

# Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior



# **Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior**

---

**Ralph “Bud” Fry and  
Dr. Roger H. Morgan**

**with Pete Melendez**

**poems by  
Jim Jeffra**

14th Edition

Copyright © 2020 Parent Project,<sup>®</sup> Inc.

[www.parentproject.com](http://www.parentproject.com)



# 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. We promise to be here with you every "**Step**" of the way.

“ We have your back!

”



## 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 is violent or 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.

When the word "parent" is used in this book, it refers to moms and dads, moms and moms, dads and dads, foster parents, grandparents, adoptive parents and any other caregiver taking this class.

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.







*To all those parents who struggle to hold the line.*

# Contents

---

## Part One: Laying the Foundation for Change

<b>Unit 1 Understanding Our Children</b>	<b>2</b>
Strong-Willed vs Compliant Children .....	4
Love and Affection .....	6
Working in Groups .....	7
Influence vs. Control .....	11
Influencing and Motivating Children .....	12
<b>Unit 2 Addressing Problematic Behavior</b>	<b>22</b>
What is Trauma .....	25
Teenagers .....	28
Dealing with Emotional Behavior .....	30
Focus on the T.O.P.I.C. ....	32
Threats of Running Away and Suicide .....	37
<b>Unit 3 Active Supervision &amp; Structure</b>	<b>44</b>
Active Supervision .....	47
Today's Media and Technology .....	50
Smartphones and Mobile Apps .....	53
Creating Structure .....	61
Using Structure & Active Supervision .....	62
<b>Unit 4 Improving School Attendance &amp; Performance</b>	<b>68</b>
School Attendance .....	72
Using Structure & Active Supervision .....	74
Home / School Communication .....	76
The Homework Assignment Sheet .....	77
Action Planning .....	83
<b>Unit 5 Drug Use: Identification, Prevention, &amp; Intervention</b>	<b>92</b>
An Overview .....	94
Teen Drug Use Trends .....	97
Recognizing Drug Use .....	99
The Intervention Process .....	101
The Adult Child .....	104
<b>Unit 6 Addressing Out-of-Control Behaviors</b>	<b>112</b>
Why Do Kids Choose Unhealthy or Destructive Relationships .....	116
Building A Sense of Hope .....	120
Youth Gangs .....	120
Intervention .....	122
Runaway and Violent Children .....	127

# Contents

---

<b>Unit 7 Developing Personal Action Plans</b>	<b>140</b>
Concept Review .....	143
Establishing House Rules .....	146
Building Effective Action Plans .....	148
Blended Families .....	151
Where the Rubber Meets the Road .....	154
<b>Part Two: Supporting Change &amp; Improving Relationships</b>	
<b>Unit 8 Finding Help &amp; Support</b>	<b>164</b>
Support for Parents.....	166
Help for Children .....	168
Working in Support Groups .....	171
<b>Unit 9 Developing Healthy Relationships</b>	<b>180</b>
Our Children’s Choice of Friends .....	182
Talking to Kids About Relationships .....	185
Dating Rules .....	190
<b>Unit 10 The Dynamics of Change</b>	<b>198</b>
It’s Not Working .....	200
The Three Phases of Change .....	204
<b>Unit 11 Managing Conflict in the Home</b>	<b>210</b>
Taking Time Out .....	212
Negotiating a Compromise .....	214
<b>Unit 12 Building Positive Self Concepts</b>	<b>220</b>
Active Listening .....	224
Verbal Messages .....	226
<b>Unit 13 Growing Stronger Teens</b>	<b>236</b>
Part of the Problem (Sleep) .....	238
You Are What You Eat .....	242
<b>Unit 14 Consistency</b>	<b>252</b>
Enforcing House Rules .....	254
<b>Unit 15 Expectations, Standards, and Values</b>	<b>264</b>
Expectations .....	266
Family Values & Standards .....	268
<b>Unit 16 Promoting Family Unity</b>	<b>276</b>
A Sense of Family .....	278
Program Review .....	281
Self-Help Support Groups .....	283



# **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



## Unit 1:

# Before We Begin

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. Adolescents in general often believe, *It's OK; that won't happen to me*, but it is especially true for the strong-willed child. This is why just talking to the strong-willed child about unwanted behavior is generally ineffective. Their impulsiveness, 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.



