

Parent Project, Jr.

Loving Solutions

Raising Tough Kids, ages 5-10 years



Ralph "Bud" Fry
Dr. Roger H. Morgan

Loving Solutions

A Parent's Guide to Raising
Tough Kids, ages 5-10 years



Ralph "Bud" Fry
Dr. Roger H. Morgan

Illustrations: Laci Morgan
Poems: Jim Jeffra

Copyright © 2025
Parent Project, Inc.
BOX 640648 Pike Road, AL 36064
800-372-8886
www.parentproject.com

Forth Edition

Parent Project,[®] Inc.

Our mission is to develop parent training programs for parents raising difficult or out-of-control children ages five and up. We provide highly effective programs that are affordable for every parent. In our 30-plus years, Parent Project[®] classes have helped nearly one million families. Little miracles. It's what we do!

You are holding Parent Project Jr., Loving Solutions. This is our second curriculum. It was developed specifically for parents of young children ages 5-10. This program goes beyond teaching practical communication skills. Loving Solutions focuses on a parenting model with an emphasis on behavior problems typical in this age group, with both prevention and intervention tools for parents and caregivers to use in the home.

Parent Project, Sr. is a comprehensive, award-winning model for community-based programs serving families with strong-willed or out-of-control adolescent children. At the heart of Parent Project, Sr., is Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior. This curriculum is the only program of its kind in the United States in that it focuses on the most destructive of adolescent behaviors.

- 💔 My child refuses to go to school. What do I do?
- 💔 What do you do when your child beats you up?
- 💔 What can I do about my son's gang involvement?
- 💔 My 14 year old is using drugs. How can I get my daughter back?

Parent Project, Sr. offers concrete, step-by-step solutions for parents raising adolescent children in today's complex society. A built-in parent support group offers parents both emotional and practical support as they make necessary changes at home. Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior is an intervention model for the more serious problems seen in the adolescent years.

Information regarding Parent Project[®] classes can be found at: www.parentproject.com, or by calling Parent Project[®], Inc. at 800-372-8886.

Introduction

Shirley Becker rushes into the grocery store with her two young children in tow. Bobby is five, and Martha is 3. It is obvious to anyone watching that their mother is in a hurry. She grabs a shopping cart and picks up her daughter, placing her in the child's seat. Bobby begins to whine. He, too, wants to ride in the shopping cart. With some effort, Shirley also picks up her son and puts him in the cart. She explains to Bobby that he may ride in the cart until it becomes too full with groceries. The boy agrees, and Mom pushes the cart down the first aisle.

Within 15 minutes, the cart is too full to accommodate her son and the groceries. Shirley tells her son it is time to leave the cart. Just as she begins to lift him, he screams, "No!" and squirms out of her hands. He grabs the cart, wedges his feet against the sides, and refuses to budge. Mom patiently explains to her five-year-old that the cart is now too full. She reminds Bobby that he agreed to leave the cart when it was time. Mom talks to her son for some time.

Nevertheless, Bobby refuses to move. Frustrated, running out of time, and not nearly finished with her shopping, Mom lifts Bobby out of the cart and stands him on his feet. Bobby throws himself on the floor and starts a screaming temper tantrum, even his mother has never seen.

Shortly, the scene draws a large crowd of shoppers. Some look on in horror, some with disgust, others begin to laugh. However, a few shoppers (probably parents who have raised difficult children themselves) share a look of sympathy with Bobby's mother, who is beginning to cry.

If this scene sounds familiar, you're holding the right book. Loving Solutions was designed for parents raising difficult, strong-willed, or highly impulsive children. With special application to ADD/ADHD issues, we hope that Loving Solutions will help make raising your children much easier, more enjoyable, and smooth your child's movement through their developmental stages and growth.

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 each Unit, you will learn new techniques to deal with your strong-willed or difficult child. At the end of each class, you will be given the opportunity to practice your new skills at home. We call these **Steps of Success**. If you faithfully take your weekly **Steps**, we promise you will see positive changes at home.

