

# Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior

**P A R E N T   G U I D E**

**EMPOWERING  
PARENTS . . .**

**TRANSFORMING  
TEENS.**



*The Parent*  
PROJECT®

**Parent Project<sup>®</sup>, Sr.**

# **Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior**

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A Parent Workbook  
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## Introduction

Most parents with strong-willed or out-of-control children who take this course share the same thought, *Nothing works with my child!*

We understand your frustration. So let's answer your first question. *How is this program different?* The answer is, you created it! Or should we say over 500,000 parents with children *just as tough as yours*, actually created this course.

- **What do you do when your child refuses to help around the house?**
- **What can I do when my child screams and curses at me?**
- **What should I do when my child runs away?**
- **What do you do when your child hits you?**
- **My kid is a drug user and may be addicted. What should I do?**
- **What do you do when your child refuses to go to school?**
- **My kid is in a gang. What can I do?**

We listened for over twenty five years, and *with your help* created concrete, no-nonsense answers to every question you asked. Yes, it was a big job. But the success stories parents continue to share with us makes the time spent worth every minute.

So, relax! The answers to your questions are here. Unfortunately, your facilitator will not be able to answer all of your questions tonight. In fact, it will take about 24 classroom hours . . . one day's time . . . for your facilitator to share the information you need for change in your home. We must first build a foundation that cannot be broken or shaken by our children. That's the bad news. There is no magic pill, no quick fix. It will take commitment. Your facilitator is willing to commit his/her time and provide you with both emotional and practical support for as long as you need it. If you, too, are willing to commit your time and effort to the process, everything is possible! This program has worked for hundreds of thousands of families across the country. There is no reason it cannot work for you as well. That is the good news!

Is your family worth one day? Give us 24 hours: we promise it will change your life.

There is one last thing. The answers you learn in this class mean *nothing!* It is what we actually do at home that will bring about change. In taking action, our attitude means everything. As parents, the more excuses we offer, the less effective we become. But, if we adopt a *Yes I Can* attitude, we learn that everything is possible.



In each class you will learn new techniques to deal with your strong-willed or out-of-control child. At the end of the class, you will be given the opportunity to practice your new skills at home. We call these *Steps of Success*. If you take your weekly *Steps*, you will see positive changes at home. If you choose not to take your *Steps of Success*, nothing will change. The choice is yours.

## ***A Note from the Authors***

This workbook has been designed for use in conjunction with both classroom instruction and ongoing parent support group sessions. Because the material contained in this text deals with the most destructive of adolescent behaviors, our insurance underwriters mandate that instructors and clinicians complete the Parent Project's Facilitator Training prior to delivering this curriculum. We encourage parents to ask to see their instructor's Parent Project training certificate prior to taking this course.

Other than your weekly *Steps of Success*, parents are cautioned not to begin making changes at home until they have completed the instructional portions of this course and have a firm understanding of the material presented. Parents should seek the advice of a qualified mental health professional whenever their child engages

in self-injurious behavior.

For purposes of brevity, the male pronouns he, his, and him will be used in lieu of both male and female pronouns (he/she; his/her; and him/her) when referring to "the child" in this workbook. The choice of the male gender is made arbitrarily and is not intended to be sexist in any way, nor is it meant to indicate the male children are any more prone to destructive behaviors than are female children.

We wish to give special acknowledgment and thanks to Dr. Bonnie Burstein for her willingness to share her expertise, commitment to families and ongoing support of this project.



*This workbook is dedicated to all those parents  
who struggle to hold the line.*