## Activity 1.1: *Personality*

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

<b>Calm</b>	<b>Challenging</b>
<b>Easy going</b>	<b>Emotional</b>
<b>Willing to listen</b>	<b>Strong-willed</b>
<b>Understanding</b>	<b>Argumentative</b>
<b>Compliant</b>	<b>Stubborn</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, we should not expect 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. Understanding the importance of these three words, and practicing them daily, will help us master the single most important element of successful parenting.

Love and affection are the keys to effective 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 or other caregivers love or care about them. (The bumper sticker: Have you hugged your kid today? was originally developed as a campaign to help keep children from using drugs and alcohol.)

Simply loving children is not enough. Love for children must be expressed, not just felt. 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 love for children should be communicated daily.

When teenagers are having difficulties, expressions 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.

## A Parent's Love

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

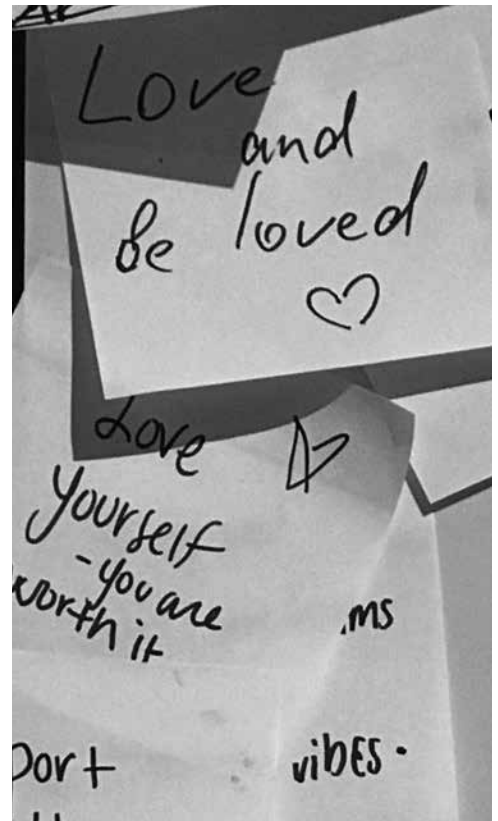
Those prayers are answered,  
So that parents will know,  
That they are the guidance,  
To where their children go.

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

---

**M**ost 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, 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 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 Timekeeper:**

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 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.



“ Simply loving children is not enough. Parents’ love for their children must be expressed. ”



## 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.

### Session Roles:

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

**Group Timekeeper:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**B**efore 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.



## 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.

Examples: 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:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

We want our 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 participants 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 had never been told 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 hanging. 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, someone has experienced a 'mini' 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 and ends with an effective, *I Love You*. We are not promising immediate miracles, but Love and Affection is our first building block.

We have been told by some 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 any single part of the formula is left out, including love and affection, we are not sure we can help you. But, for those 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 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.

# Influence vs. Control

---

**P**arents 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, you 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 building block.

If we truly had control, none of our children would drop out of school, use drugs, become pregnant, or join gangs. Nevertheless, we often make the mistake of trying to control 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. Power struggles can be greatly reduced by frequently stating we are well aware we do not control our children.

Second only to the need for frequent displays of love and affection, the issue of 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.





## Activity 1.4: 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.

---



---



---



---

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

Yes  No

What we do have is a great deal of influence. In fact, we are the most important role models for children. Interestingly, between the ages of 12 and 25, approximately 50 percent of a child's values are formed from his parents'/caregivers' 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'/caregivers' values and 20 percent is formed by personal experience. Because we are such powerful role models for our children, when new 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

Strong-willed children can be motivated 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 child is observed reading a book instead of watching television. A parent who wanted to increase reading behavior might 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.

When children spend more time involved in positive and constructive activities, there is less time for them to engage in things that can bring negative consequences into their lives.





# Group Activity 1.5: *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.

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 play video games. Knowing her daughter has unfinished homework, Mom responds, *Absolutely honey. You can play video games just as soon as your homework is finished.*

In this case, the positive consequence for the child is playing video games after the homework is completed. By using the word “absolutely” this mother focuses on the positive and helps reduce the arguments.



