

TIPS FOR PARENTS

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Remember, you are your child's first and most important teacher! Children learn many skills, including good manners, by watching and copying you.

- ❖ Always look for things your child does correctly. You will find many things. Say such things as "You buttoned two of these hard buttons on your jacket today! Good work! You worked hard and now you can do it!" "You tied your shoe today. I'm sure you feel proud!"
- ❖ Spend a brief special time with each of your children every day. Take 15 to 20 minutes or more to do activities you both enjoy. Relax, laugh, and have fun together! Allow your child choices, such as selecting between two school outfits or two enjoyable activities. This increases his or her sense of self-control and independence.
- ❖ Read books to your children every day. Help them talk about what they hear and what they see in the pictures. Some children like to draw their own pictures about what happened in a story. Help your child put the pictures they draw in the right order. Have your child retell the story while looking at the pictures drawn. The public library and yard sales are great sources for books.
- ❖ A child's brain develops slowly. Don't expect your five-year-old to think as an adult. The child remains a child for many years. Guiding your child takes much patience, kindness, consistent rules, and repetition.
- ❖ Always talk and listen respectfully to your child, even when you are correcting inappropriate behavior. Take turns talking and listening. Your child will imitate your good manners and will in turn treat others with respect. When you use self-control, so will your child. Give yourself a brief "time out" if you start to lose your temper.
- ❖ Children have vivid imaginations and need to play with make-believe tools, safe household items, art supplies, blocks, dress-up clothes, toy cars, etc. Children may learn best by doing things and using their hands.
- ❖ Children are naturally active and curious. They like to touch things and may find inappropriate things to explore. This is particularly true when they are bored. On shopping trips, in the car, and in restaurants have a small bag of safe interesting things handy such as small books and toys, as well as coloring books and crayons. Be sure your child gets plenty of exercise and drinks beverages without caffeine throughout the day.
- ❖ If your child becomes too active or disruptive in public, gently remind him or her of the good manners needed in school and give the child a second chance. If the child cannot calm down, leave the situation and try again at a later time. Your child can practice using a quiet voice and good listening and sitting skills for a few minutes each day at home in preparation for school.