# Contents

## Part One: Laying the Foundation for Change

<b>Unit I</b>	<b>Understanding Our Children.....</b>	<b>1</b>
	Strong-Willed vs Compliant Children .....	2
	Love and Affection .....	3
	Working in Groups .....	4
	Influence vs. Control .....	8
	Influencing and Motivating Children.....	9
<b>Unit II</b>	<b>Addressing Problematic Behavior.....</b>	<b>15</b>
	Expectations and Feelings .....	17
	Dealing with Emotional Behavior .....	19
	Preparing to Address Problematic Behavior .....	20
	Threats of Running Away and Suicide .....	24
<b>Unit III</b>	<b>A Parent’s Formula for Success .....</b>	<b>27</b>
	Active Supervision .....	28
	Today’s Media and Technology.....	31
	Creating Structure.....	37
	Using Structure and Active Supervision.....	38
	Improving School Performance.....	39
	Developing Homework Behavior.....	43
<b>Unit IV</b>	<b>Adolescent Drug Use .....</b>	<b>49</b>
	What’s Out There .....	53
	Recognizing Alcohol and Other Drug Use .....	59
	Drug-Use Intervention Techniques.....	62
	Six-Steps Action Plan.....	63
	Finding Help.....	67
<b>Unit V</b>	<b>The Out-of-Control Child.....</b>	<b>71</b>
	Our Children’s Choice of Friends.....	73
	Preventing Gang Involvement.....	75
	Recognizing Gang/occult Involvement.....	77
	The Intervention Process .....	82
	Out-of-Control Children.....	84
<b>Unit VI</b>	<b>Considering Relationships and Developing Action Plans .....</b>	<b>95</b>
	Talking to Kids About Relationships .....	97
	Concept Review .....	102
	Establishing House Rules .....	103
	Effective Action Plans .....	105
	Time to Act .....	111

# Contents

## Part Two: Supporting Change & Improving Relationships

<b>Unit VII</b>	<b>Finding Help and Support .....</b>	<b>115</b>
	Support for Parents.....	116
	Help for Children .....	118
	Working in Support Groups.....	119
<b>Unit VIII</b>	<b>The Dynamics of Change.....</b>	<b>125</b>
	“It’s Not Working!” .....	126
	The Phases of Change .....	129
<b>Unit IX</b>	<b>Managing Conflict in the Home.....</b>	<b>133</b>
	Taking Time Out.....	135
	Negotiating a Compromise .....	136
<b>Unit X</b>	<b>Active Listening.....</b>	<b>141</b>
	Just Listen!.....	142
	The Five Steps .....	143
<b>Unit XI</b>	<b>Growing Stronger Teens.....</b>	<b>149</b>
	Sleep.....	150
	Diet.....	153
<b>Unit XII</b>	<b>Building Positive Self Concepts .....</b>	<b>159</b>
	Positive and Negative Messages.....	160
	Choices .....	163
<b>Unit XIII</b>	<b>Consistency .....</b>	<b>167</b>
	Enforcing House Rules .....	168
	The Importance of Consistency in Families.....	169
<b>Unit XIV</b>	<b>Expectations, Standards and Values .....</b>	<b>175</b>
	Parental Expectations .....	176
	Family Values and Standards .....	177
<b>Unit XV</b>	<b>Promoting Family Unity .....</b>	<b>181</b>
	A Sense of Family.....	182
<b>Unit XVI</b>	<b>Putting It Together and Making It Work.....</b>	<b>189</b>
	Program Review .....	190
	Mapping Progress.....	192
	Continuing On Your Own .....	193
<b>Self-Help Support Groups .....</b>		<b>199</b>
	Terms and Definitions .....	203
	Self-Help Support Group Meeting Forms.....	205
	Homework Assignment Sheet / Telephone Book .....	209

# **Part One**

## **Laying the Foundation for Change**

# Unit 1: Understanding Our Children

*(What we need to know about strong-willed children and changing behavior)*

## **Session Objectives:**

**Parents will be able to . . .**

- Describe character traits of a strong-willed child
- Recognize successful ways to demonstrate love and affection
- Discuss issues of influence versus control
- Describe effective parenting strategies to increase or decrease behavior

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## **Before We Begin Unit 1:**

*Choose someone you do not know to be your partner. Ask each other the following questions. Please write or draw your partner's answers.*



1. What is your partner's name?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the names and ages of your partner's children?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What does your partner hope to learn from this class?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

After getting your partner's permission, introduce your new friend to the group using the above information.

## Strong-willed vs. Compliant Children

Parents with compliant children usually do not understand what all the fuss is about, while parents of strong-willed children usually end up questioning their own ability to parent effectively. For parents of strong-willed children, quiet family conversations usually end in arguments or screaming matches and simple parental requests are met with loud complaints or open refusals to cooperate.

Generally speaking, strong-willed adolescents learn about life by trying it themselves. They do

not accept parental input nor are they willing to use the mistakes of others as learning experiences for themselves. The frequently heard adolescent phrase, *It's OK; that won't happen to me*, is especially true for this child. This is why just talking to the strong-willed child about unwanted behavior is generally ineffective. Their stubbornness, curiosity, lack of fear, and desire to experience things first-hand, usually means they will do what they want, even when they know they are breaking the rules. Strong-willed children often engage in such behaviors quite impulsively.