# Group Activity 1.6: *Fun Follows Work*

Working with your support group, take a few minutes to develop a list of situations we should create at home to allow children 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 CAR, 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 **positive strokes** and **positive consequences** are both used 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 1.7: *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/caregivers, **negative consequences** means grounding their child. For some, grounding means that their child stays at home for a period of time. For others, 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.

Someone 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 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 adults 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.

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.

In blended families, it is often better for the biological parent to initiate the TEASPOT or other structure (homework chores, etc.), whenever possible. When the child sees the step-parent as the “enforcer,” children are often resistant. Step-parents can and should, however, give lots of **positive strokes** and initiate **positive consequences**. Step-children often say You are not my father/mother. Step-parents might respond, No, I am not. But I am now part of the management team in this home. I care about you and your wellbeing, and your father/mother is not here now.

*We will discuss more about step and co-parenting in Unit 7.*

Perhaps Harry Golden said it best: *The arrogance of the young is a direct result of not having known enough consequences. The turkey that every day 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.

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 adults think. Remember, the consequence is designed to change the child's behavior, not to satisfy the parent's/caregiver's frustration or desire for revenge.

It is often shared with us that every time kids are grounded, they break another house rule that causes another restriction. One mother 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 TEASPOT, we should never lengthen the time of the restriction. All we need to do is restart the time of the original TEASPOT.

**Example:** A child has completed 1 day of a 3-day TEASPOT for alcohol use. On the second day, the child sneaks out of the house to be with his friends. The same 3-day TEASPOT should start over again. Using this technique, restrictions do not pile up on children. Children are more likely to cooperate when they can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Some children continually break house rules when they are grounded. Don't worry. We'll make additional suggestions in the upcoming Units.



# Refining the Concepts

---

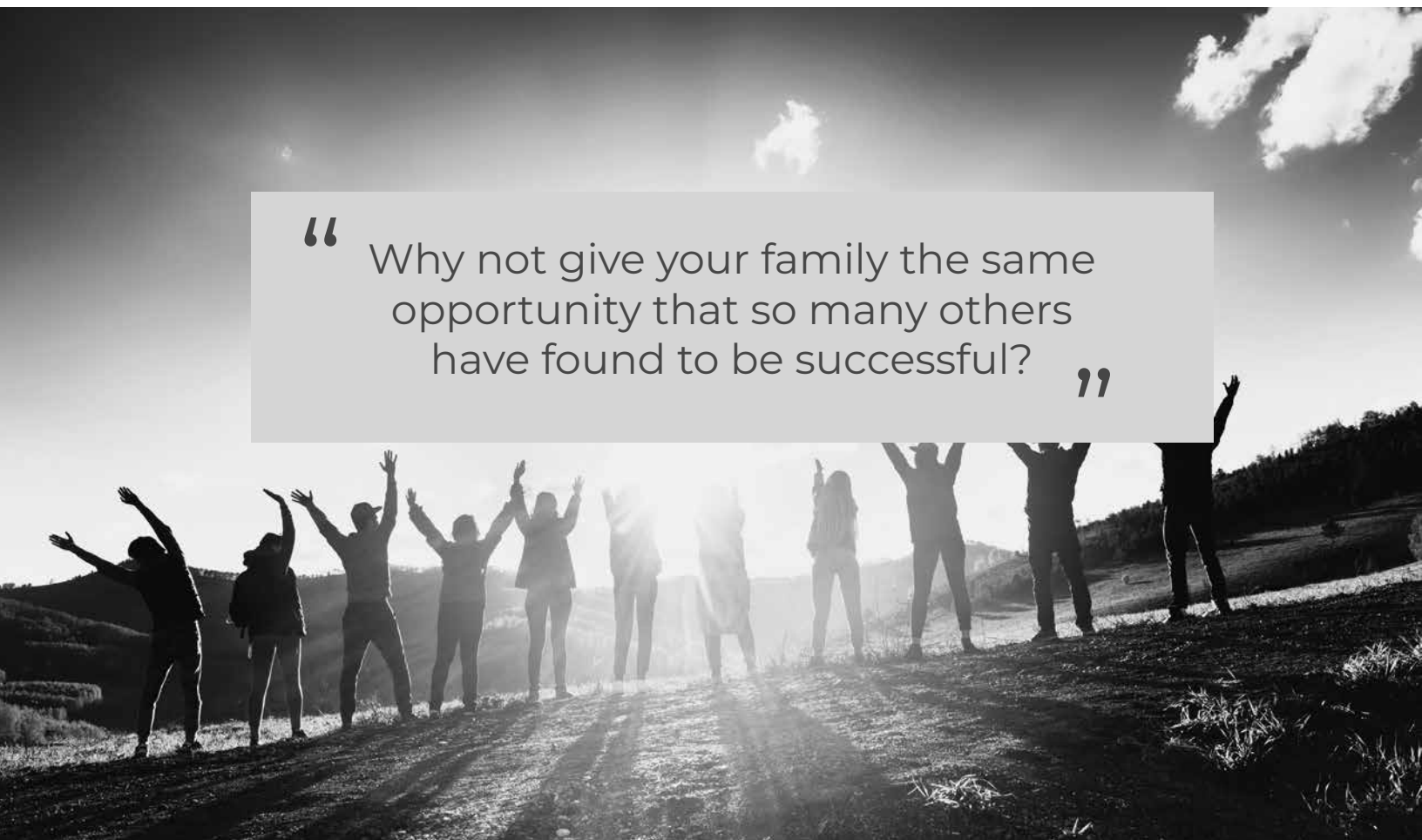
**A**lthough we cannot control our children, we can control the things children enjoy, such as smartphones, video games, toys, freedom for activities, and junk food. While children may not be willing to work for the things we want, they will usually work for the things they want. By controlling the things children want, we can motivate children to change unwanted behaviors and start tasks they are unwilling to do on their own.