Contents

Unit 1: Parenting the Strong-Willed Child.....	1	Home/School Communication	111
Strong-Willed vs. Compliant Children.....	3	Home Learning Activities	113
Love and Affection	4	Developing Homework Behavior	116
Working in Groups.....	6		
The Limits of Communication	11	Unit 7: Concrete Solutions	
Positive Consequences	12	for Tough Kids	123
Self-Limiting Time-Outs	15	Combining Time-Outs	126
		Sibling Rivalry	130
Unit 2: Parental Influence	23	Out-of-Control Behaviors	131
Influence vs. Control.....	26	Extending Time-Out	133
Choosing Your Battles	28	Effective Action Plans	135
"Time-Outs Don't Work	33	Natural Consequences	139
Designing Effective Time-Outs.....	36		
Consistency	38	Unit 8: Sleep, Diet & Behavior.....	147
		Part of the Problem	150
Unit 3: Encouraging Positive Choices.....	45	More is Better	151
Expectations	47	Very Difficult Children	152
Family Values & Standards.....	48	Waking Kids Up	154
Guiding Life Principles	51	You are What You Eat.....	156
I Love Messages	53	Picky Eaters	159
Active Listening	55		
Negotiating a Compromise	58	Unit 9: Stay the Course	165
		It's Not Working	167
Unit 4: Redirecting Negative Choices	65	The Honeymoon Phase	169
Couch Parenting	67	Teaching New Skills	171
Planning Our Response	68	Problem Solving.....	174
Organizing Our Thoughts.....	71	A Sense of Family	175
Dealing With Emotional Responses.....	73	Revisiting Difficult Situations	177
Communication vs. Motivation	73		
Parental Consistency	77	Unit 10: Recognizing &	
		Supporting Success	181
Unit 5: Structuring for Success.....	85	Program Review	183
Busy, Busy, Busy	86	Sharing Success	185
Active Supervision.....	89	Support for Parents	186
Responding to Requests	91	Working in Groups.....	188
Media and Technology.....	93	WISE Advice	189
Creating Structure	98	Confidentiality	191
		In Closing	192
Unit 6: Improving School Performance....	105	Appendix	194
Grit vs. Talent.....	107	ADD/ADHD Diagnoses	194
Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation	108	Overview-Selected Childhood Disorders...	206
Better Grades	109	Useful Forms.....	210
Parents as Educators	110		

Meet Max & Jenni!

They've agreed to help us better understand our own children.



WHAT'S UP? I'M MAX.

I'M 10 YEARS OLD, AND I LIKE TO PLAY SOCCER AND RUN WITH MY DOG BUDDY. PIZZA IS MY FAVORITE FOOD, ESPECIALLY WITH PINEAPPLE ON TOP!

I LOVE MY MOM A LOT, BUT SOMETIMES I GET REALLY ANGRY WHEN SHE ASKS ME TO DO STUFF WHEN I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF PLAYING MY FAVORITE VIDEO GAME. MOM SAYS I'M TOO IMPULSIVE. I THINK PARENTS SHOULD COME WITH INSTRUCTIONS.

HEY THERE! I'M JENNI.

I'M 8 YEARS OLD, AND MY FAVORITE COLOR IS PINK. I REALLY ENJOY LEARNING ALL ABOUT FASHION, AND LIKE TO PUT TOGETHER ALL KINDS OF CRAZY OUTFITS. MOM SAYS MY ROOM IS REALLY MESSY, BUT I KNOW WHERE EVERYTHING IS.

MY BIGGEST PROBLEM IS MY LITTLE BROTHER AND SISTER. THEY CAN BE A REAL PAIN. MOM SAYS I NEED TO BE NICER TO THEM. I'M WORKING ON IT, BUT SOMETIMES THEY MAKE ME REALLY MAD. MOM SAYS I NEED TO WORK ON MY TEMPER. WHATEVER!



Professor Laney

We can't work the kids too hard... they're only 8 and 10! When Max and Jenni are unavailable, I'll fill in. I will help with some of the group activities and share some interesting quotes and ideas from other parents and parenting experts.