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### Activity 1.1: Personality

*Working by yourself or with your spouse, choose the five words / phrases that best describe your child's personality. Please circle your answers.*



<b>Calm</b>	<b>Emotional</b>
<b>Easy going</b>	<b>Strong-willed</b>
<b>Willing to listen</b>	<b>Argumentative</b>
<b>Understanding</b>	<b>Stubborn</b>
<b>Compliant</b>	<b>Challenging</b>

If three or more of your answers are in the column on the right, chances are you have a strong-willed child and traditional parenting techniques may not be effective. Just as an automobile mechanic would not use tools designed for foreign cars on American cars, parents should not expect the parenting techniques created for more compliant children, to be effective with strong-willed or out-of-control children.

While it is true that compliant children are sometimes more susceptible to peer pressure, the fact that the strong-willed child is more likely to expose himself to destructive adolescent behavior is also true. A study on crime in the United States,

(Crime and Human Nature, James Q. Wilson) explains the four major factors that led nearly all of the youth studied into a life of crime:

- **Lack of discipline**
- **Lack of supervision**
- **Negative peer influence**
- **Lack of demonstrated love and affection**

Because of the dangers of drug use or gang involvement, the presence or lack of these factors in a child's life can mean the difference between life and death. We will take a close look at each of these factors during the next few weeks.

## Love and Affection

The three most empowering words in any language are, *I Love you*. Parents who understand the importance of these three words, and practice them daily, will have mastered the single most important element of successful parenting.

Love and affection are the keys to effective parent/child communication and discipline, and play a vital role in building a child's self-esteem. Sadly, children often involve themselves in destructive behavior because they do not believe their parents love or care about them. (The bumper sticker: *Have you hugged your kid today?* was originally developed as a campaign to help parents keep their children from using drugs and alcohol.)

Simply loving children is not enough. Parents' love for their children must be **expressed**.

**S**imply loving children is not enough. Parents' love for their children must be expressed.

Many parents, especially fathers, often find it difficult to tell those closest to them how they feel. It is essential for children to know they're loved today for who they are, and not what they might become. Children are "now" centered. They seldom think of the future and do not usually hold on to parental messages from one day to the next. For these reasons, most experts agree parents' love for their children should be communicated daily.

When teenagers are having difficulties, a parent's expression of love may not be openly acknowledged by the child. Nevertheless, love must be expressed daily. Hugs and kisses and pats on the back are great. They all help to show love and affection to a child, but there is no replacement for a meaningful, "I love you." These three words can work wonders and are irreplaceable in changing destructive adolescent behavior.

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## A Parent's Love

*Parents plea to the heavens,  
For some guiding light,  
To give them strength,  
And help them sleep at night.*

*Those prayers are answered,  
So that parents will know,  
That they are the guidance,  
To where their children go.*

*Parents guide with rules,  
With love and with hope,  
With strength and with courage,  
Which helps kids to cope.*

*Parents say to kids daily,  
Just how much they are loved,  
Even when kids are errant,  
And they've pushed or shoved.*

*Parents, don't sit in silence,  
Stand straight and proud,  
Tell your children you love them,  
Right in front of their crowd.*

*For no matter their faults,  
Or the wrongs kids may do,  
Your love and affection,  
Will bring them home to you.*

## Working In Support Groups

Most of the parenting techniques discussed in the large group will be learned and practiced in smaller support groups. Therefore, before we begin our first group activity, it will be necessary to divide into support groups of about four members each. Working in a support group allows each member to draw from the experiences of their entire group, thereby increasing learning and understanding. Support groups work best when each member is assigned to and performs one of the following *group roles*:

### Group Facilitator:

The group “task master” keeps the group on task and ensures that the group follows through with the format of each activity.

### Group Time Keeper:

The group “efficiency expert” paces the group and monitors the time allotment during all support group activities, and helps the group complete activities by giving a one minute warning to the group before the end of the allotted time.

### Group Reporter / Recorder:

The group “spokesperson” records group responses/answers during activities, and then reports the group’s answers to the large group at the end of each activity.

### Group Nurturers/Cheerleaders:

The group motivator(s) help their group to focus on the positive and gives positive strokes to individual members. This member promotes each member’s participation, and discourages judgmental language and behavior. (More than one parent can be assigned to this important task.)

