

The Brief Book of Parenting

Excerpts

A Helpful Guide for Real Parents
with Real Children



Written and Illustrated by

Kelly Karius R.S.W., Mediator

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NOTE TO THE READER

The information contained within is for reference and education only and is not intended to be a substitute for professional assistance where necessary.

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Dedicated to my children, and all children.



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INTRODUCTION

Parenting can be a tough road, with bits of joy in between. This brief book is packed with information to assist in making those bits of joy in between bigger, so that things don't seem so tough.

In my work I often hear people talking about how their expectations of the “joys of parenting” were not met. They talk about how hard it is to be consistent, how difficult it is to know if they are doing the right things. They talk about how it seems like other people have perfect families, while they just struggle along. They are having a hard time finding the joy.

There is no such thing as a perfect family. Good parenting does not mean perfect parenting. We will all make mistakes. If we are working with our child to grow a positive relationship, the mistakes that we make can be forgiven.

Good parenting means being the best parent that you can. As consistent as possible and as loving as possible. It means being aware of the cycles that your family may be in, and taking steps to break these cycles. It is a journey of faith and a mission of future. You have my best wishes in your journey. I hope you enjoy this information and find it helpful.

Kelly Karius

Parenting...

The hardest job there ever will be.

A career that changes with every child.

One that comes without a manual.

No policies in place.

No procedures in place.

Some guidelines.

Hard work.

Some guilt.

Great rewards.

Continuously moving forward as you grow into an adult to adult relationship with your child.



Discipline is...

- A way for your child to learn that behaviors have consequences.
- A way to help your child find direction for his life.

Discipline involves...

- Increasing a child's positive behavior.
- Preventing a child's negative behavior.
- Stopping a child's negative behavior.

AS YOU DISCIPLINE, INTEND FOR IT TO HELP YOUR CHILD, TEACH REASONABLE LESSONS AND HELP YOUR CHILD TO GROW.

It is important that discipline be given at the developmental level of a child.

Increasing Positive Behavior

Increasing a child's positive behavior involves long term growth plans for your child. It is important to be consistent in providing ways for your child to increase positive behavior. Some long term growth plans are described below.

Recognizing, Acknowledging and Praising

It is very important to recognize when your child has been behaving well. Look for the things that your child is doing well, point them out to your child and give praise. Doing this will increase your child's good behavior. Children need attention, and when they can't get good attention, they'll make their behavior worse. Even negative attention is better than no attention at all. Be sure to recognize, acknowledge and praise your child's good behavior, no matter how small. Notice when they pick up a toy, or when they come home on time. This will also change your perception of your child. The more positives you notice, the more you will realize what a great child you have.

Planned Learning Opportunities

Planning your child's learning will increase positive behavior. A planned learning time – "let's teach you how to tidy up," or "let's talk about table manners", allows you a calm time to teach positive behavior.

Encouragement

We all need encouragement. Children need to hear their parents say that they are able to meet their goals and able to behave well. They need to know that they don't have to be perfect and be encouraged to keep on trying. As parents, it is important that we provide ongoing encouragement without expecting that our children be perfect.

Positive Reinforcement

Reward your children for positive behavior. Rewards don't need to be costly. A reward may be praise, or pay for extra work in the house, or a hug. Think of yourself and your work. When no one notices your good works, when you don't receive pay and it doesn't seem like anyone cares that you are working hard, you are less likely to do your best.

Increased Privileges and Responsibilities

Be aware of your child's current privileges and responsibilities. As your child matures and his behavior improves, be sure that you are appropriately increasing his privileges and responsibilities. A child who has cleaned his room before going to a friend's house might receive permission to stay a little longer. If a child helps his father in the garage and cleans up afterwards, he may receive the privilege of using the garage for his own projects (with necessary supervision).

Preventing Negative Behavior

Clearly Establish Limits and Rules

When your household is calm, take the time to discuss the known limits and rules of your home. Often misbehavior happens simply because a child doesn't understand the limits and rules. Be very clear.

Apply Limits and Rules Consistently

Keep your firm rules firm. When a rule has been established, be sure there are reasonable consequences when they rule is broken. Often we think we are being kind to our children when we “let them off the hook”, however children crave structure and need to know the limits. It is our job to make those limits clear and consistent.

Choose Consequences with Your Child

When you are establishing the limits and rules, ask your child what she thinks are reasonable consequences for breaking the rule. Developing a plan “with” your child, instead of “for” your child makes the rules and consequences clear. Involving your child in the plan gives your child a reason for working with you, instead of against you.

Connect Consequences with Behavior

Natural consequences are consequences that follow because of the behavior. If you don't wear mittens, your hands get cold. If you don't keep your room

neat, you have trouble finding things. Logical consequences are not directly related to the behavior, but they make sense. For example; you were riding your bike in a way that was not safe. I need to take your bike away for one day and we need to have bike safety lessons. Use natural and logical consequences wherever possible. Consequences that make sense help children understand the lesson.

Teach Your Child What to Expect

Plan discipline ahead of time, and teach your child what to expect. Take your child through the process of a time-out, so that she understands what will happen. Be clear about the rules and clear about the consequences. Be careful about giving warnings, as warnings can teach your child that you don't really mean what you say.

Teach Anger Management and Patience

Help your child know what to do when he is angry. Make a plan that includes deep breathing, exercise and thinking in a balanced way. Help your child learn patience and the ability to wait for her rewards. Help a child save money to buy something they want, rather than letting them spend money on candy.

Children need to see mature responsible role models who are sensitive to their needs. They need to see role models who are willing to set reasonable limits and rules.

Reasonable rules help children feel safe, secure, appreciated and respected.

Stopping Negative Behavior

Tell Your Child What He Is Doing Wrong

Sometimes a child doesn't understand what is wrong with what he is doing. If your child is banging his foot against his chair, and you say "Stop that!" he may or may not know what you mean. Be clear when telling your child what they are doing wrong. "Please stop banging your feet against the chair."

Separate the Behavior from Your Child

The behavior is bad, not your child. Be clear when you talk to your child about bad behavior. Don't tell your child "You're bad!" Tell your child that behavior is bad and you do not want her to repeat it.

Discuss the Behavior and Options

Talk about the specific behavior with your child. Help your child see other options. If your child is jumping on the furniture, provide ideas! Maybe she needs to play outside, or so some jump rope skipping.