



## PARENTING THE LORD'S WAY

What we learn from Commandments, Blessings and Agency

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"This gospel will make bad men good and good men better."

*LeGrand Richards  
The True Church – A Missionary Church  
New Era, June 1974, 4*



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"Fathers, yours is an eternal calling from which you are never released."

*Ezra Taft Benson  
"To the Fathers in Israel"  
Ensign, Nov. 1987, 48*



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"It is a great challenge to raise a family in the darkening mists of our moral environment..."

"The measure of our success as parents, however, will not rest solely on how our children turn out. That judgment would be just only if we could raise our families in a perfectly moral environment, and that now is not possible."

"It is not uncommon for responsible parents to lose one of their children, for a time, to influences over which they have no control."

*Boyd K. Packer  
"Our Moral Environment"  
Ensign, May 1992, 66*



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"... he doth require that ye should do as he hath commanded you; for which if ye do, he doth immediately bless you;"

*Mosiah 2:24*



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"... remember that ye are free to act for yourselves—to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life."

*2 Nephi 10:23*

"No enduring improvement can occur without righteous exercise of agency. Do not attempt to override agency. The Lord himself would not do that. Forced obedience yields no blessings"

*Richard G. Scott  
"To Help a Loved One in Need"  
Ensign, May 1988, 60*



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## Avoid Coercion

- Coercion causes a child to escape, avoid and countercoerce.
- "When parents are calm and understanding, and noncoercive, they are safe, and children want to be close to them and with them." (Dr. Glenn I. Latham)



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## !! CAUTION !!

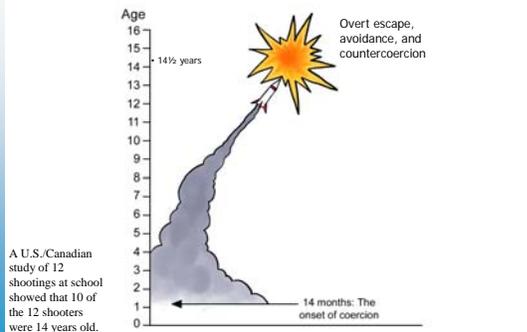
- "Do not suppose that short-term compliance achieved using coercive means leads to long-term gains.
- "Coercion produces only short-term compliance followed by long-term losses."

Dr. Glenn I. Latham



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## The Long-Term Effects of Coercion



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## Dr. Glenn I. Latham, 1931-2001



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## Parents teach through modeling

- Whether you like it or not, this is the case. (Sorry about that. ☺)
- Calm behavior teaches children to be calm.
- Kind behavior teaches children to be kind.
- Polite behavior teaches children to be polite.
- Harsh and demanding behavior teaches children to be non-cooperative, harsh, and demanding.
- "It is not by the whip or the rod that we can make obedient children; but it is by faith and by prayer, and by setting a good example before them."

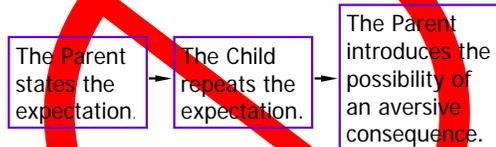
(Brigham Young, *DNW*, 9 Aug. 1865, 3)



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## Expectations

If At All Possible, Give Expectations a Chance



A coercive environment in which the child behaves well only to avoid the negative consequence of behaving badly.



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## Expectations

If At All Possible, Give Expectations a Chance

The Parent states the expectation.

The Child repeats the expectation.

The Parent waits for an opportunity to acknowledge compliance, then does so.

A reinforcing environment in which the child learns that by behaving well, he/she enjoys the positive consequences of behaving well.



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## Teaching Expectations

- Tell your children what you expect them to do rather than what you expect them not to do.

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<u>Instead of saying</u>	<u>Say</u>
Don't slam the door.	Please shut the door quietly.
Don't talk with your mouth full.	Please chew with your mouth closed.
Don't leave crumbs on the counter.	Please keep the counter clean.
Don't lie.	Tell the truth.