These *group roles* should be rotated among support group members on a weekly basis.

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## Group Activity 1.2: Roles

- *Working with your support group, take a minute to elect **every** member to one of the group roles. Record the member’s name next to his/her assigned role.*
- *Now take a minute for each group member to describe his/her role to the group.*



### Session Roles:

**Group Facilitator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group Time Keeper:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group Reporter:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group Nurturers/Cheerleader(s):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Before we move on to the next activity, let's examine a few ground rules for working in groups:

**Active Listening:**

Only one group member speaks at a time. When a support group member is speaking, the remaining group members should give their complete and undivided attention.

**Confidentiality:**

Trust between group members is the foundation for group success. For trust to develop, people must feel sure of confidentiality. Confidentiality is generally interpreted as, *What is heard in the group, remains in the group.*

**Avoid Being Judgmental:**

Each support group should be a safe, comfortable and positive place to share your feelings and stories. Support groups are not a place for sarcasm, judgment, criticism or confrontation. Planned activities require the brain power of the

entire group to be successful. Judgmental responses often shut down the creative process.

When working with your group on Brainstorming Activities the following additional norms should be included:

**Quantity vs. Quality:**

There are no right or wrong answers in brainstorming activities. Members should contribute to the group whatever ideas come to mind. Be as creative as possible; don't worry about the merit of the idea.

**Okay to Piggy Back:**

When a member can add to another member's idea, they should do so. Once an idea or thought has been spoken aloud, it belongs to the group.

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## Group Activity 1.3(a): Showing Love

*Working with your support group, take a few minutes to list or draw examples of ways parents can convey love and affection to their children. Remember to consider the ground rules and norms for brainstorming activities.*



**Example: Saying, "I Love You."**

**Cooking for your children.**



## Group Activity 1.3(b): Most Effective

Now, of the examples you have listed, how many will a child generally recognize as love or affection? (Note: usually there will only be three.)



Ways of expressing love that my child will certainly recognize:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Parents want their children to know they are loved and the three examples listed above will usually work. Parents who find it difficult to **tell** their children they are loved will usually feel comfortable with at least one of the other examples.

At the end of one class we taught, one mother waited until all of the other parents had left before approaching us. She said that she did not think she could tell her two teenage daughters that she loved them. She told us she was never hugged nor kissed as a child, and her parents had never told her that she was loved. She had raised her two daughters in the same way.

Our hearts went out to this single mother. We looked at each other and took a deep breath before saying, *Nevertheless. . . If you cannot do this, we are not sure we can help you! Can you write?* we asked. Yes, she replied. *Can your daughters read?* Yes, she said again. *Then write them I Love You notes, and put them in their school lunch bags. Will you try writing them both a love note this next week?* It was her turn to take a deep breath. *OK,* she responded.

As we left that evening, we were probably as anxious as this mother. As soon as she walked into the classroom the following week, we rushed up to her. *Did you put the notes in their lunch bags?* Yes, she said. *Well? Don't keep us hang-*

*ing. What happened? Well, she began, I was sitting on the sofa when my girls returned home from school. Without saying a word, they ran up to me, picked me up off the sofa, carried me into my bedroom, threw me on my bed, and tickled me until I wet my pants!*



What were her daughters trying to tell their mother? You guessed it. *We love you too*. Sadly, they had not yet learned how to say it either.

In nearly every class we've taught, some parent(s), have experienced a little miracle. That is, they return home from class, begin heartfelt expressions of their love to their children, and their child's behavior begins changing almost immediately. Everything we will do in this course begins with an effective, *I Love You*. We are not promising all of you immediate miracles, but Love and Affection is our first building block.

Some parents have told us that open displays of love and affection are not a part of their culture nor the way they were raised. We certainly understand cultural differences. If you are a parent experiencing these thoughts, we encourage you to ask yourselves a simple question; *How is my child currently behaving without my open displays of love and affection?* If the answer is, *terrific*, you probably don't need this class. If the answer is, *You don't wanna know*, we're offering a formula. This formula for changing destructive adolescent behavior has worked for tens of thousands of families of varying nationalities all over the country. If parents leave out any single part of the formula, including love and affection, we are not sure we can help you. But, for the parent who is willing to put aside the way they were raised, busyness, and other personal barriers, and truly commit themselves to helping their children, everything is possible.