Finally, meet the dads who wrote this book. Dr. Roger Morgan and Ralph "Bud" Fry have over 70 years of experience writing parenting books, teaching parenting classes, and training other parent educators. Their specialty is working with parents of strong-willed, difficult, or highly impulsive children. Bud and Roger are the co-founders of the Parent Project®, a national organization dedicated to helping families. You can read more about the authors at www.parentproject.com if you like, but for now, let's get started.



Roger



Bud







Parenting the Strong-willed Child:

Laying the Foundation



Objectives:

Parents will be able to:

- List character traits of a strong-willed child
- Discuss the limits of communication
- Recognize successful ways to demonstrate love and affection
- Describe effective parenting strategies to increase cooperation and other positive behaviors.

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 type of parenting concerns or issues is your partner facing right now? _____

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

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

Strong-willed vs. Compliant Children

Parents with compliant children usually do not understand what all the fuss is about. In contrast, parents of strong-willed or impulsive children typically question their ability to parent effectively. For parents of impulsive children, simple parental requests are often met with loud complaints or open refusal to cooperate. Sometimes, it is simply the child's personality (strong will) that makes parenting more difficult. In other cases, learning disabilities or other problematic conditions, such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), present additional, unique challenges to parents. Whatever the reason, traditional parenting techniques are generally less effective with these children.

Many parents thought (before they had children) that all children were cuddly, responsive, cooperative, and compliant. The thought was that good parenting would always result in a happy, well-adjusted child, that appreciates and returns our love and affection. When our child does not display these gentle characteristics, we often blame ourselves; we feel guilty. Our child's nature is probably an inherited trait that does not result from parenting. So what did we do to have a strong-willed child? You had sex! If you have an adopted child, somebody else had sex. Many experts agree that a child's basic personality is most likely determined in the womb. Unfortunately, some parents become paralyzed from action because of self-blame, thinking their child's challenging nature results from their parenting. We suggest parents focus instead on what they can do to help their children.

Individual Activity 1.1: Personality

**"THEY TELL ME I CAN BE DIFFICULT AND I ARGUE A LOT.
THAT'S NOT TRUE!"**

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

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Calm | 6. Emotional |
| 2. Easygoing | 7. Strong-willed |
| 3. Willing to listen | 8. Argumentative |
| 4. Understanding | 9. Stubborn |
| 5. Compliant | 10. Challenging |



The Point

If three or more of your answers are in the column on the right, chances are you have a strong-willed or impulsive child.

Most parents show love to their children, praise them when they are good, and provide discipline when necessary. This is effective with most children. We refer to these methods as traditional parenting techniques. Traditional parenting techniques are less effective for the more difficult or impulsive child. Just as an auto mechanic would not use metric tools designed for foreign cars on American cars, parents should not expect the parenting tools created for more compliant children to work with strong-willed, more difficult children. Parents with 'metric' children need a new set of tools.

This can be especially confusing for parents with several children. Your first two children might have been generally compliant and cooperative and seldom cause trouble. Your third child comes out of the womb kicking, screaming, and unhappy about everything. As this little one grows, you use every trick you know from your experiences with the first two children to guide this new child. Nothing seems to work. Parents often question what they have done wrong and miss the fact that this is a different type of child, requiring a different set of parenting tools.

So what does work?

Love and Affection, Positive Strokes, Positive Consequences, and Negative Consequences (discussed in Unit 2) are the keys to parenting impulsive children. This is the foundation we will use and the foundation from which we will build. We will discuss the use of these keys, not only with strong-willed children but children with special needs as well.

In a national poll, participants were asked, ***What phrase or words do you long to hear?*** The number one answer is, ***I love you!*** The second most popular response was, ***You are forgiven.*** The third answer surprised most readers: ***Supper is ready.*** If we think about it, these phrases create a strong framework for parenting. Because love is the foundation for our relationship with our children, let's begin with a parent's expression of love and affection.

Love and Affection

The three most powerful words in any language are, ***I Love You.*** When parents understand the importance of these three words and take the time to use them daily, they will have mastered the single most important element of successful parenting.

Love and affection is the key to family communication and discipline. They also play a vital role in building a child's self-concept. Sadly, older children often involve themselves in highly destructive behaviors because they do not believe their parents love or even 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 alcohol and other drugs.

