in the “secret life” of her son or daughter, it may already be a tragedy. So be on the lookout. Early detection can curtail a serious situation. Sadly, we cannot depend on our teens to tell us what is going on. You can also check with his teachers, guidance counselors, and others close to him to be sure that he is on track. If you discover that your teen is involved in questionable activities or not working up to his potential, talk to him and put a plan of action in place immediately. Do not assume that the problem will take care of itself. It won’t. You must take care of it by helping your teen see the value in making positive, healthy choices.

The Bottom Line

Putting these tips in place through communication and interaction will help your teen develop positive moral character. Many of these techniques will work within a short time and you will start seeing an improvement in your child’s behavior and the quality of your relationship with him. However, some of the techniques will be more challenging. But do not give up or think that they are ineffective. Keep applying and repeating them diligently. Teach! Teach! Teach! For example, a one-time conversation on role models and friends or work ethic will not be as valuable as several ongoing conversations. Remember to make yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually available to your children. Then, feel the joy and sense of accomplishment as you see your children grow into morally responsible, productive, caring adults.

Imagine your children having integrity and respect for all and then do everything in your ability to help them become just who you imagine them to be!

~The Peaceful Solution
Character Education
Program

Lesson Twelve

Featuring Positive Moral Songs And Verses

Below are a selection of positive character building songs and poems for you and your family to enjoy. One of the best learning techniques is to use repetition. This sets it in the mind thoroughly. Therefore, we encourage you to say and sing them frequently.



The Peaceful Solution

The Peaceful Solution
works for you and me.
The Peaceful Solution
makes friends of you and me.

~~

Stop, Look, Listen, Do

Use hand gestures, point to eyes, ears

Stop
Look
Listen
Do

(Repeat 2 more times)

This is right for me and you.

~~

Honesty

Means to tell the truth
Honesty is the right way.
I won't tell a lie or unkindly reply.
Honesty is the best way.

~~

Lady Bug

Look, look closely what do you see?
A ladybug crawling on me.
Touch, touch lightly, don't bring her harm
Just brush her gently from my arm.

~~





Obey Mother, Obey Father

Obey mother, obey father.
Listen to what they say.
Obey mother, obey father, too.
This is the right thing to do.
Obey mother, obey father.
This makes a peaceful day.

~~

What Else Can I Do?

Obey mother by saying, "Yes, Ma'am,
What else can I do for you?"
Obey father by saying, "Yes, Sir,"
Then you won't cause a stir.

~~



The Polite Way

Whatever we want to do today,
We need to ask the polite way.
May I, please; thank you, too,
This shows respect to me and you.

~~

Mother, May I?

Mother, may I?
Yes, you may.
Thanks for asking,
It's the right way.

~~

Respect For You

Respect for you
and respect for me.
I'll be kind to you,
and you'll be kind to me.

~~



Let's See How Kind

I'll treat you how I want you to treat me.
Let's see how kind we can be.
I won't yell or tug at you.
When you do the same, you are being kind, too.

~~



Peace

P-E-A-C-E, P-E-A-C-E,
Peace will bring us great joy,
Peace for every girl and boy.
P-E-A-C-E, P-E-A-C-E,
Peace is what the world needs now,
The Peaceful Solution shows us how.

~~



Noah's Teddy Bear

Noah had a teddy bear.
He was fuzzy and brown.
Noah took him everywhere,
Then one day set him down.
Where is Teddy? Noah looked around.
"Here he is," said JoJo,
"He was in the lost and found."

~~

STOP, THINK

STOP, THINK
Count 1-2-3.
STOP, THINK
How should I be?
STOP, THINK
Count 4-5-6.
STOP, THINK
Make the right pick
STOP, THINK
Count 7-8-9
STOP, THINK
Now I'll be fine.
STOP, THINK
Count to 10
STOP, THINK
Let's do it again.



