

# PROJECT 319

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## Age by Age Guideline to Disciplining your Child

### Age 0-2

Toddlers misbehave because they can't express or control their emotions. They also tend to be very demonstrative. So when they're happy, they're very happy. And when they're upset, they're very upset. Your tot is naturally inquisitive, so it's only normal for him to get into everything. His job is to test his new sense of independence; yours is to set limits.

- Making a safe environment for them, free of chemicals, jewelry, unsafe items.
- Offer choices.
- Simply saying No, and removing them from the situation.
- Timeouts, Thinking Time.- A minute per age is the standard.
- Spanking, hitting, slapping doesn't work- A child at this age can not make the connection between behavior and physical punishment.
- Set by example. They are watching you, and love mimicking you.

### Age 3-5

Your preschooler's memory and communication skills are developing and he's better able to follow instructions and understand explanations. This age group is busy figuring out tricky social skills, such as sharing, manners and getting along with friends.

- Start communicating the rules of the family home.
- Explain to your children what you expect of them before you punish them.
- For example: If your child desires to decorate the wall for the first time, explain to them why we use paper. The consequences will be cleaning the wall and not having crayons in the future.
- Never ask more than twice.
- Model the behavior that you want to see.
- Empty threats undermine who you are, consistency is the key.
- Rewarding good behaviors, recognizing what they have done. "I saw you pick up your toys earlier, I am so proud of you."

## PROJECT 319

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### Age 6-8

“Big kids” are now better able to express their feelings and to demonstrate self-control, so this is a prime time to lay the foundation for future behavior. Whatever happens between the ages of five and 10 tends to have a major impact on what’s going to take place in the teen years.

- Consistency is the key.
- Try not to give unrealistic threats or punishment.
- Take a “Question Approach”. For example: “What would you do differently next time?”
- Push the rewind button. Give your child a second chance, and opportunity to do something different.
- With consequences, use cause and effect. If your child’s late for school one day, just put their bedtime back a little bit early for a few days to see how they do.

### Age 9-12

Tweens are starting to spread their wings and they want to go further, stay out longer and do more with their peers. That can be scary for parents (especially with the first child) who don’t want to give up the control. It’s OK, to start giving a little bit of freedom.

- Don’t dictate. when you’re setting rules and limits, involve your young debater in the process. Explain your position, listen to his or hers, and then compromise where you can.
- Negotiate Later: Parents often try to reason with their tweens when they’re in the middle of a disagreement, Negotiate later, when everyone has calmed down.
- Use when and then: “When you finished your homework, then you can play computer games.” This is a phrase that works well for this age group, since you’re still giving your child free will.
- Have clear expectations.

## PROJECT 319

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### Age 13-up

Parents need to realize that brain changes are taking place, hormonal changes are taking place. Kids just aren't in complete control of their own behavior. The drive for independence becomes a dominant force in your teen's life, and his peer group rules.

- They want to be independent. Teens want to make their own decisions. Their decisions can be based on emotion rather than reason or logic.
- Remember to give a teenager some control over things. Not only will this limit the number of power struggles you have, it will help them respect the decisions that you do need to make.
- Don't take it personally, your teen is not trying to find ways to make you angry, even if it seems that way. Stay calm and tell yourself it isn't personal.
- Keep setting appropriate limits. Teens feel more secure when they have clear boundaries on issues like homework and curfew. Remember as well to build in more freedom and responsibility as your child grows.
- Set healthy boundaries with friends, school, and dating. So they know what you expect in every situation.
- Your teen might complain some, but they actually really do thrive with structure and feel safe, even though they don't verbalize it.
- Consequences are good when your teen breaks the rules. Communication with them is always key.
- Let them make decisions about school, clothes, hairstyles, even the conditions of his or her room. Focus on the positive, if they are doing well. Show them that you trust them.

## PROJECT 319

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### South Carolina Law on Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse or neglect occurs when the parent or guardian:

- Inflicts or allows to be afflicted upon the child, physical or mental injury. Including injuries sustained from punishment.
- Commit sexual offense.
- Abandons a child.
- Encourages, condones, or proof mission of delinquent ask by the child. (Illegal activities)
- Fails to support the child with: adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, appropriate to the child's age and development. Education and healthcare.

### A Word about Spanking

Spanking is the most controversial topic on discipline. Experts are finding that there can be a negative context to it. This is why experts, discourage spanking.

- Spanking teaches kids that it's OK to hit when they're angry.
- Spanking can physically harm children.
- Rather than teaching kids how to change their behavior, spanking makes a child fearful of their parents. It teaches them to hide issues from their parents.
- For kids seeking attention by acting out, spanking may "reward" them — Some children feel that negative attention is better than no attention at all.