When parents are asked if they love their children, the usual response is, ***Of course I do.***

But, when asked, ***When was the last time you told your son or daughter that you love them?*** parents' responses are mixed.

Loving our children is not enough. Parents' love must be expressed. Many parents, especially fathers, find it difficult to tell those closest to them how they feel. Nevertheless, children need to know they're loved today for who they are and not only for what they do or might become. Children are "now" focused. They seldom think of the future and usually do not remember parental messages from one day to the next. For these reasons, most experts agree parents' love for their children should be communicated daily.

When parent/child relationships are strained, or with some children with special needs, a parent's expression of love may not be openly acknowledged by the child. Nevertheless, love must be expressed daily. Hugs, kisses, and pats on the back are great. They all help show a child love and affection, but there is no replacement for a heartfelt ***I love you***. These three words can work wonders and are irreplaceable in changing unwanted behavior and improving parent/ child relationships.

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,
Say it clear, say it loud.

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

"LOVE IS A BETTER TEACHER THAN DUTY."

- Albert Einstein



Working In Groups

Most parenting techniques discussed in this book can be learned and practiced in a group format. Therefore, before we begin our first group activity, we must divide into groups of about four to six members each. Working in a group allows each member to draw from the experiences of the entire group and increases learning and understanding. Groups work best when each member is assigned to and performs one of the following group roles:

- **Group Facilitator:** The group “taskmaster” keeps the group on task and ensures that their group follows through with the format of each activity.
- **Group Recorder:** As group secretary, the recorder writes down the group responses/ answers during activities and reports their group’s answers to the large group at the end of each activity.
- **Group Time Keeper:** The group time manager monitors the time allotment during all support group activities. While helping their group complete activities on time, this member helps pace the work and gives a one minute warning.
- **Group Cheerleaders/Nurturers:** The group motivator(s) helps their group to focus on the positive and gives positive strokes to individual members. They promote each member’s participation, and discourage 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.



Group Activity 1.2: Roles

Working with your group, take a minute to elect every member to one of the group roles below. Record the member’s name next to his/her assigned role.

Group Facilitator: _____

Group Recorder: _____

Group Time Keeper: _____

Group Nurturers/Cheerleaders: _____



The Point

Most parents tell us that group learning is extremely helpful. We know that groups work best when each parent actively participates in one of these group roles.

Successful Groups

Let's examine a few ground rules for working in groups:

- **Active Listening:** Only one group member speaks at a time. When someone is speaking, the remaining group members should give their complete and undivided attention to that member.
- **Confidentiality:** Trust between group members is the foundation for group success. In order to develop trust, 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 group should be a safe, comfortable and positive place to share your feelings and stories. Groups are not a place for judgment, criticism or confrontation. Activities require the brain power of the entire group to be successful. Judgmental responses often shut down the creative process and should be avoided. 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 or strength of the idea.
- **Okay to Piggy Back:** When a member can add to another member's idea, they should do so.
- **Group Ownership:** Once an idea or thought has been spoken aloud, it belongs to the group.

**"THEY TELL ME YOU WILL
LEARN MORE STUFF IF YOU
WORK IN GROUPS.
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.
I JUST THINK IT WILL BE
MORE FUN."**



Love and Affection: (continued)



Group Activity 1.3: Showing Love



"I MAY NOT ALWAYS SAY IT BACK. I MAY EVEN TURN AWAY WHEN YOU SAY IT. I STILL NEED TO HEAR HOW MUCH YOU LOVE ME, EVERYDAY."

Working with your group, take a few minutes to list or draw examples of ways parents can convey love and affection to their children. Remember to follow the ground rules for working in groups.

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. <u>Saying, "I Love You".</u> | 6. _____ |
| 2. <u>Cooking for your children.</u> | 7. _____ |
| 3. <u>Spending time with your children.</u> | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |



The Point

Parents express their love and affection to their children in hundreds of ways daily. Some ways are more effective than others. Just getting out of bed and going to work for the family can be an expression of love. But what do our children recognize as love? Some items on our lists are expected by children and seen by them as our duty, not our love. We must use expressions that our children cannot interpret as anything other than, **Mom and Dad love me.**

One parent said that when he buys something special for his son, the child recognizes the gift as an expression of love. Another child may see the same gift as his right: Dad's job is to buy me stuff! Based on this concept, parents must deliver effective messages of love. Again, children must clearly hear the message: **Mom and Dad love me.**



Group Activity 1.4: Most Effective

"I DON'T ALWAYS GET IT. YOU NEED TO TELL ME SO I WILL UNDERSTAND."

