

## HOLDING THE LINE HOW-TO

### DO

- 1) REMEMBER KIDS ARE SUPPOSED TO TEST BOUNDARIES TO LEARN
- 2) ALLOW THEM TO FEEL ALL FEELINGS
- 3) BE CLEAR AND CONSISTENT
- 4) HONOR YOUR UNIQUE KID'S PERSONALITY

### DO NOT

- 1) PUNISH, THREATEN, OR SHAME
- 2) REWARD OR BRIBE
- 3) FORCE APOLOGIES
- 4) ASK A ? WHEN "NO" ISN'T AN OPTION
- 5) TAKE BEHAVIOR PERSONALLY

## STRATEGIES

**GIVE CONTROLLED CHOICES:**  
 2 OR 3 OPTIONS YOU ARE OK WITH, SO YOUR CHILD RETAINS SOME SENSE OF CONTROL.

**PHYSICALLY HELP YOUR CHILD FOLLOW THROUGH:**  
 "I WILL HELP YOU GET INTO THE CAR" – CALMLY PICK UP AND PUT IN CAR.

**MAKE CONTACT:**  
 TOUCH SHOULDER OR HOLD HAND AND ENCOURAGE CHILD TO FOLLOW ALONG WITH YOU – "COME." OR "LET'S GO" WORK WELL.

**MODEL/TAKE TURNS:**  
 "LIKE THIS... YOUR TURN, DO IT LIKE THIS." THIS HELPS THEM SEE EXACTLY WHAT YOU EXPECT.

**MAKE THEM FEEL HEARD:**  
 YOU'RE \*REALLY\* WANTED... I WONDER IF YOU WERE AFRAID... MAYBE YOU WERE TRYING TO...

**CHALLENGE TO A RACE:**  
 WITH YOU, OR TO BEAT THE CLOCK

**MAKE UP A GAME:**  
 AIM FOR A TARGET, BE A CHARACTER

**ASSIGN 1 PART:**  
 YOU DO THE RED CARS, I'LL DO THE BLUE.

**BE PLAYFUL:**  
 SMILE, KIND TONE, SOFT BODY LANGUAGE

**PUPPETS:**  
 ACT OUT WITH A TOY/PUPPET WHO FOLLOWS RULES

**HAVE A ROUTINE:**  
 WHEN TRANSITIONS ARE EXPECTED, THEY ARE EASIER TO MANAGE

**USE A TIMER:**  
 THERE IS LESS TO FIGHT IF THE TIMER IS SIGNALING THE END RATHER THAN YOU

**USE TRIGGERS:**  
 A CLEAN-UP SONG, A BEDTIME SCENT, A NAPTIME BOOK

**TRANSITION ITEM:**  
 YOU DON'T WANT TO QUIT CARS, PICK ONE TO GO WITH YOU TO BED.

**ASK WHAT THEY NEED:**  
 HOW MANY MINUTES/ SECONDS DO YOU NEED TO FINISH WHAT YOU'RE WORKING ON?

**REWIND BUTTON:**  
 PRETEND TO REWIND BEHAVIOR AND SAY "LET'S TRY THAT AGAIN." OR CALL A "DO-OVER!"

**SAY WHAT YOU SEE, HEAR, OR NOTICE:**  
 I SEE YOU REALLY WANT THAT DOLL...

**USE "I" LANGUAGE AND OFFER HELP:**  
 "I SEE YOU'RE HAVING A HARD TIME. I'D LIKE TO HELP."

**USE FIRST (IF, WHEN)/THEN:**  
 "FIRST WE WILL..., THEN..."  
 "IF YOU DO THIS, THEN WE..."  
 "WHEN THIS IS DONE, THEN THIS CAN HAPPEN."

**EMPATHIZE WITH BIG FEELINGS AND GIVE THEM WORDS TO DESCRIBE THEM:**  
 "YOU FEEL SO MAD!"

**GET LOW:**  
 SIT ON THE FLOOR – THIS IS NON-THREATENING AND CAN BRING A CHILD OUT OF FIGHT MODE

**HOLD SPACE:**  
 WAIT CALMLY AND QUIETLY NEARBY, IN EYE SIGHT, WHILE THE STORM PASSES

**DEEP BREATHING:**  
 MODEL IT EVEN IF THEY AREN'T DOING IT – MIRROR NEURONS CALM THEM AS YOU CALM YOURSELF

**PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE:**  
 WHAT TO DO – YOU CAN GRIT YOUR TEETH, OR SAY "STOP" INSTEAD OF BITE.

**ASK CHILD FOR IDEA:**  
 "WHERE ARE YOU ALLOWED TO..." OR "WHERE IS A GOOD PLACE TO JUMP/THROW/SPLASH ETC."

**CHANGE SCENERY:**  
 ADD MUSIC, GO OUTSIDE OR GET THEM IN WATER. (WATER TABLE, BATH, SHOWER ETC.)

**TIME – IN:**  
 LEND YOUR OWN CALM BY SITTING WITH A CHILD ON YOUR LAP OR BY YOU UNTIL THEY HAVE CO-REGULATED

**BE SPECIFIC:**  
 NO "BE NICE" – IT IS TOO VAGUE. INSTEAD SAY \*WHAT\* YOU WANT: "GENTLE HANDS" OR "SOFT TOUCHES"

**CONNECT 1ST:**  
 MAKE EYE CONTACT, SMILE, ASK A QUESTION TO BREAK FOCUS, OFFER A HUG – THEN DIRECT/CORRECT

**PROBLEM SOLVE:**  
 ASK YOUR CHILD, "HOW CAN WE MAKE THIS BETTER? WHAT CAN WE DO TO CHANGE THIS?"

## REMEMBER:

ALL BEHAVIOR IS COMMUNICATION.

DISCIPLINE IS HELPING A CHILD SOLVE A PROBLEM, PUNISHMENT IS MAKING A CHILD SUFFER FOR HAVING A PROBLEM. TO RAISE PROBLEM-SOLVERS, FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS, NOT RETRIBUTION.

YOUR CHILD IS NOT GIVING YOU A HARD TIME, THEY ARE HAVING A HARD TIME.

THIS TOO, SHALL PASS.

KIDS ARE DOING THE BEST THEY CAN GIVEN THEIR CURRENT MENTAL, PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.