Some parents use corporal punishment in place of, or in addition to the **negative consequences** discussed here. While some 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 with physical violence. Corporal punishment is an ineffective tool in changing destructive adolescent behavior. It generally drives adolescent children further from their parents.

**Love and affection, positive strokes, positive consequences, and negative consequences** are the backbone of our parenting model for strong-willed and challenging children. When parents and caregivers learn and practice these interventions and consistently follow-through, good things happen. Nine out of every ten parents (90.4%) who take this course report improvement in their child's behavior by the 10th week. And 97.5% would recommend this class to a friend. The next ten weeks will pass whether you participate in this class or not. Why not give your family the same opportunity that so many others have found to be successful?

“ Why not give your family the same opportunity that so many others have found to be successful? ”





# Review Activity 1.8

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 we cannot control our children, we can control the \_\_\_\_\_ our 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.

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

---



---



---



---



---



---

**strokes day work**  
**Short things**

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

**Note:** *Changing a child's unwanted behavior requires that we change also. The Steps of Success, found at the end of each Unit, are designed to help us prepare for, and bring about change in the home. When we faithfully complete each week's S.O.S. we 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.*

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

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

---



---



---



---



---

**This Week:**

- ▶ Tell your children how much they are loved every day.
- ▶ Catch your children doing something right and give them a positive stroke.
- ▶ If you find it necessary to provide a negative consequence for an unwanted behavior, try taking everything away for a short period of time (TEASPOT).

I gave my child a positive stroke when:

---



---



---



---

**(If you think your child may become violent, or you are uncomfortable with TEASPOT at this time, hold off. We will continue to lay a stronger foundation and deal with violent children later in this course.)**

If you found it necessary to give your child a TEASPOT, what was his/her reaction?

---



---



---



---

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

# Understanding Our Children *(Unit 1: Content Evaluation)*

**Session Objectives:** 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

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home (Message) Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about this class? \_\_\_\_\_

Are both parents/caregivers attending tonight?  Yes  No

Names of other parents/caregivers attending with you tonight? \_\_\_\_\_

What group role did you play?

Group Facilitator  Group Reporter  Group Timekeeper  Group Cheerleader

How well did you do? \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: The following questions were designed to both help your instructor better meet your family's needs, and highlight the key points of tonight's lesson.

1. The thing I liked best about tonight was: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What would have made learning easier or better for me tonight was: \_\_\_\_\_

3. The most powerful thing I learned tonight was: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Of the 3 ways of expressing love and affection, the one I feel most comfortable using first is:

Writing/Texting "I love you"  Saying, "I love you"  Hugs and kisses

5. I'll most likely be able to catch my child "doing right" and give him/her a positive stroke when my child is:

Working  Trying  Caring

Parents' comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