~~

Asking First

Asking first before you touch is right to do.
Asking keeps peace between me and you.
Asking first before you touch is clear to see.
Asking will keep peace between you and me.

~~



Pretty Flowers

Pretty flowers by the tree,
Is it okay to touch them?
“No,” Mother says, “leave them be.”
“Yes mother” I say, as I walk away.

~~

Building A Peaceful Life

Building, building, building a peaceful life.
Building, building, building a peaceful life.

With kindness, compassion, self-control too,
We’re building a peaceful life for me and you.

With respect for all, forgiveness and kindness, too.
We’re building a peaceful life for me and you.

~~

Helping Beetle

Walking down the road, holding Daddy’s hand
I saw a little beetle in the sand.
Look Daddy! I said with surprise
He can’t turn over no matter how he tries.
We watched him for a little while
Then Daddy said with a smile
We’ll help him get back on his feet
So he handed me a stick he found on the street.
Then with a flick and the toss of my hand
Back on his tummy the beetle did land
Daddy was pleased and so was I
We helped the beetle, and he went bye-bye.

~~

No Is Okay

The sweetest sound I’ve ever heard
Came from my mother in just one word.
She told me in a very kind way
That I could not always have my way.
I looked at her with great concern
But the lesson I did learn.
You may not, no, or not today
Show true care in many ways.
So, when my mother tells me no
I see the love that she does show.

~~





Peace For You And Me

You and I are not the same,
We have a different voice, face and name.
My outside look is my own,
But if you look close, more is shown.
Through my eyes I do see
A peaceful life for you and me.
My heart beats in and out
Tolerance is what life is all about.
A world with joy and war no more,
The Peaceful Solution is the cure.



~~

Little Bird

Little bird has hurt its wing
I'll mend it for him so he can sing.
I see an ant under the door
I'll let him pass on the floor.
I will not step on the ladybug
I'll let her hop on the rug.
I will care for all things, great and small.
I will respect the smallest flower and trees growing tall!



~~

***Showing Respect At All Times**

Chorus

Respect for you, respect for me,
Is the best choice I see.
How to show respect to all,
Whether great or whether small.

Every day and every night,
Do be honest with all your might.
Obey all rules set in place,
To keep yourself and others safe.

Be polite with friend or foe,
With true character, as you know.
Asking others before you take,
Would stop a conflict you could make.



(*Found on *Time For Peace* music tape/CD)

For The Pleasure Of Children

A young brother and a young sister are sitting together. The sister says to the brother, "Everytime I say dog, then you say cat."

Sister, "dog".

Brother, "cat".

Sister, "dog".

Brother, "cat".

Sister, "dog".

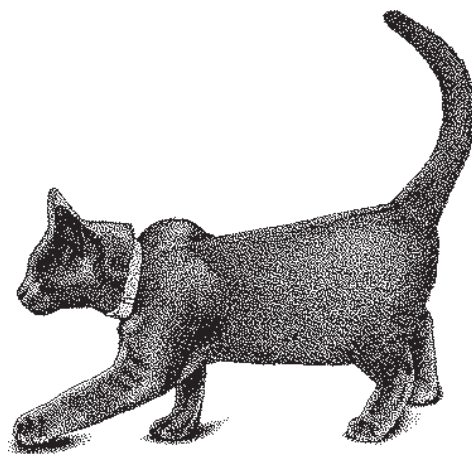
Brother, No answer.

Sister, "Dog", louder.

Brother, No answer.

Sister, "DOG", much louder.

Brother, "MEOW"!!!



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This program places emphasis on teaching adults how to maintain positive character traits such as respect, responsibility and self-control in their lives so they can easily model these behaviors for their children. Parents are taught to create a suitable learning environment for their children as well as how to monitor the influences that threaten the development of positive character. The wealth of knowledge presented in this manual will benefit those deciding to become parents, the expectant parents, as well as those who already have children. It consists of what every person needs to know about moral character development from the moment the child is conceived through the challenging teen years and into adulthood.