The power of parental love was driven home at a funeral we attended. Our friend, a young father of two, had been tragically killed in an accident. When his 17 year-old son spoke at his father's funeral he said, "The thing I will miss the most is my father's daily text message telling me how much he loves me." Without open displays of love and affection, discipline, structure, communication and the family itself will suffer greatly.

## ***What Was He Thinking?***

The answer is, he probably wasn't thinking clear-

ly! At least not the way most adults think.

**Example:** In a research study conducted by Dr. Deborah Todd at Harvard's McLean Hospital, MRI's, (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), were used to show how teens process emotions differently than adults. While the teens in the study identified emotions on pictures of faces displayed on a computer screen, MRI images of their brains were taken. Teens, who generally perform poorly on this task, activated the "Amygdala," a portion of the brain that processes fear and other "gut" reactions. As we grow older, our brain activity during these tasks shifts more to the frontal lobe of the brain, which generally results in better processing and improved reasoning.

So what does that mean? We recently read an article that appeared in "O" Magazine. The author recounted how he and his other 14 year-old friends had all risked serious injury by jumping from a second story window of a friend's home. The boys were not to be in the house without parental supervision. But the parents, upon returning home, had already discovered that the boys were in the house. Knowing this, the boys jumped anyway! The author writes, "The first teen to jump broke his arm. **Already caught and already having seen him get hurt, we all followed him out the window.** Let me repeat that: ***Already caught and already having seen him get hurt, we all followed him out the window.***"

***Already caught and already having seen him get hurt, we all followed him out the window."***



## Group Activity 1.4: Kids

Working with your support group take a few minutes to discuss and answer the questions below.



### How do most adolescent children generally think and act?

1. Do children usually plan for tomorrow or do they live for today?

**Answer:** Children usually

2. Do children generally consider the feelings of others or do they think of themselves first?

**Answer:** Children generally

3. Are children usually willing to wait or do they want it now?

**Answer:** Children usually

4. Are children more likely to think things through or to act on emotions?

**Answer:** Children are more likely

5. Do children generally respond quietly or angrily when parents tell them, "NO"?

**Answer:** Children respond

Teenage brains are not yet fully developed. In fact, the human brain does not fully develop until we are in our early to mid 20's. The lack of complete brain development is no excuse for breaking house rules or destructive behavior. But, understanding that kids simply think and see things differently than adults, should help us better manage our reactions to our children's poor choices. Screaming and yelling at our children will not help. As parents, we would do well to remember that adolescent children generally act and think as they do not because they are bad, but because they are young. After Love and Affection, this is our second building block, children think differently than adults.

**Screaming and yelling at our children will not help.**

building block.

If we truly had control, none of our children would drop out of school, use drugs, become pregnant, or join gangs. Nevertheless, parents often make the mistake of trying to control their children. In turn, many strong-willed teens rebel just to prove

to Mom and Dad that they cannot be controlled. In most of these cases, the rebellion will continue until the child is sure that Mom and Dad are no longer trying to control

him. Parents can significantly reduce this power struggle by frequently stating they are well aware they do not control their child.

### Influence vs. Control

Parents of strong-willed children can often be heard to say they have *lost control* of their child. This is simply not true. In order to *lose control*, a parent must first have control. *Parents do not control children.* After love and affection and the way kids think and act, this is our next major

Second only to the need for frequent displays of love and affection, the issue of parental influence vs. control is the most critical concept presented in this course. *We simply do not control our children.* The sooner we give up the notion of control, the more effective we will be as parents.

## Activity 1.5: Think Back

Take a few moments to reflect on your own childhood. Record one instance when, as an adolescent, you seriously broke the house rules, or otherwise disobeyed your parents.



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In the instance you described above, were your parents able to control your behavior?

Yes  No

What parents do have is a great deal of *influence*. In fact, parents are the most important role models for their children. Interestingly, between the ages of 12 and 25, approximately 50 percent of a child's values are formed from his parents' value system. The remaining 50 percent is formed by the child's environment and peers. Between the ages of 25 and 30, another 30 percent of a child's

values are taken from his parents' values and 20 percent is formed by personal experience. Because parents are such powerful role models for their children, when new parenting strategies are learned and practiced, destructive adolescent behavior can generally be prevented or changed.

**In fact, parents are the most important role models for their children.**

## Influencing and Motivating Children

Parents can motivate strong-willed children to change by providing **positive strokes** or **positive consequences** for desired behaviors and **negative consequences** for unwanted behaviors. Parents should recognize or give **positive strokes** to their children when they catch them doing something right.

