

The 101s: A Guide to Positive Discipline

“The 101s: A Guide to Positive Discipline” by Dr. Katharine Kersey will assist in making and maintaining positive connections with children. The techniques equip children to develop self-directed behaviors, consequently requiring less time for us to attend to behavior issues and more time to develop supportive, respectful relationships. Below are ten of the principles

1. **Demonstrate Respect Principle** - Treat the child the same way you do other important people in your life - the way you want him to treat you - and others. (How would I want her to say that to me? Would I like my supervisor to talk to me in that way?)

2. **Modeling Principle** - Model the behavior you want. Show the child, by example, how to behave. Children are watching us all the time, and they will grow up to be like us whether we want them to or not.

3. **Make a Big Deal Principle** - Make a big deal over responsible, considerate, appropriate behavior by providing attention, thanks, praise, thumbs-up, recognition, hugs, special privileges, and incentives (NOT food).

4. **Incompatible Alternative Principle** - Give the child something to do that is incompatible with the inappropriate behavior. "Help me pick out 6 oranges" (instead of running around the grocery store).

5. **Choice Principle** - Give the child two choices, both of which are positive and acceptable to you like, "Would you rather tiptoe or hop upstairs to bed? You choose or I'll choose."

6. **When/Then** - Abuse it/Lose it Principle – Try stating something similar to "When you have finished your homework, then you may watch TV." (No homework = no TV.)

7. **Connect Before You Correct Principle** – Spend as much time as you can with your child listening to him. Do things he enjoys and show him how important he is to you.

8. **Validation Principle** - Acknowledge (validate) his wants and feelings. If your child is upset with his teacher, say, "I know you feel angry with your teacher and want to stay home from school. I don't blame you. The bus will be here in 45 minutes." "It's okay to be upset. How long do you need - two minutes or four?" (Then set the timer.)

9. **Good Head On Your Shoulders Principle** – Frequently tell your child, especially as she reaches the teen years, "You have a good head on your shoulders. You decide. I trust your judgment." This brings out the best in the child and shows her that eventually she will be in charge of her own life and responsible for her own decisions.

10. **Belonging and Significance Principle** - Remember that everyone needs to feel that she **belongs** and is **significant**. Ask your child's advice. Help her feel important by giving her important jobs to do. Remind her if she doesn't do them, the jobs don't get done! Help her to feel significant by being responsible.

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