Working with your group, list three parental expressions of love that cannot be mistaken as anything other than love. (Usually, there will only be three.)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



The Point

Every child will recognize these three expressions of love, even if not immediately acknowledged. Remember, when parents are frustrated, the words I Love You are spoken less and less. Change will be less painful for the parents who can put their frustration aside long enough for a heartfelt I Love You at bedtime. Discipline, structure, communication, and the family will suffer greatly without open displays of love and affection.

Positive Strokes

"I CAN LIVE FOR TWO MONTHS ON A GOOD COMPLIMENT."

- Mark Twain



Parents should recognize or give positive strokes to their children when they catch them doing something right.

Example: A parent sees their child reading a book instead of playing video games. A parent who wants to increase the time the child spends reading might say, ***It makes me smile to see you reading.*** This type of recognition or positive stroke increases the chance the child will read again soon.

A parent asked, ***Why should I give my child a positive stroke for doing something he is supposed to do?*** We could only think of one answer: ***Because you want your child to do it again.*** Even adults that are paid to do a job are occasionally given a positive stroke by their supervisor for doing a good job. The same principle applies to parenting.



Group Activity 1.5: Doing Right

**"YOU NEED TO TELL ME WHEN I DO GOOD.
IF YOU DO, I'LL DO IT AGAIN."**

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

1. Taking out the trash with or without being asked.

2. Helping a younger brother or sister.

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____



The Point

It is easier to increase wanted behaviors than it is to decrease unwanted behaviors. The more positive strokes we give our children, the more our children will cooperate with those positive behaviors. Giving positive strokes to our children also addresses the often repeated complaint we hear from children about their parents: ***My parents always tell me when I mess up. They never tell me when I do good.***

The Limits of Communication

A father, driving with his family, said to his ten-year-old in the back seat, **Hey Mike, want to roll up your window?** A few minutes later, his son still had not rolled up his window. He repeated his question, which was intended to be more of a directive; **Hey Mike, didn't you hear me? You want to roll up the window?** A bright child, Mike, answered, **You didn't tell me to roll up the window; you asked me if I wanted to roll up the window. I didn't want to, so I didn't.** Our children usually know exactly what we are saying. When they do not comply, it is generally because they do not want to, not because they did not hear or understand us.

Any video game addicts in your family? **Johnny, turn off your game, wash your hands, and come to dinner.** Five minutes later, when every other family member has been seated and anxiously awaits dinner, Mom says in a somewhat more aggravated tone, **Johnny, didn't you hear me? I said to come to dinner!** Johnny replies in an equally aggravated tone, **I heard you . . . but I can't stop now. I'm almost to the next level!**

We prefer to believe that Johnny did not hear us rather than recognize he is very good at ignoring us. Most of our problems with our children are reruns of the same conflicts we had last week, the week before, and the week before... What makes us think that repeating the request the 1,765th time will finally get through when the first 1,764 times did not? Are children suddenly going to "hear" us? Let's face it. Children do not want to do their chores, homework, wash their hands, brush their teeth, clean their rooms, or scoop the dog poop (even though they promised they would when you agreed to get them that dog).

So why do we keep asking them again and again, as if somehow that 1,765th time might be the magic number? Are we playing the Lottery here? What will bring us the jackpot? Nothing, if we keep using communication only.

As the saying goes, **Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, yet expecting different results.** Are we all insane? No, we are not all crazy. But most parents have placed far too much faith in communication. Let us be clear here. Communication is not a bad thing. We should communicate with our children. It is extremely important to communicate and to communicate well. However, after communication has failed, we need to move on to the next step rather than persist past the point of ridiculousness by repeating ourselves over and over again. Saying it louder the second, third, and fourth time is not the answer. Nagging leads to frustration, anger, hurt feelings, tension, damaged self-esteem, and strained parent/child relationships. Our advice here is simple, **STOP REPEATING YOURSELF!**



"WHAT DID YOU SAY?"

