

Tips for Parents

PCA-NV
Volume: Two

Shopping with Your Children

Anyone who has shopped at a grocery store or mall with children, especially young children, knows that the experience can be trying, and sometimes, stressful! Here are some tips that may prove useful on your next shopping trip:

Before You Go...

- How is everyone feeling? Is your child too tired or hungry to shop? Are YOU? It's best to go when you are rested, don't wait until the end of a tiring day. If possible, postpone your trip or arrange for a sitter.
- Have a talk with your child before you go shopping. Let your child know that it is a special outing to go shopping with you. You can go shopping and have fun, as long as you both understand your family's shopping rules.
- Make your expectations clear. For instance, "Stay close to me," "Use your quiet voice," "When we leave, you can select a special treat if you remember the rules!"
- One last thing before you go: wear comfortable shoes and clothes (you and your child). If the climate calls for a winter coat, you may want to remove outerwear once in the store



so that no one overheats.

Now you're ready to shop. Just a reminder, keep your children within sight in the store; hold hands; put them in a cart or let them hold onto the cart with you.

At The Store...

- Give your child choices. When possible, allow your child to make some decisions. "Do you want red or green apples?"
- Give your child a responsibility. "Can you help me pick out the hardest apples?" Or let your child steer the cart.
- Never leave your child unattended in a shopping cart!
- Reinforce good behavior. Say things like, "You are being so helpful!" Talk and play with your child. A hug can be reassuring and say more than words sometimes!

"Home Alone" Tips

Children are sometimes home alone while parents are working or away for some other reason. **It is generally believed however that children under the age of 12 should not be left home alone.**

Here are some suggestions to increase the safety of your older child and ease your mind while he or she is home alone:

- Agree on ground rules for those times when you are not home; for example, rules for cooking, leaving the house, having friends over, etc.
- Assign your children tasks to accomplish while you're gone. Try to keep them busy!
- Be sure to have telephone numbers posted where you can be reached. Also, make sure you list numbers for fire and police, neighbors, and relatives.
- If your children arrive home to an empty house, be sure to call and check in with them.
- Enroll your children in a course on safety procedures. Their safety is related to their knowledge of how to protect themselves. Check with the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, your local hospital, or YMCA for courses.
- Talk to your children about their concerns when they are home alone. Make sure everyone understands each other.
- Remember, with the proper guidelines, being home for limited periods of time can increase independence, responsibility, and confidence in your children!



Protecting Your Toddler at Home

Toddlers are curious and love to explore, but they don't know when they're getting into dangerous situations. **It's up to you to keep your little one safe. As soon as your baby starts to crawl, it is necessary to child-proof your home.**

The following tips are a good starting point. Each home is different, so walk through yours with an eye to what will appeal to your toddler. If it's too dangerous, do something about it! Put away valuable items you don't want damaged or destroyed, even if they're not dangerous. That will save you from saying "no" too often.

- Keep emergency numbers next to your phone in case of injury, fire, poisoning, or any other situation requiring immediate assistance.
- Store medicines and household cleaners on a high shelf. But remember closets and shelves aren't the only place to find these dangerous items. Medicine may also be found in women's purses, and poisonous cleaners may be in your garage.
- If you have stairs in your home, prevent falls by blocking them with safety gates.

- Keep matches away from children. Your toddler may play with them and accidentally start a fire.
- Never allow a young child (under 12 years old) to be responsible for your toddler, even for a few minutes. Young children can't always determine what an active toddler might do.
- Keep wall sockets covered with safety plugs. Putting small toys in wall sockets is tempting to toddlers.
- Keep electrical cords out of the way. Toddlers may pull the cord and be injured when something heavy falls on them.
- Lower the thermostat on your hot water heater to protect your toddler from burns. Fill the bathtub and turn off the water before you place your toddler in the tub. If the water is running a toddler can turn the handle and scald themselves, even if you are watching them.
- Be sure your toddler is never alone around water. Keep toilet seats covered. Children can drown in as little as a few inches of water.
- Even if you are with your toddler all the time, accidents can happen. So it is important to prevent accidents before they occur.

contents

- "Home Alone" Child Tips P.1
- Protecting Your Toddler at Home P.1
- Teaching Children Discipline P.2
- Tips for Emotionally Positive Children P.3
- Advice for New Moms and Dads P.4
- Shopping with Your Children P.4
- Ways to Show Kids You CARE P.4

Ways to Show Kids You CARE

- Acknowledge them
- Smile and hug them - a lot!
- Ask them about themselves
- Listen to them
- Play with them
- Read out loud together
- Giggle together
- Say yes
- Set boundaries that keep them safe
- Be honest
- Notice when they are acting differently
- Stay with them when they are afraid
- Suggest other behaviors when they're acting out
- Share their excitement
- Notice when they are absent
- Call them to say "hello"
- Discuss their dreams and nightmares
- Kneel, squat or sit at their eye level
- Answer their questions
- Be consistent
- Let them act their age
- Tell them how terrific they are - often!
- Learn what they have to teach
- Use your ears more than your mouth
- Make yourself available
- Show up at concerts, games and events
- Apologize if you've done something wrong
- Keep promises you make
- Point out what you like about them
- Catch them doing something right
- Give them your undivided attention
- Praise more; criticize less
- Expect the best; do not expect perfection
- Enjoy your time together
- Help them learn from their mistakes
- Empower them to help themselves
- Love them, no matter what!



