

CHILD-REARING BELIEFS

Child-Rearing Beliefs Checklist

Directions: Mark statements with which you agree. Compare your answers with anyone who is helping you raise your child. Discuss answers that differ to reach an understanding.

Using Power Wisely

- 1. When parents lecture, nag, plead, or yell, they upset themselves and delay taking action that corrects misbehavior.
- 2. Parents need to make the final decision in areas of children's lives that affect others or threaten safety. But, they need to allow children "free will" in areas of interests, beliefs, and style.
- 3. Children do not have to be punished for behavior that affects only themselves and can be given a natural consequence such as doing their own laundry when clothes are not put away.

Incentives That Require Cooperation

- 4. Withholding all privileges until children do as they are asked is a better motivator than taking away privileges to punish a child for not cooperating.
- 5. It is more effective to set a deadline for starting a chore or task than to ask a child to do something immediately.

Actions That Encourage Obedience

- 6. Punishments should be designed to teach good conduct rather than to cause distress or prevent mistakes from ever happening.
- 7. Punishments need to be intense enough to upset children but brief enough to provide opportunities to show changes in past behavior.
- 8. Consistently repeating the same punishment is better than one long punishment.
- 9. One minute per year of age is a useful guideline for the length of time-out.
- 10. Children should be told how long a restriction will last and can be given a task that shows they have learned from past actions to shorten the length of the restriction.
- 11. Spankings require parents to be active while the child is passive. Withholding privileges until a task is performed, time-out, essays, or restrictions require children to comply.

Daily Routines, School Problems, and Moral Matters

- 12. After demonstrating that they know how to keep their rooms neat, teenagers can be allowed some leeway on bedroom cleanliness.
- 13. When children lie, punishments should be limited to wrongdoing and to help them identify the causes of dishonesty (avoiding punishments, disapproval, rules, or looking bad).
- 14. Children who are making poor grades do not have to be restricted for a whole grading period if they bring home school reports showing satisfactory progress.

Responses That Reduce Anger, Bad Attitudes, and Back Talk

- 15. It is acceptable for children to express frustration with rules and consequences by making faces, pouting, crying, or complaining. (Cross out any that you won't tolerate.)
- 16. Suppressing a child's frustrations makes them build up. Sympathizing with a child's frustrations reduces them and will not undermine punishments as long as parents remain firm.
- 17. Parents should give children a reason for their decisions but do not need to make them understand the reason.
- 18. Children do not need to understand their parents' point of view and may not be able to do so until they have followed a rule consistently.
- 19. Parents can best fulfill their need for understanding by talking to other adults, not by trying to convince their children.
- 20. Parents need to understand their children's point of view to make good decisions.