

Parenting Survival Tips

- Never shake . . . just take a break.
- Never hit . . . just think a bit.
- Stop in your tracks. Step back.
- Give yourself a time out.
- Go in the next room. Sit down.
- Take five deep breaths. Inhale. Exhale. Slowly.
- Count to 10 or 20.
- Phone a friend or family member to vent your frustration.
- You can even call 1-800-CHILDREN (800-244-5373) just to talk.
- Put your feet up.
- What would help you in this moment: a glass of ice water, an apple, a cold washcloth on your forehead, having a friend stop over?
- Think about the age of your child. Are you overreacting to something that is just normal behavior for a child or teen their age?
- Think of an age-appropriate form of discipline for your child. Do they need a time out or to lose their cell phone for 24 hours?
- Congratulate yourself on getting through another tough situation.
- Believe it or not,

THIS TOO SHALL PASS!

Need help?

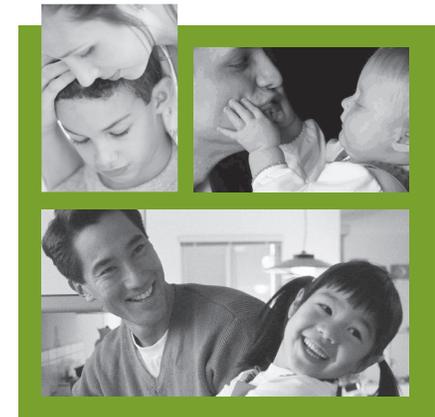
For more information on parenting, family support resources, or the location of a parent support group near you, please contact us.



MCCC's mission is to empower individuals and communities to stop child abuse and neglect before it starts through awareness, education, support, and leadership for action.

Minnesota Communities Caring for Children (MCCC) is a statewide nonprofit organization that empowers parents and builds the capacity of communities to create environments where all children thrive. Childhood experiences – both positive and negative – have significant impacts on physical, mental, social, and emotional health in adulthood. When fundamentals such as safety and self-worth are woven into a child's brain architecture, that child is more likely to develop into a healthy adult. On the other hand, a child exposed to violence or neglect is more likely to develop physical and mental health complications. MCCC works with families, communities, and state and local agencies to create opportunities for all children to have healthy childhoods.

Parent Survival Tips



MCCC is the Minnesota Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America and Circle of Parents® National
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651-523-0099 www.pcamn.org 1-800-CHILDREN



Life as a Parent

HELP WANTED

Male/female to work double to triple shifts. No weekends or holidays off. Long-term commitment (18 years minimum) needed. Must have unlimited physical, emotional stamina. Low pay to start, but high potential for satisfaction!

Welcome to the world of parenthood!

Why didn't someone tell you there were going to be days when you would feel:

- Old before your time?
- Tired before 11:00 am?
- Too upset to think straight?

Would you have believed it if they had? The reality is that you are the caregiver and lots of parents feel the way you do. You are not alone and things can get better.

Getting to know your children

Remember you don't have to know everything; the demands of the job, like the child, grow gradually. When the stress of parenting overwhelms you, don't be afraid to ask for help!

Birth to One Year

Learn the basics: How do you bathe a baby or change a diaper? You can learn how: Read, ask an expert, talk to other parents. Love your baby: Give all you've got. Talk to your baby, touch, hold, hug, kiss, smile, and enjoy. It is impossible to spoil a baby. Discover what's what: Pay close attention to all the sounds (cooing, babbling, gurgling, crying) your baby makes, as well as facial expressions and body movements. Each one means something. Never use physical force: The pressures of parenting are very real. You need to find safe, satisfying ways to release those pressures, but never on your baby. Never.

Toddler

Take a deep breath: The tornado in your home, your belongings in chaos This too shall pass. Right now, to your toddler, everything is new, exciting, and just waiting

to be explored. Childproof your home: Pack away your treasures, and lock up any dangerous or poisonous items. You will breathe a lot easier and you won't have to say no so often. Keep the rules simple and few: Your goal is to keep your toddler safe. Table manners can wait! And so can toilet training.

Preschooler

Preparing to take on the world: Sometime between toddlerhood and school age, children start working on his or her declaration of independence. Giving up naps, endless curiosity, learning new skills, new words, and meeting new friends all prepare your child for functioning outside the family. Testing Limits: Preschoolers develop new skills and new understanding by challenging the old ones. Although it may seem like they're testing you, they're really testing themselves. Work with your child, not against them. Help structure their exploration. Be Observant: At this age, you may start expecting too much of your child. Be aware of subtle preschooler concerns like separation anxiety, bedtime fears, self-esteem, security, and acceptance.

School Age

Show your interest: Check homework, talk about what is happening in school, ask their friends over, and find time to see your child's teacher occasionally. Communicate: If there is a single golden rule for parents, it is this... talk with your children (and listen too)! Assign kid-sized chores: Kids this age love to help. Just make sure the chores fit each child's capabilities. Be clear with directions!

Adolescence

Refuse to get confused: Part of growing up is acting like a two-year old and an adult, all in the same day. Be prepared to comfort, reassure and, on occasion, look the other way. Face the facts: Your teen will probably say, "I know that" when you talk about the facts of life, but do it anyway. As a parent, you are the only one who can share the values that go with the facts!

Let your affection show. Make it loud and clear that you care!

Discipline is Teaching

Parents and caregivers can use discipline to help their children learn how to behave. The goal of discipline is to teach children to manage their own behavior. Punishment is one form of discipline; however it is the least effective way to teach children how to behave. When punishment is overused, children learn that others manage their behavior.

Discipline will help you survive, but to be effective, it must teach a child what behavior is unacceptable and offer an opportunity to discuss how to avoid such behavior in the future. Discipline works if given in doses that reflect the child's age and the incident.

Babies are generally too young to be redirected using discipline. Infants are not able to understand rules and consequences.

Discipline only when reasonable expectations are not met. Define clearly, in advance, what you expect from children. Establish rules that are reasonable for the age of the child. Praise your child for following the rules, as well as redirecting when rules are not followed. Children respond better to approval and affection!

Be consistent. Whatever style of discipline you choose, use it in every situation, even in public or when the grandparents are visiting. Consistency reminds children that you are serious about your expectations of their behavior.

Review expectations regularly. There are no perfect children, just as there are no perfect parents. If your children do not meet your expectations, the expectations may need to be changed.

Shame, rejection, withdrawal of affection, or preferential treatment of one child over another have no place in discipline.