We said, stop repeating yourself.

"WHAT?"

Go to your room!

If words had worked, would you be taking this class? If words worked, your child would have turned off the video game and come to dinner. If words worked, they would have studied for that test, even without you asking, because they listened when you told them that was the way to graduate and get that good job someday. On a more serious note, if words worked, our kids would not join gangs, take drugs, drink alcohol, become sexually active at fourteen or die prematurely from their dangerous choices against our 'words.' Indeed, if only words worked. When our words don't work, it is time to move to something else. That something else is a consequence that goes beyond words.

Positive Consequences

The MOST 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 followed a parent's request or rule.

Example: A parent returns home and finds his/her child watching television. Knowing the child has unfinished homework, the parent instructs the child to turn off the TV. The parent explains, Honey, you may absolutely turn on the TV just as soon as you finish your homework and I have checked and approved it. In this case, the **positive consequence** for the child is watching television after his homework is completed.

This is not a bribe. When we bribe a person, we give them the money before they do the job. A **positive consequence** is the same concept as receiving a paycheck at the end of the work week. The message we want to send to our kids is that we work before we play.

**"I HATE TO SEE MY CHILDREN SUFFER, BUT
LOVING THEM MEANS DOING WHAT IS BEST FOR
THEM, NOT WHAT HURTS THE LEAST."**

- Patti Covert





Group Activity 1.6: Fun Follows Work

"OKAY. I'M NOT GONNA LIKE IT AT FIRST. BUT I NEED TO LEARN TO WORK BEFORE I PLAY."

Working with your 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 contains a specific desired behavior and identifies a positive consequence. Using the word "absolutely," or, "sure," helps to focus kids on the positive and significantly reduces parent-child arguments.



1. Absolutely! You may watch TV, just as soon as you finish drying the dishes.
2. Sure! You may go to your friend's house, just as soon as your room is clean.
3. Absolutely! You may _____, just as soon as _____.
4. Sure! You may _____, when you finish _____.
5. Absolutely! You may _____, just as soon as _____.



The Point

When parents use both positive strokes and positive consequences often, it tends to increase children's positive behaviors and help them feel better about themselves. Using the words "absolutely" or "sure", works like a miracle in reducing arguments. Try it today with your children.

Parents Control Things, Not Children

In Unit 2, Parental Influence, we will discuss influence vs. control in more depth. In this Unit, we simply want to say parents cannot control their children, but parents can control the things their children enjoy, such as bicycles and video games. 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 do constructive tasks and teach self-discipline as well. By using the things that children want, we can influence behavior. So what are the things children enjoy?



Group Activity 1.7: Child's List

Working with your group, take a few minutes to list the daily activities/things your child enjoys. Take your time. Make sure your list includes everything your child enjoys (video games, scooters, etc.) Hint: what do they do when they have free time?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____



The Point

These are the items children cannot have access to while on Time-Out. When we refer to our "Child's List of Things", or, "Child's List" throughout this book, this is what we mean. Since we do not actually control our child's behavior, we can usually motivate them to choose to cooperate in order to have their things again.



When to Use Self-Limiting Time-Outs

There are two basic types of Time-Out: Self-Limiting Time-Outs (**take as much time as you need**) and Fixed Time-Outs (parents set the time). A Self-Limiting Time-Out is used when a child has chosen not to do or complete a task. They have not done something bad, as much as failed to do something they do not wish to do, typically some chore or responsibility. We will discuss responding to inappropriate behavior, such as breaking the rules, hitting, and being disrespectful, in Unit 2.

For example, when a child refuses to do homework, one simple solution is not to allow the child access to any of the things on their list until their homework is complete. We call this a Self-Limiting Time-Out. Self-Limiting Time-Outs involve withholding our Children's List of Things to motivate children to do the tasks they would not do on their own. These are activities that children are not motivated from within to do. Motivators (Child's List of Things) are withheld only until the child completes the task. Kids learn when they see the connection: I get to do the things I like as soon as I do the jobs mom and dad want me to do. From this, children gain a critical life skill - self-discipline. Although we may never be able to convince our children of this, basic structure, including Self-Limiting Time-Outs, is not punishment. Structure is simply a method of helping our children use their time wisely to develop and become stronger, more capable adults.