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<u>Instead of saying</u>	<u>Say</u>
Don't hit your sister.	Play nicely with your sister, Play nice, Be nice, Lets keep our hands to our self, etc.
Don't be rude and disrespectful.	Talk politely and nicely.

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## Teaching Expectations

- State your expectation clearly.
  - A 3rd party should understand
  - Minimize number of words
  - Avoid emotions
  - Avoid reason, logic and good sense. (when it is an emotional issue)

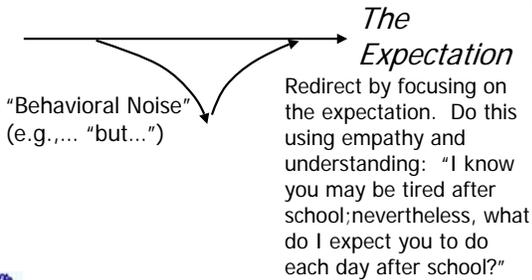
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## Teaching Expectations

- Have the child re-state the expectation.
  - Move on if the child protests the 4th time.

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Keep the communication moving in the right direction.



Redirect by focusing on the expectation. Do this using empathy and understanding: "I know you may be tired after school; nevertheless, what do I expect you to do each day after school?"

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## Teaching Expectations

- Emphasize the benefits that are earned by being compliant.
- But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God. (Moroni 7:13)
- Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. (Exodus 20:12)
- And he hath said that: Inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land; but inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall be cut off from my presence. (2 Nephi 1:20)
- "You can coax them: you can lead them by holding out inducements to them and by speaking kindly to them." (Joseph F. Smith, *Improvement Era*, Jan. 1910)
- "We should use incentives to help our children do the things they need to do." (an apostle visiting Livermore, CA)

## Teaching Expectations

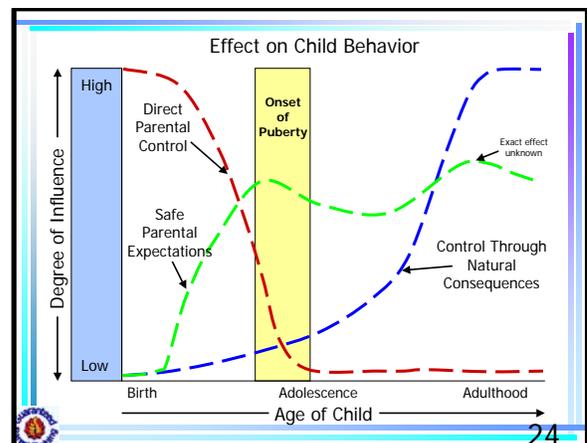
- Never tell children something they already know. Let them tell you.
- Engage them in conversation
- Use role-playing to teach
- Let them be part of the solution
- Help them self instruct
  - It is not important what you say. Your child won't remember.
  - It is important what your child says, because that is what your child will remember (and do).

"It isn't the amount of time parents talk to the child that produces the desired results. It is the amount of time and number of opportunities the child has to respond and to be actively engaged in the conversations, and exploring the solutions that are reinforced that produce the best results."

Glenn I. Latham  
"The Power of Positive Parenting," p. 65

## Teaching Expectations

- Allow consequences to teach.
- "Once our expectations have been taught and understood, we must allow our children to choose for themselves, then let the consequences of those choices deliver their messages." (Glenn I. Latham)
- "To avoid all possibility for error is to avoid all possibility for growth." (Dallin H. Oaks)



"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

*John 7:17*

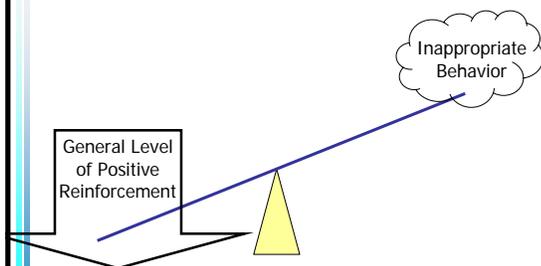
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## Use Positive Reinforcement

- Acknowledge appropriate behavior in some way.
- Acknowledge appropriate behavior casually and briefly.
  - 8-12 words, 3-5 seconds
- Acknowledge appropriate behavior intermittently.

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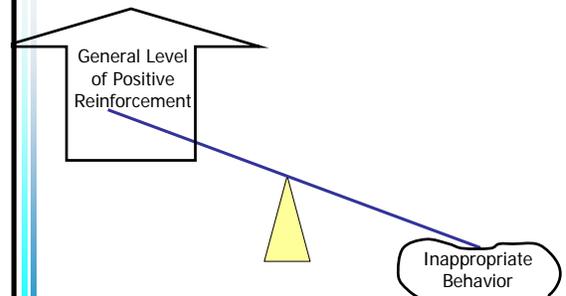
## General Level of Positive Reinforcement vs. the Incidence of Inappropriate Behavior



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## General Level of Positive Reinforcement vs. the Incidence of Inappropriate Behavior



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## Use Positive Reinforcement

### Verbal praise:

1. Deserved
2. Given Sincerely
3. Given with Variety
  - A. Sometimes descriptively
  - B. Sometimes generally
  - C. Sometimes embellished with values

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## Ascending from Compliance to Values

### Values

Children's behavior is coupled with a common enduring value.

"You are so dependable."

### Compliance

Children are acknowledged for doing what they are supposed to do.

"Thank you feeding the dog."

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### Attention Builds Behavior

- You get more of what you focus on.
- Parameters for the value of attention
  - time
  - close proximity (distance to child)
  - touch
  - words
  - emotion



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### Purposeful or Planned Ignoring

- Ignore with purpose.
- Leave behind no messages which indicate that the kid(s) "got to you."
- Time the behavior that is being ignored. (Most behaviors will go away within 1 min. and 45 sec.)
- A short time later, look for opportunities to acknowledge appropriate behavior.



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### Purposeful or Planned Ignoring

- If the child comes to you
  - Respond with empathy and understanding
  - Prompt them to leave
  - Move on to other activities
  - Acknowledge appropriate behavior when it occurs



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### Purposeful or Planned Ignoring

- With several children, turn your attention to the appropriate behavior of another child.
  - Give attention only to the appropriate behavior.
  - Brief empathy and understanding may be used for child's feeling.
  - Acknowledge appropriate behavior when it occurs.



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"If they get a little naughty, stop them when they have gone far enough. ... When they transgress, and transcend certain bounds we want them to stop."

*Brigham Young  
DNSW, 8 Dec. 1868, 2-3*



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### Stop, Redirect, Reinforce

- Use this skill on consequential behaviors
- Use this skill when you feel you **MUST** do something
- With young children, simply turn them to another activity
- Reinforce the appropriate behavior



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## Stop, Redirect, Reinforce

- STAY CALM!!!
- Stop the behavior
- Redirect
  - Ask child to state how he should behave
  - Or, tell the child what to do
- Respond to complaints with empathy
- Reinforce appropriate behavior
- Keep it short and sweet!
- Remember, STAY CALM, Stay Firm!!!



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## When Emotions Are High:

1. Never tell a child something he/she already knows.
2. Never ask or answer questions.

### Rather:

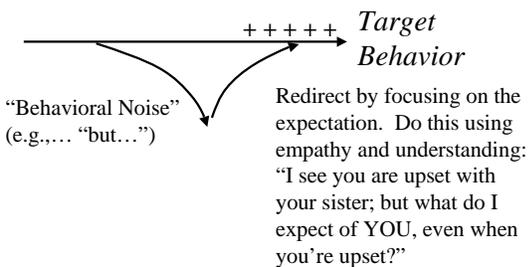
1. Use empathy and understanding.
2. Focus on expectations.



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## Keep the communication moving in the right direction.



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“High levels of self-instruction correspond with high levels of correct responding... [and] produce desired behavior change.”

“Toward a Functional Analysis of Private Verbal Self-Regulation”  
Ian Taylor and Mark O'Reilly, Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis  
Spring, 1997, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp.43-58



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## Ask, Don't Tell

1. STAY CALM!!!
2. Have the child tell you what you expect them to do (or tell them if they do not know).
3. Respond to the child's protests with empathy and understanding, then return to the expectation.
  - “What do I expect you to do right now?”
  - “What do I expect you to do when...”
4. If the child protests a 4th time, end the conversation (you just move on).
5. When the child repeats the expectation, be positive.
  - “Right! It's pajama time,” or “Terrific,” or “Exactly right,” or ...



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## Ask, Don't Tell - Example

1. Empathy – “I see you are enjoying TV”
2. Expectation – “But, what do I expect you to do right now?”
3. Empathy – “I can tell you don't like homework. That's pretty normal.”
4. Expectation – “But, what do I expect you do right now?”
5. 97% of the time, the child will tell you what is expected after 2 or 3 protests.
6. “That's right, your homework. Thanks.”
7. Even if child doesn't say it, respond with, “I am glad you understand I expect you to start your homework.”



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## Immediate Directives

1. State how the child feels (empathy)
  - You had a lot of fun playing, and you would like to play some more.
2. Statement – the way things are!
  - Right now we need to go home and eat lunch
3. Empathy
  - I know you are not hungry yet.
4. Statement – the way things are!
  - Right now you need to put your shoes on
5. For a young child, use gentle force.  
For older children, DO NOT USE FORCE!
6. STAY CALM

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## Understand Behavior Science

- All repeating behaviors serve a purpose
  - Child gets something
  - Child avoids (delays) something
- Which rewards are the most powerful?
  - Positive vs. negative?
  - Immediate vs. delayed?
  - Certain vs. uncertain?
  - Preferred vs. non-preferred?
  - Large (more) vs. small (less)?
  - Deprived of vs. satiated with?

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## Understand Behavior Science

- Make a plan and build desired behavior
- “Research has shown that the most effective way to reduce problem behavior in children is to strengthen desirable behavior through positive reinforcement rather than trying to weaken undesirable behavior using [punishment].”

Dr. Sidney W. Bijou

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## Positive vs. Negative Consequences

Negative Consequences (avoiding something)	Positive Reinforcement (rewards or getting something)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce child's ability and desire to behave</li><li>• Reduce parent's positive influence</li><li>• Produce only enough behavior to avoid the consequence.</li><li>• The behavior can take on the feelings of the consequence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase child's ability and desire to behave</li><li>• Increase parent's positive influence</li><li>• Produce behavior to earn the consequence, plus extra, discretionary effort to earn more positive consequences.</li><li>• The behavior takes on the feelings of the consequence.</li><li>• Behavior will generalize to other behaviors. The child will become creative looking for good things to do, even in totally unrelated areas.</li></ul>

Everyone is happier with positive consequences!

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## Behavior Science – Grandma's Law

- Eat your vegetables, and then you can have pie and ice cream.”
- Doing what is needed gives the child access to a preferred activity.
- Application of Grandma's Law
  - “When you finish your homework, you can watch TV.”
  - “Can I go out and play?” “Sure, just as soon as your toys are picked up.”
  - “Clear off the dining table, and then we will play with your truck.”
  - “When you complete your chores, you earn the privileges you enjoy here.”
- As adults, we think of this as motivation.

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## Using Punishment – **WARNING!!!**

1. Punishment is risky, decreases motivation, and decreases cooperation.
2. Using punishment is more difficult than using reinforcement. Requires consistency.
3. To be effective, punishment
  - Must be established in advance
  - Must be contingent on the child's behavior
  - Must be consistent
  - Must be reasonable
  - Must be enforceable
4. Restitution is better than punishment

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## Punishment Example

- Should you choose to hit your sister, there will be a cost. You will lose the privilege of (riding your bicycle) for 2 days.
- Avoid using words, "I'll take away" or "I won't let you"
- Punishment should be as short as possible.
  - Remember, a privilege can not be "lost" during the punishment period. Extending the time has limited effect!
- Punishment should be based on the things you control (or the child lets you control).
- REMEMBER: Set up the punishment in advance.
- Let the consequence do the nagging for you.

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## Surprise or First Time Problems

1. STAY CALM!!!
2. Stay positive (don't grumble or complain)
3. Ask child to state how he should behave (What did you expect him to do?)
4. Respond to complaints with empathy
5. Appreciate the child's correct reply
6. Keep it short and sweet!
7. Remember, STAY CALM, Stay Firm!!!
8. No threats or punishment!
9. For repeating problems, MAKE A PLAN!

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## PHE, the Secret Ingredient of a Gospel Home

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## Create a Positive Home Environment

- "Children need sunlight. They need happiness. They need love and nurture. They need kindness and refreshment and affection. Every home, regardless of the cost of the house, can provide an environment of love which will be an environment of salvation." (Gordon B. Hinckley)
- "If your child isn't doing something to irritate you, then she must be doing something right. Figure out what it is, and say something positive about it." (Marriage and Family Therapist)

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"At times our children may not be in possession of a good spirit; but if the parent continues to possess the good Spirit, the children will have the bad spirit but a short time."

*Brigham Young  
DNSW, 7 Apr. 1868, 3*

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## Create a Positive Home Environment

- "The key is for parents to establish the quality of the environment and refuse to allow the annoying, disruptive behavior of unhappy children to dictate the mood or course of their behavior"

*Dr. Glenn I. Latham,  
Christlike Parenting*

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## Keep Calm

- “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.” (Proverbs 15:1)
- “Anger should never be permitted to rise in our bosoms, and words suggested by angry feelings should never be permitted to pass our lips.”  
(Brigham Young, DBY, 203-4)
- Respond to anger and strong emotions with empathy.
- “Pleasant, positive interactions between parents (and grandparents) and children always, in the long run, produce the best results.” (Dr. Glenn I. Latham)



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“Sometimes discipline, which means “to teach,” is confused with criticism. Children—as well as people of all ages – improve behavior from love and encouragement more than from fault-finding.

*Susan W. Tanner  
“Did I Tell You ... ?  
Ensign, May 2003, 73–75*

“Love can make the difference – love generously given in childhood and reaching through the awkward years of youth ... and encouragement that is quick to compliment and slow to criticize.”

*Gordon B. Hinckley  
“Bring Up a Child in the Way He Should Go”  
Ensign, Nov. 1993*



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- Don't worry. Be Happy!
- Let your children delight you.
- “Anything worth doing is worth doing poorly, until you can learn to do it well.” (?????)
- “You will never be successful at shouting and screaming happiness and compliance into their lives.” (Glenn I. Latham)
- Smile at your children. Let your countenance shine on them.
- “A child loves the smiles of its mother, but hates her frowns.” (Brigham Young, DBY, 209)



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“It is our responsibility to create a Christlike ‘world’ in our homes, a safe place where children behave well because they enjoy the pleasant consequences of doing so, rather than to avoid the unpleasant consequences of behaving badly. It is a world in which the child thinks, ‘I know my parents will acknowledge and appreciate me’ rather than thinking ‘I am only doing this because I don’t want to be beat on’ (verbally or physically).”

*Dr. Glenn I. Latham  
Christlike Parenting, p52*



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“When we create PHE, along with teaching and living the Gospel, we will have a home where children will have a high probability of internalizing our family values, successfully navigating the difficult years of adolescence, and growing up into healthy, happy and faithful adults.”

*Tom Dozier*



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