

Ten Favorite Parenting Techniques

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1. **Proud Book:** Place a small notebook beside your child's bed. Write in the book each day one positive thing/behavior your child did. Keep it brief (under 10 words) and label the specific desirable behaviour, for example: "You got ready for bed so quickly" or "You asked for the treat so politely." Read it aloud to your child.
2. **Connect the Dots:** Buy a connect the dots book. Each time your child does the desired target behavior, they get to connect a dot. Once all the dots are connected, they get a small reward.
3. **Let's Over Do It:** Choose a behavior you are trying to correct in your child, then repeat the behavior at least 5 times i.e. Problem is child forgets to wash hands before meal, so have your child wash their hands 5 times before mealtime.
4. **Post-it Love-You Notes:** Stick post-it notes around the house with loving messages to your child, for example: "Johnny, I love you always and forever" or "Johnny, you bring tremendous joy to my life."
5. **In 5 Minutes:** Offer a choice (e.g., "Do you want to brush your teeth now or in 5 minutes").
6. **Redo Button:** If your child makes a poor choice, calmly say, "Let's hit the redo button," and allow them to try the behaviour again the right way.
7. **Special Time Token:** Give your child a token or card that can be exchanged for 15 minutes of one-on-one time with you later that day. No phones, no distractions.
8. **Photo Routine Chart:** Take photos of your child completing each task of the morning routine (e.g., 1. Brush teeth; 2. Get dressed; 3. Sit at table and eat a healthy breakfast; 4. Put on coat, boots, stand by door ready to leave for school. Glue each photo in sequence onto a piece of cardboard. Child can decorate. Place the chart on the wall in your child's bedroom for them to follow each morning. Create a separate chart for the bedtime routine.
9. **Table Talk:** Find a private place in your home to have Table Talk. Book Table Talk into your weekly schedule i.e., every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday after dinner. Ask your child, "How was your day today? Was it a happy day or a sad day? What happened to make it a happy day or a sad day?" (For older children ask, "How was your day today on a scale of one to ten, one being the worst possible day and ten being the best day ever?"). Repeat what you heard (i.e., "You felt sad when..."). Validate your child's feelings using a soft tone of voice (i.e., "You must have felt very sad when the other kids wouldn't let you play with them"). Ask open-ended questions to invite more discussion (i.e., "Tell me more about your sad feelings"). Don't feel like you have to make it all better—simply listening to your child and validating their feelings is what your child needs most from you. And try to do Table Talk at least a few times per week.
10. **Reward Bag:** Create a Reward Bag with your child. Reward items should be fun parent-child activities. Decide together on the rewards so your child feels part of the process and is motivated to earn the rewards. Write each reward on a separate slip of paper, fold it, and place it in the bag. Your child can earn a point each time the target behavior is accomplished. Choose only one target behavior to reward at a time. Begin by selecting a target behavior that is easy to do. Each time your child earns 5 points, they get to pick a reward from the bag. Track points earned by using a reward chart. Examples for rewards: Play a board game with parent; Build a fort with parent; Do a craft with parent; Find a yummy recipe together, then make it; Have a family indoor picnic; Have a pajama party; Have a "reverse dinner" (eat dessert first).

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