

Discipline



Dear Dad and Mom,

6 Months to 2 Years

Parents wonder when they should start teaching us babies “No”. When teaching me “No” it is helpful to look at things from my point of view. I like to chew on things, bang things, take things apart, touch things and put things in my mouth. I learn this way. If something is in my reach, you can bet I will shake it, spill it, eat it or break it. I’m curious.

Here’s what you can do to help me learn while not letting me destroy your things or hurting myself.

1 . Set up our house so I can be free to touch and crawl or walk around without getting in trouble.

- ◆ Put gates at the top and bottom of stairs.
- ◆ Keep medicines, cleaning supplies or other things that might make me sick, out of my reach and in locked cupboards.
- ◆ Put plug covers on all unused outlets. I like to see if I can fit objects in small openings.
- ◆ Close doors to rooms you don’t want me to wander into. I can drown in toilets or buckets of liquids.
- ◆ Take valuable or breakable things off tables and shelves that I can reach. I can’t yet understand “valuable”. I need you to help me stay safe while I learn about the world.

2 . The fewer times you have to say “No” during the day the happier you and I will be.

- ◆ Save “No” for things that are really important, like protecting me from falls or burns. I’m learning to trust and I trust you the most to protect me.
- ◆ Keep our home safe and as child-proofed as you can.
- ◆ Give me lots of smiles, hugs and positive words especially when I am behaving. I want and need your approval. (Don’t give hugs and smiles only as rewards. I need lots just because I’m your kid).
- ◆ Be consistent. I can’t figure out what I should do if you approve of something I do one time and disapprove another.
- ◆ When I am doing something you don’t want me to, distract me. Substitute a safe activity.

3 . A regular schedule for meals, bedtimes, naps and other every day activities makes me feel safe and I behave better.

You are the most important people in my life. I learn just about every thing I know from watching and listening to you. With you as my teacher I can learn to be the best person I can be.



Department of Health & Human Services

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Love,
Your Kid