

Ten Favorite Parenting Techniques

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1. **5/50**: Parent can only use 5 words to get the child to time out i.e. "Go to the time out chair" and put the child in time out for 50 seconds. The purpose is to avoid engaging in a power struggle with your child.
2. **Relaxation corner**: Instead of time out, call it a relaxation corner and have a pillow, stress ball etc.) It's a more positive disciplinary technique.
3. **When-Then**: Child is rewarded once he follows through on a specific behavior i.e. "When you finish your dinner, then we will go out for ice cream."
4. **Lets over do it**: Choose a behavior you are trying to correct in your child, then repeat the behavior at least 5 times i.e. Problem is child forgets to wash hands before meal, so have your child wash his/her hands 5 times before mealtime.
5. **Broken record**: Parent simply repeats the same phrase, over and over again, in a calm/neutral voice, no matter what the child does or says i.e. "I'm sorry you can't get what you want today."
6. **Connect the dots**: Buy a connect the dots book. Each time child does something good, child gets to connect a dot. Once all the dots are connected, the child gets a treat.
7. **Feeling code**: Parent and child make a code, using a one-to-3 scale, and rating feelings. For example, for angry, a number 1 might be it rained when I was supposed to go to the park, a number 2 might be someone used my toy without my permission, a number 3 might be someone broke my favorite toy on purpose. Parent and child can think of examples, then code them. Then when a child is feeling angry, parent can ask the child what number angry is it. This is a good way to help children express their feelings.
8. **Brag calendar**: Hang a calendar above child's bed. Parent writes on the calendar each day one positive thing/behavior the child did. Parent says aloud to child what was written on the calendar so the child is verbally praised. At the end of the month, the parent can reward the child with a special treat.
9. **Praise person**: Select one person in the family to be the praise person for one week. The praise person must look for things in others to praise. Once everyone in the family has had a turn to be the Praise Person, the family talks about how it felt to have the Praise Person focusing on positive behaviors.
10. **Post-it love-you notes**: stick post-it notes around the house with loving messages to your child i.e. "Johnny, I love you always and forever" or "Johnny, you bring tremendous joy to my life."

About the Author

Liana Lowenstein, MSW, CPT-S, maintains a private practice in Toronto, Canada, provides clinical supervision and consultation to mental health professionals and lectures internationally on childhood trauma and play therapy. She is author or editor of numerous books including, Creative Interventions for

Troubled Children and Youth (1999), Creative Interventions for Bereaved Children (2006), Creative Interventions for Children of Divorce (2006), Assessment and Treatment Activities for Children, Adolescents, and Families (Volumes One and Two), and Creative Family Therapy Techniques (2010). For further information and to read more parenting articles go to: www.lianalowenstein.com

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