Group Activity 1.8: Unfun Tasks

"MOST OF THE TIME, THE ONLY WAY I'M GONNA DO THE STUFF I DON'T LIKE, IS IF YOU TAKE AWAY THE STUFF I DO LIKE."

Working with your group, take a few minutes to brainstorm a list of situations where a parent should use a Self-Limiting Time-Out.

1. Child needs to complete homework.

2. Child needs to pick up his toys.

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____





The Point

Children must eventually learn to motivate themselves to perform important tasks that are not fun. Using Self-Limiting Time-Outs significantly reduces parent/child conflict and helps children learn self-discipline (motivating themselves to do something positive they do not wish to do). Therefore, ask your children once, two times if you must, but when we repeatedly ask our children to do something, we unintentionally teach children that they do not have to listen to their parent's requests.

Designing Self-Limiting Time-Outs

Self-Limiting Time-Outs motivate children to do what they may find unpleasant or boring (homework, chores, etc.). A child who refuses to pick up his toys is sent to a Time-Out until he is ready to pick up the toys. He may leave Time-Out only to pick up the toys. In the beginning, parents should remind their child that he may not go for glasses of water, answer the front door, or for any other activity. Note: while bathroom visits should initially be allowed, parents should be prepared for some children to attempt to take advantage of this request. Parents should postpone offers of hugs and kisses until tasks are completed. The child need not ask permission to leave Time-Out to pick up his toys. When he chooses to pick up his toys, he does it, ending his own Time-Out. He can play immediately afterward (Child's List). (Younger children may initially need reminders as to the structure of the Self-Limiting Time Outs, but reminders should be brief, not conversations.)

Example: A child is reminded by his parent to make his bed. Later, the parent sees the child playing in the room with no progress on the bed. The parent sends the child to a suitable Time-Out spot (nothing fun to do, watch or listen to) and respectfully repeats the request to make the bed, adding the statement, take as much time as you need. The parent withholds the Child's List until the bed is made. When the child finishes the bed and tells his parent, the parent either approves or provides additional training or if the child is capable of doing better, he is asked to redo or finish it. If the child whines or complains, calmly remind him to complete the task. Don't argue!

Instead of arguing, add the statement, take as much time as you need. If your child refuses, again, remind him that he is to return to Time-Out until he is ready to make his bed.



Summary of the keys to effective Self-Limiting Time-Outs

1. Are used to help motivate children to complete important tasks.
2. The length of the Time-Out is determined only by the child.
3. They are open-ended: a child might spend three seconds, ten minutes, a half hour, or even longer on a Self-Limiting Time-Out before he chooses to do the task.
4. All reinforcers (Child's List of Things) are withheld until the desired positive behavior is finished. Time-Outs are often most effective when children stand facing a blank wall, without pictures or other items to fidget with. Hallway walls or corners usually work well.
5. The child is instructed that they may leave Time-Out at whatever point he decides to complete the requested task, but to take all the time they need.
6. The child tells his parent(s) when he believes the task is complete.
7. The parent checks on the quality of their child's effort.
 - a. Effort is approved, and the child is free for normal, chosen activities. Positive strokes should be given as soon as the task is complete, even if they resisted.
 - b. Effort is not approved; the child chooses either to complete the task or return to Time-Out until they are ready to do so.
 - c. Do not demand perfection. We are talking about 5 to 10-year-old children here. Consider your child's capabilities when you ask them to complete tasks.
8. Parents should not speak to a child while they are on Time-Out. It is tempting to repeat our instructions hoping the child did not understand us the first time. In most cases, it is not that our child does not understand us. It is more likely that they don't want to do it. Siblings should also be told not to speak to a child on Time-Out.

