

Every single moment you spend with your child counts. So sing and read to your children, hug them, give them routines, respond to their signals, take them to a doctor regularly and choose your child care wisely. That's how children grow, learn, love and succeed.



TEACH ♥ MORE LOVE ♥ MORE



The Importance of Limits: Developing Boundaries for Young Children

Children begin testing boundaries in their earliest years. Hence, a child who repeatedly throws a toy learns to expect a specific reaction or to recognize a boundary from the response that is given. The key is to set boundaries for your child rather than letting your child set boundaries for you. For example, if your child throws a toy, pick it up once and give it back while stating the boundary, "If you throw the toy again, I will put it away. You can throw a ball but not the toy." If the child throws the toy again reinforce the boundary — putting the toy away -- and offer the child a ball. As your child grows into toddlerhood and beyond, it becomes especially important to follow through with stated consequences. Your child will learn



to be respectful of your words when predictable responses can be anticipated.

There are many reasons why children need limits established and boundaries maintained. For instance:

• **Encouraging the discovery process:** Understood limits provide young children the opportunity to explore and learn safely.

• **Defining acceptable limits:** By establishing and restating boundaries, children learn to distinguish between the acceptable and unacceptable.

• **Defining power/control relationships:** Power struggles develop with young children when boundaries are not clear. Children who know what to expect know how to behave and feel powerful in the predictability of that situation.

• **Using established limits as evidence of a child's developmental growth:** As children grow developmentally, limits need to be modified to accommodate a new developmental level. For example, bedtime for a 2 year old will be different than bedtime for an 8 year old.

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**If you have questions
about raising your child
or being a parent, call Teach
More/Love More at
305-631-8111**

**Operated in English, Spanish
and Creole 24 hours a day.**

**Si ou ta renmen resevwa ti jounal
sa a an kreyòl, rele
(305) 631-8111.**

OUR MISSION: *To ensure that all children in Miami-Dade County have the community's attention, commitment and resources--and, hence, the chance to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically so that they are ready and eager to learn by the time they reach first grade.*



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Miami, Fla. 3312

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Ask the Expert

Question: *Every Sunday I take my son to the park. He likes it there but other children always bully him around. How can I help my son not be a doormat?*

Answer: It is common for infants and toddlers to explore by pulling hair, poking, pushing, hitting, biting or grabbing. Young children responding to these behaviors may react in passive ways because they are not sure how to react. It is important to give these children the tools that enable them to stand up for themselves. This includes modeling appropriate problem-solving techniques that emphasize communication and arming children with appropriate words to make their needs known. Support your child's first social interactions by understanding the importance of exploration as a tool for developing social competence.

Children older than 3 years will behave in the same manner if boundaries have not been clearly defined. These children also need the consistent emphasis of acceptable behaviors. The older child who behaves passively may need more intervention because this is most likely an established pattern. It is important to teach this child how to get help from an adult in addition to appropriate modeling and appropriate words.

By Ivette Aponte-Torres,
Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition



Building Home and School

What can your child's provider do to help develop boundaries?

- ✓ 1. Have a regular and predictable schedule.
- ✓ 2. Inform the child when any part of the schedule is going to change.
- ✓ 3. Consistently remind children of limits, and redirect behavior when necessary.
- ✓ 4. Anticipate when a child is pushing boundaries; redirect before a power struggle emerges.
- ✓ 5. Offer choices to give child control.
- ✓ 6. Children are not grouped by labels such as: "bad," "good," "dumb" or "fat."
- ✓ 7. Be clear about consequences when the child goes beyond an established boundary, and follow through.

Literacy Corner

Learning and Letters are Everywhere

Children begin developing their language skills at infancy. Focusing on what is known as environmental print is a way to develop pre-reading skills. Environmental print is print found outside of books and is a part of everyday life. By pointing out words and symbols in your daily routines, young children begin to understand that print is everywhere and has meaning.