**Example:** A parent sees his/her child reading a book instead of watching television. A parent who wanted to increase reading behavior could say, "I

*can't tell you how good it makes me feel to see you reading a book."*

This type of recognition or positive stroke increases the probability the child will read again in the near future.

Remember, it is easier to increase wanted behaviors than it is to decrease unwanted behaviors. When children spend more time doing what is right, there is less time for them to do wrong.

## Group Activity 1.6: They Did Good

Working with your support group, take a few minutes to list or draw some behaviors for which a child should be given a positive stroke by his parent.



- **Example: Taking out the trash without being asked.**
- **Example: Helping a younger brother or sister.**
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

A second powerful way to increase desired behavior comes from **positive consequences**, such as giving children access to the things or activities they want after they have complied with a parent's request.

**Example:** A child returns home from school and asks Mom if she can watch TV. Knowing her daughter has unfinished homework, Mom re-

sponds, *Absolutely honey. You can watch TV just as soon as your homework is finished.*

In this case, the positive consequence for the child is watching television after the homework is completed. By using the word "absolutely" this mother focuses on the positive and helps reduce the arguments.

## Group Activity 1.7: Fun Follows Work

Working with your support group, take a few minutes to develop a list of situations parents should create at home to allow their child to experience **positive consequences**. Make sure that every situation identifies a positive consequence to a specific desired behavior. Don't forget to use the word "Absolutely."



- **Example: "Absolutely, you may use the telephone, as soon as you finish drying the dishes."**
- **Example: "Absolutely, you may go to your friend's house, as soon as your room is clean."**
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

When parents use both **positive strokes** and **positive consequences** frequently, it tends to increase positive behaviors and helps children feel better about themselves.

**Negative consequences** should be used for unwanted behaviors or broken house rules. **Negative consequences** usually mean the

removal of the things and activities our children enjoy.

**Example:** *If a child breaks the house rule by coming home an hour past his curfew, the negative consequences might be the removal of all of the things and activities the child enjoys for one day (24 hours).*

## Group Activity 1.8: Poor Choices

*Working with your support group, take a few minutes to list or draw some unwanted behaviors or broken house rules for which a child should be given **negative consequences**. Try to list observable behaviors and not attitudes.*



- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

For most parents, **negative consequences** means grounding their child. For some parents, grounding means that their child stays at home for a period of time. For other parents, grounding means taking away the telephone or TV for a period of time. For strong-willed or out-of-control children, combining both of these concepts works best. That is, the child stays at home during his/her free time, and parents take everything, (fun stuff) away for a short period of time.

very effective in changing destructive adolescent behavior.

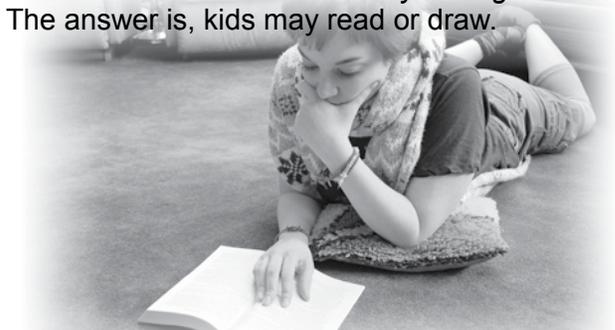
The **Negative consequence** (TEASPOT) for broken house rules or unwanted behaviors should fit the way children think, not the way parents think. For example, because children live for today and are not usually willing to wait for what they want, consequences should generally be short-term, (one evening to three days) for adolescents.

**A parent in one of our classes called this technique, TEASPOT, (Take Everything Away for a Short Period Of Time).**

A parent in one of our classes called this technique, TEASPOT, (Take Everything Away for a Short Period Of Time). TEASPOT follows the time-tested consequence of Time Out. When a two year -old is placed on a Time Out by his parent/s, it usually is for two minutes. During that two-minute time period, the child has nothing they want: no play, no toys and no fun stuff to do. For the adolescent child, the TEASPOT works the same. With younger children we typically remove the child from his things. With teenagers, we remove the things from the adolescent. Taking Everything Away for a Short Period Of Time is

When using the TEASPOT, parents often ask, *What should I allow my child to do with their free time when they are grounded?*

The answer is, kids may read or draw.



