

# Ten Terrific Tips to Guidance & Discipline

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1) Bee Awesome! The more engaging and interesting the activities in your classroom, the less disruptive the children will be.

2) If...then... statements give the child a choice. "If you keep taking toys away from other children, you will have to play by yourself." A child can choose to misbehave if he is willing to pay the consequence. Consequences only work with children who care about consequences. Difficult children who enjoy the mental stimulation of giving you a hard time and/or who are seeking immediate gratification will not mind paying the consequence. Telling a child what will happen if he misbehaves again is a plan for failure. Always plan for success.

3) So, use correction rather than consequence. "We take turns with toys. Start over and tell Brian you would like to have the T-rex after him." You did not really want him to play alone; you needed him to learn to take turns. Children learn more from correction. "Start over..." is an empowering phrase to use with young children.

4) "May I" and "Yes ma'am or sir" are more than simple courtesy. These are simple words that stop power play between adults and children because using these phrases consistently (not just when "in trouble") help children to continuously acknowledge and accept the fact that you are in charge of the classroom. Just remember that courtesy is a two way street and always treat the children with courtesy and respect, too.

5) Lowering your voice when addressing a problem or issue with children conveys that you are in control of yourself; and therefore, in control of him. When you raise your voice, the child may think he is gaining control and will keep pushing to see if you will give up.

6) Do not bargain for compliance. If you bargain for compliance now, you'll have to beg for it later.

7) What you wear and how you groom yourself really do matter. Casual or sloppy dress and grooming subconsciously suggest - to the children *and* their parents - that you will and accept casual standards and attitudes toward learning and behavior in your classroom.

8) Every good sports coach knows the importance of running an intensive training camp at the beginning of each new season; so does every good teacher and child care provider. Always work from more structure to less structure - not the other way around.

9) Too many child care workers *monitor* their classrooms rather than supervising them. Monitoring means staying in one spot and correcting or punishing misbehavior after it occurs. (It also means filling out accident reports after accidents occur.) Supervision is a preventative process that involves moving around the classroom or playground in an assertive and authoritative (not authoritarian bully) manner, checking with children and knowing what they are playing and what they are planning. Supervision prevents problems from developing.

10) Instill a sense of community in your classroom by adding the phrase "...and help others..." to your rules. Have children recite the rules aloud during Circle Time several times a week. The BEE rules are: Be kind, and help others be kind. Be responsible, and help others be responsible. Be a good listener, and help others be good listeners. Be a hard worker, and help others be hard workers. Believe in yourself to make good choices and help others believe in themselves, too. These rules cover any misbehavior that could occur in your classroom.

Adapted from "Flip Tips" by Ronald Morrish, author of "Secrets of Discipline" and "With All Due Respect." [realdiscipline.com](http://realdiscipline.com)