Many different forms exist including billboards, labels, road signs, headlines, restaurant signs, posters, advertisements and newspapers. Consciously exposing children to all this at an early age creates a personal and concrete connection to print and the foundation for learning to become meaningful.

Visit your local library for books, activities and other ideas about encouraging your child's literacy.

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• **Providing security:**

Boundaries give children a sense of safety by knowing what to expect. Situations and events are less scary when a child can predict what will happen next.

As children grow, they will strive to find independence and to control their lives.

Giving children chores that are age appropriate help foster this sense of power in the child's life. Toddlers can help sort laundry or dry non-breakable dishes; pre-school children can set the table or sweep the floor (using a child-size broom). Offering acceptable choices is another way to set boundaries by giving children control over their actions. Conversely, offering unacceptable choices undermines a child's independence and blurs boundaries.

Nutrition

Making sense of food labels for children:

- Nutrition Fact Box contains information about the nutrition the food holds. Daily recommended intake for fat, fiber, sodium and carbohydrates have not been established for children under 4 years.
- Calories From Fat is not listed for children as a young child's calorie intake and should not be limited for the purpose of dieting.
- Pay attention to the listed Serving Size. Companies sell food to make money. Companies package food based on profits and frequently are not concerned with healthy diets.
- The Ingredient List is a list from the highest concentrated to lowest concentrated nutrients in the food package.
- Net Weight tells you how much the food inside the package weighs.

Teachable Moments

How do you help your child understand limits?



Michelle Lardizabal, mother of Jake Lardizabal - 1 year:
We try to be simple and clear... Even at 1, Jake definitely understands "No." On most things, especially where it is dangerous, there is no giving in. We try to be consistent.



Yolanda and Nick Mans, parents of Leah Nicole Mans - 2 years:
We help our 2-year-old daughter understand limits by giving her choices. We also help Leah understand limits by discipline. We do give Leah an opportunity to be an individual with feelings, but at the same time instill in her that when we say something it is firm.



Shelly Witiak, mother of Brittany Witiak - 4 years:
Limits must be consistently applied and enforced. Children are more likely to respect limits when they realize their parents mean what they say. Letting children help set their own limits gains their cooperation in following the rules. Your rules should reflect your own family values.



Karlyn Monterrubio, mother of Clayton Monterrubio - 2 years:
We let Clayton act out his feelings. Once his actions are recognized in a negative way, we respond by explaining to him in a quiet voice his wrong actions. If Clayton does not listen and continues, our tone of voice becomes more stern, telling him there will be consequences if he continues.



Lorraine Aragon, mother of Kristin Davis -- 4 years:
"Explaining," I think, is the key word. In my busy world (a working mom of two) there are times where I am so tired that I want to say, "Leave me alone" or "Just do it!" I make sure to take a step back and look at what my daughter really needs, which is an explanation.

Peaceful Homes: Grocery Shopping

The Peace Education Foundation

Grocery shopping with a young child can be a pleasure if adults plan ahead.

- Plan shopping trips when the child is rested. Hungry, cranky children do not make happy shoppers.
- Children like to move. Staying still in the shopping cart seat is difficult. Keep the shopping trip as short as possible. Know what you need to buy.
- Children are interested and curious. Talk with your child about the items that you are buying. Name or count the items; notice the size, shape and color.
- Children like to help. Let your child hold an item that isn't too heavy and won't break or crush. Letting children hold an item helps them feel as though they are helping and keeps them interested.
- For older children, cut out labels from two or three favorite food items. Create a shopping list for your child by putting them in a baggie and use a magnet to place on the refrigerator. As you get ready to go to the store, ask your child to "Get your list." Have your child "read the list" by identifying the labels. Make a game of having the child find the item on the shelf that matches that label. This is a great activity for pre-reading skills and helps parents and children focus on buying what they need.

With a little planning and creativity, grocery shopping with your child can be a rich learning experience.