Remember, we are taking everything away! Therefore consequences must be short term to keep children from feeling as if they are on Death Row and from subsequently rebelling because they think they have nothing else to lose. Short-term consequences are far more effective in changing behavior. Short-term consequences work because they fit the way children think, not the way parents think. (The consequence is designed to change the child's behavior, not to satisfy the parent's frustration or desire for revenge.)

Parents often share with us that every time their kids are grounded, they break another house rule that causes another restriction. One parent said her child broke the house rules so often she thought he was grounded until he was 31. When kids break a second house rule when they are on a TEASPOOT, parents should never lengthen the time of the restriction. All the parents need to do is restart the time of the original TEASPOOT.

**Example:** *A child has completed 1 day of a 3-day TEASPOOT for alcohol use. On the second day, the child sneaks out of the house to be with his friends. The parents should simply start the same 3-day TEASPOOT over again. Using this technique, parents keep restrictions from piling up on their children. Children are more likely to cooperate when they can see the light at the end of the tunnel.*

For parents whose children continually break the house rules when they are grounded, don't worry. We'll make additional suggestions in the upcoming Units.

## ***Refining the Concepts***

Although parents cannot control their children, parents can control the things their children enjoy such as telephones, television, toys, freedom for activities and junk food. While children may not be willing to work for the things **we** want, they will usually work for the things **they** want. By controlling the things children want, parents can motivate children to change unwanted behaviors.

Many parents use corporal punishment in place of, or in addition to the **negative consequences** discussed here. While some parents may have found spanking to be effective in changing behavior with younger children, we do not recommend it with adolescents. With strong-willed teens, corporal punishment is often seen as another attempt to control them, and only escalates the power struggle. Most of these children respond to corporal punishment by becoming even more rebellious. Some children may even strike back at their parents. Corporal punishment is an ineffective tool in changing destructive adolescent behavior. It generally drives adolescent children further from their parents. However, parents can increase their influence and motivate strong-willed children to change their behavior by consistently using **love and affection, positive strokes, positive consequences** and **negative consequences**.

***While children may not be willing to work for the things we want, they will usually work for the things they want.***

Perhaps Harry Golden said it best: *The arrogance of the young is a direct result of not having known enough consequences. The turkey that everyday greedily approaches the farmer who tosses him grain is not wrong. It is just that no one ever told the turkey about Thanksgiving.*

We live in a world that is full of consequences, both positive and negative. When children consistently do their homework, the consequences are usually improved grades and increased self esteem. The consequences for behaviors such as drinking and driving, drug use and early sexual involvement, can be disastrous. As parents, it is our responsibility to help our children avoid life's more severe and even deadly lessons, by teaching them about consequences while they are in the home. Allowing a child to face the world without the knowledge of and experience with, both **positive** and **negative consequences** for their actions is criminal.

## Review Activity 1.9

With your support group, take a few minutes to complete the following statements by filling in the blanks using the words in bold print below. Feel free to use your books.

Then, working by yourself, record the most powerful idea **you** learned from this unit.



1. If parents have a strong-willed child, traditional parenting techniques may not \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Parents must tell their children how much they are loved every \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Although parents cannot control their children, parents can control the \_\_\_\_\_ their children enjoy.
4. Parents should give their children positive \_\_\_\_\_ when they catch their children doing something right.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ term consequences are more effective than long-term consequences because they fit the way children think.

**strokes day work**

**Short things**

6. Finally, working by yourself, what was the most powerful idea **you** personally learned from this Unit?

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## Steps of Success Note:

Changing a child's unwanted behavior requires that we parents change also. The Steps of Success found at the end of each Unit, are designed to help parents prepare for and bring about change in the home. We find that parents who faithfully

complete each week's S.O.S. are far more likely to see positive changes at home. Therefore, we strongly recommend that **every** Step of Success be completed and recorded weekly. Do it and you too will see positive changes at home.

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## S.O.S. (Steps of Success)

*"I wish I would have held you closer, hugged and kissed you more when you were little." (This parent author is unknown, but it is never too late for open displays of love and affection.)*

*This Week:*

- *Tell your children how much they are loved every day.*
- *Catch your children doing something right and give them a positive stroke.*

*Make sure you bring back your success stories to share with your support group next week.*



How did your child react to your open displays of love and affection this past week?

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I gave my child a positive stroke when "I caught" him:

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**Critical Family Concept:**  
*My kids need my love and affection everyday!*