Allowing children to take as much time as they need or choose to complete a chore (while withholding all of Their List until they do) effectively transfers responsibility to our children. The statement **Take as much time as you need** is powerful and helps children understand that their behavior determines when they may have the things on Their List. The Child's List of things is available only after completing the chore. The child is learning essential life skills: we work before we play and how to cooperate and overcome our own resistance. Can you outwait your child?

**"THE ONLY PLACE SUCCESS COMES BEFORE
WORK IS IN THE DICTIONARY."**

- Vince Lombardi



Note: We recognize that some strong-willed/impulsive children may simply refuse to take Time-Outs. Others may respond by kicking or hitting their parents. We will discuss these and other out-of-control behaviors in Unit 7.

Learning self-discipline is one of the most critical tasks of childhood. When learned early, self-discipline reduces family and peer conflict, contributes significantly to personal success, and saves lifelong heartache. Unfortunately, as children get older, the negative consequences for failure to control oneself become far more serious (addiction to drugs, legal problems, physical injury or even death), and cooperative behavior becomes more difficult to teach and learn. Perhaps Harry J. 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."

Any single intervention discussed in this book, when used alone, is less effective in shaping behavior. The keys to successfully parenting the strong-willed or impulsive child are daily expressions of Love and Affection, consistent use of Positive Strokes, Positive Consequences, Negative Consequences, and Time Outs (Unit 2).



Review Activity 1.9: Key Points to Remember

Working 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. When children refuse to do a requested task, parents should use a _____ Time-Out.
6. Finally, working by yourself, what was the most powerful idea you personally learned from this Unit? _____

strokes day work Self-Limiting things

Note: Changing a child's behavior requires that we as parents change also. The weekly Steps of Success at the end of each unit help parents prepare for and bring about change in their home. Parents who faithfully complete each weekly S.O.S. are far more likely to see positive changes at home.

Steps of Success - S.O.S.

"THE DADS WHO WROTE THIS BOOK TELL ME THAT IF MY PARENTS TAKE THEIR STEPS OF SUCCESS, EVERY WEEK, THINGS WILL BE A LOT MORE PEACEFUL AT HOME. THAT WOULD BE A GOOD THING; CAUSE I'M REALLY GETTING TIRED OF MY PARENTS YELLING AT ME."



- Tell your children how much they are loved every day this week.
- Catch your children doing something right and give them a positive stroke.
- If at any time next week, you find that your words are not working, move to a Self-Limiting Time-Out. Use the word *absolutely* in your instructions.
- 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?

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

I used a Self-Limiting Time-Out when: _____

What happened? _____



Words of Wisdom

"I WISH I WOULD HAVE HELD YOU CLOSER, HUGGED AND KISSED YOU MORE WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE."

- Parent Author Unknown

Loving Solutions

Unit 1: Parenting the Strong-Willed Child; Content Evaluation

Parent's Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Work (Message) Phone: (____) _____

How did you hear about this class? _____

Are both parents attending tonight? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Names of other family members attending with you tonight?

Adult(s): _____ Children: _____

Session Objectives

1. List character traits of a strong-willed child
2. Recognize successful ways to demonstrate love and affection
3. Discuss the limits of communication
4. Describe effective parenting strategies to increase cooperation . . .

Session Evaluation

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. This week, my child's most dangerous/frustrating behavior was: _____
Currently, my reaction/response to this behavior is: _____
5. Of the 3 ways of expressing love and affection, the one I will feel most comfortable using first is:
☐ Writing "I love you" ☐ Saying, "I love you" ☐ Hugs and kisses
6. 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
7. Self-Limiting Time-Outs should be used when
☐ My child refuses to complete a chore ☐ My child refuses to do homework ☐ Both of these
8. Parent comments: _____

Loving Solutions

Unit 1: Parenting the Strong-Willed Child

Data Collection

Instructor's Name: _____

Session Date: _____

Location: _____

Co-facilitator: _____

Session Objectives

1. List character traits of a strong-willed child
2. Recognize successful ways to demonstrate love and affection
3. Discuss the limits of communication
4. Describe effective parenting strategies to increase cooperation

	No Attempt			Completely Mastered	
Objective 1:	1	2	3	4	5
Objective 2:	1	2	3	4	5
Objective 3:	1	2	3	4	5
Objective 4:	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:
