

Hi, my name is Emily Robinson and I'm a 30 year old nanny in Seattle, WA. I've been a nanny for 4 years, working primarily with infant-3 year olds in nanny shares. I'm currently pregnant with my first child, who is due in March 2020. Because of medical reasons and being pregnant, I'm currently not working FT with a family, but often fill in here and there for previous families I have nannied for. I'm very close with all of my previous families as I often get progress reports about the kids, or requests to stop by and just say hi. My plan is to bring my child with me when I go back to working as a nanny, hopefully in summer or fall of 2020.

No Bad Kids: Toddler Discipline Without Shame

By: Janet Lansbury

Why Toddlers Push Limits:

- Children are easily overwhelmed by impulses bigger and stronger than they are.
- "Rule #1: never, ever take a child's limit- pushing behavior personally. "
- Young children cannot function when they are tired or fatigued.
- "Children will often push our limits simply because they haven't received a straight answer to a question."
- Children can see and absorb how we are feeling and will reflect this behavior outwardly to others.
- Best way to get the attention from others.

Discipline: Person to Person:

- "To develop an honest, balanced person-to-person relationship, our children need to learn early on that we will do our best to give them everything they need, but that they can't always get what they want...and that's okay."
- Create a daily routine of eat, sleep, and play to help a child feel like they have control over their world.
- Speak in first person by using "I" and "you" that keeps the conversation direct.
- Don't "just say no." Give your child a brief explanation on why you don't want them to do something.
- Don't ignore your child or try and distract them when they're yelling, whining, or misbehaving to discourage the behavior, but rather asking her what she wants and then telling her how you want her to communicate it.
- Talk to a child like you would talk to an adult. Refrain from using lingo like "inside voice" and "use your words."
- Don't discourage curiosity, let kids try and reach and do things that may not be "safe."
- Respond to a child clearly, so they understand exactly what you want or don't want them to do.

Keys to Cooperation: Ways to offer Respect

- Make the child's activity a familiar routine and/or give advance notice.
- Don't interrupt (child's play or chosen activities) unless necessary.
- Communicate with even the youngest infants.
- "Let your child do it - or at least try."

- "Slow down movements, words, and the time in between them. The younger the child the more time they need to process the words."
- Don't multitask, give your child your undivided attention.
- Acknowledge their feelings and point-of-view.
- Thank children and acknowledge accomplishments and progress.

The Choices our Kids Can't Make:

- "Most of the choices toddlers can't comfortably make are about transitions."
- Toddlers often show that they have too much power by being whiny, more resistant, distracted, clingy, or continue to test your patience.
- Caregiving rule of thumb: "Fear (or even fight reticence) about upsetting, disappointing, or angering our children will cloud our vision and negatively affect our judgements."

Stay "Unruffled" When Kids Test Limits:

- Gain perspective on why your toddler is pushing boundaries and limits in the first place.
- Think about strong emotions and conflict positively.
- Have reasonable expectations on how your child or why your child might be responding in a certain way.
- Be preventative, proactive, and prepared to respond to your child's response.
- Act as if you know how to handle your child's outbursts in a calm and collective way.
- "Practicing self-reflection helps us to know our triggers, and then we can be able to understand them."
- Find support from others around you and in your life.

How to Get Through the Tough Stages- Whining, Biting, Kicking, Hitting

- "Don't let it rattle you."
- Provide gentle guidance in a calm way.
- Provide rest, food, drink, and comfort when needed.
- "Whiners might me on the verge of an emotional explosion."
- "Give undivided, positive attention."
- Recognize how your child is acting and communicate and follow through to dismiss the behavior. "You're having a hard time not hitting, so I will help by holding your hands."
- Acknowledge all the feelings, don't fight them.

Common Teaching Methods That Get in the Way:

- Punishments, including time-out, spanking, and consequences when presented punitively.
- "Perceiving children as "bad" rather than in need of help."
- Accepting that toddlers are not intentionally bad or mean, they are just trying to be understood.
- Yelling at a child when they "misbehave" in a way that makes you upset and frustrated.

The Truth About Consequences:

- "Punishments are inadequate teachers because they don't teach or model positive behavior."
- "They are unrelated to the situation and/or given too long after the fact."
- Could the situation have been avoided or prevented in the first place?

- “They include forced apologies or other inauthentic gestures.”
- Consequences can be effective and respectful when:
 - “Logical, reasonable, age-appropriate choices.”
 - Stated kindly, rather than as a threat.
 - When you acknowledge your child’s point-of-view and feelings.
 - “Consistent, predictable responses, elements of routine that our child recognizes.”
 - When we acknowledge our personal limits and express them in an honest way to our children.

When to Allow a Child’s Behavior and When to Draw the Line:

- Say YES to feelings. “Encouraging the expression of feelings and acknowledging them is the key to our child’s emotional health and also to self-worth.”
- “Say yes to safe exploration, self-directed play.”
- Give boundaries for safety, when the child is testing, and during transitions.
- When possible, don’t give children the freedom to irritate or annoy us through their behavior.