Community Event

THE ART OF STORYTELLING... IN OTHER WORDS

Family Festival Day - Saturday, May 10
Main Library, 101 W. Flagler St., Miami
10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

FREE

A whole day of storytelling and things to learn. With the Historical Museum of Southern Florida and the Miami Art Museum, the Main Library will host concerts and activities featuring a wonderful group of storytellers from around the world.

Daniel Amponsah (Koo Nimo) from Ghana.
Adeline Ama Buabeng from Ghana.
Fereydoun Kian from Iran.
Lisa Luu from Taiwan.
Norma Darby and the Jamaican Folk Review from Jamaica.
Marie Monique Jean-Gilles from Haiti.
El Duende from Colombia.
Gloria Kaiser from Austria and Brazil.

Call 305-375-5501 for more information.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN ABOUT STORYTELLING...

A cultural exchange presented by the Miami-Dade Public Library System that celebrates the ethnic diversity of the community. In addition to the Saturday festival, these four workshops are available:

Thursday, May 8: - Playing the Story Along (Workshop 1), \$25
Registration and coffee at 9:30 a.m.
10 - 11:30 a.m.

Is Anansi Mek It! (Workshop 2) \$25
Registration and coffee at 12:30 p.m.
1:30 - 4 p.m.

Friday, May 9 - Meet Bo Rabby (Workshop 3) \$25
Registration and coffee 9:30 a.m.
10 - 11:30 a.m.

Improving Your Storytelling (Workshop 4) \$25
Registration and coffee at 12:30 p.m.
1 - 4 p.m.

All four sessions cost \$65; one day costs \$45.
Call 305-375-5501 to register.

All workshops will take place at the Main Library, 101 W. Flagler St., Miami.

Community Information: Spanish Health Help-line

Tommy Thompson, the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has announced the creation of the Su Familia, National Hispanic Family Health Helpline (866-783-2645/866-SU-FAMILIA). Su Familia will help Hispanic families get basic health information to help them prevent and manage chronic conditions, and refer them to local health providers and federally supported programs.

The toll-free help line is open Monday through Friday
from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

More information about this program
is available at

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2003pres/20030312.html>.

Statewide Event

REGIONAL FATHERHOOD CONFERENCE

June 4 - 5

Park Plaza Westshore, Tampa

Sponsored by Florida's Commission on Responsible Fatherhood, the conference provides the opportunity for parents and professionals to be trained in national fatherhood and marriage programs, network with others in their region and earn continuing education credits.

Visit www.floridafathers.org or contact Anne Carpenter at 850-488-4952-ext. 135.

Community Event

May is recognized as Haitian Cultural Heritage Month when Haitian art, film, food, history, literature and music will be showcased. For event information call 786-426-3206

NEED HELP?

If you have a child who you suspect may have a developmental delay or disability, please consult your child's health care provider or contact:

- Ages 0 to 3: Early Intervention Program
North: (305) 243-5600 • South: (786) 268-2611
- Ages 3 to 5: FDLRS/ Miami-Dade Public Schools (305)274-3501

Want to subscribe to this newsletter for free?

Send this to: Michelle Fries: The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation,
3250 SW Third Ave., Miami, Fla. 33129
--OR-- Call 305-631-8111

Name _____

Address _____

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I prefer (circle one): Spanish English Creole

Be a part of the newsletter...

Send in: Photos, questions or helpful tips.

Photos will be included in each issue. These photos personify our readership and do not imply or suggest any particular family styles or situations.

Questions will be answered by local experts.

Helpful tips from parents will be included in the Teachable Moments section.

Mail to: Michelle Fries, The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation, 3250 SW Third Ave., Miami, Fla. 33129.

Published through support from: The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation (305-646-7229) and United Way of Miami-Dade, Success By 6 at (305-860-3000).

These two organizations work closely with the Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition, responsible for oversight of the county's pre-K early intervention and subsidized child-care programs as well as several other efforts. The coalition president and CEO is Chuck Hood (305-646-7223).

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For more information on anything here, please call us at (305) 631-8111 or visit us at www.teachmorelovemore.org.