Teaching Children

- Remember the purpose of discipline.

It is to teach your child socially acceptable ways of expressing natural desires and drives. Discipline guides your child into adulthood.

- Successful discipline is geared to the child's developmental stage.

Don't expect a child of any age to perform something he or she is not ready for.

- Children need positive reinforcement.

Reward your child for doing right with smiles, hugs, attention, praise and thanks. Rewards do not need to be toys or candy.

- Never hit or shake a child.

Hitting is **not** a useful discipline tool for your children. Hitting and other physical punishment are not effective because they also teach a child that it is okay to hit people, make children much too angry to be sorry for what they've done, and can hurt a child physically.

- Discipline is best taught by example.

The lessons your teach your child come from what your child sees you do - not what you say.

- If what you are doing is not working, change it!

Your best efforts, even those that worked in the past, may break down. Try to keep sight of your basic principles and always cherish your relationship with your child.

The important thing is not whether your child behaves in the next few minutes or today or this week. The really important thing is how your child turns out 5, 10, or 20 years from now.

Tips for Emotionally Positive Children

In School and At Home

Encouraging children's self-esteem

- Respect the children's input and voice
- Give every child love and attention
- Be empathetic to their feelings
- Be honest with them
- Encourage their independence and curious nature

Convey Confidence in Children

- Allow the children to meet their own needs as soon as they show the ability to do so
- Ask or Say:
 - ~ Do you want to try to use the utensil yourself?
 - ~ I'll wait while you tie your shoes
 - ~ Are you ready to make your own sandwich?
 - ~ Here is the way to use the washer

Communicate Appreciation

- Every child has unique talents and interests
- Notice what children like and dislike
- Children are born good, curious, and spontaneous
- Introduce and foster the children's interests, even though they may not be your own

- Always praise the children in their attempts at everything
 - ~ What a beautiful picture!
 - ~ Tell me about the part of the book you liked best
 - ~ It looks like you took extra time to making this
 - ~ Do you need extra time to finish that?
 - ~ I really appreciate you being quiet and waiting until I finished talking
 - ~ Thank you!

Communicate Limits

- Children feel safe and cared for when adults set limits for them
- It is natural for children at any age to test these limits. Consistency is the key.
 - ~ "That's not okay."
 - ~ "When you are screaming, I can't hear you. Let me hear your words."
 - ~ "Let's talk about it."
 - ~ "Tell me what you want."
 - ~ "No, I'm not buying you toys today."

Communicate Choices

- Children should be given the opportunity to choose
- Give them choices YOU can live with
- When a child makes a choice, they are responsible for their consequences
- Some examples of ways that you can give children choices
 - ~ Do you want corn or peas?
 - ~ Both the white top and your yellow top look nice with these pants, which do you want to wear?
 - ~ This is the school menu. Do you want to buy lunch or bring?
 - ~ Is there anything you want to do this year in school, like sports or band?
 - ~ Who would you like to invite to your birthday party?

Acknowledge children's feelings

- Validate the child's experience, this helps them honor their own feelings.
- Let them know feelings are okay and part of being human



Advice for New Moms and Dads

Being a parent is the most difficult, yet most important and satisfying work you will ever do. During the busy and exciting days that make up the first weeks of parenting, remember to take good care of yourself as well as the new baby. Here are some tips on how to survive the early weeks with the new baby:

- Get as much rest as possible. Sleep when the baby sleeps, and Mom and Dad take turns sleeping late on weekend mornings.
- Eat nutritious meals. If a neighbor or friend offers to help, ask them to bring you dinner or do your grocery shopping.

- Join a parenting group. You will learn about caring for your baby, and you will meet other parents who share your interests and concerns.
- Don't expect too much from yourself. Housework won't always get done, but eventually you will get back to a routine.
- Call your doctor or clinic with any questions or concerns you may have. This will save you from needless worry.
- Visitors can be helpful, but don't let them interrupt your rest or your family time together.
- Dads - don't let mothers have all the fun. Spend lots of time caring for

and playing with baby. The rewards are great!

- Be sure your infant receives necessary immunizations and doctor visits as required. (for more info: <http://www.immunizenevada.org/>)
- If you have older children, be sure to let them know every day that you love them.
- If you find yourself getting frustrated and angry with your baby call for help. Ask a friend, neighbor or relative to take care of the baby while you take a break.

Have fun with your baby. The early weeks can be the basis for a lifetime of loving and sharing.



About PCA-NV:

Prevent Child Abuse Nevada (PCA-NV) is an initiative of the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy within the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. We are the Nevada chapter of the nationally renowned Prevent Child Abuse America network. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization we provide resources devoted to the **prevention** of child abuse and neglect throughout the state.

We believe in the prevention of child abuse through doing what we can to ensure that children live in safe, stable and nurturing environments. We believe that healthy child development is the foundation for a positive community and economic development; the building blocks of a successful society and stable national chapter.

For More Information:

Prevent Child Abuse Nevada
Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
4505 S Maryland Pkwy, Box 453030
Las Vegas NV 89154-3030
Phone: (702) 895-5053
Fax: (702) 895-2657
Email: preventchildabusenevada@unlv.edu
Website: www.preventchildabusenevada.org
Twitter Handle: @PCANevada
Facebook: Search for our page by typing "Prevent Child Abuse Nevada" or scan the barcode to the right with your smartphone.

