

# TEACHING YOUR KIDS SELF-DISCIPLINE

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There is a drastic difference between a disciplined and an undisciplined person. It sticks out a mile. A self-disciplined person gets a lot done, has more fun, experiences more adventure, and is in control of their own life. They work to goals and they have purpose. They are often on a mission, or even several missions at a time.

An undisciplined person, on the other hand, is just the opposite. They waste time, are frustrated because they never seem to get anything completed, never get round to planning a trip, or saving for it. They often experience job dissatisfaction because they were never disciplined enough to put in the hard yards of study to gain the qualifications they needed for their area of interest. They are not in control of their life because of others' influence over them, or out of sheer lethargy and no goals.

Do we want our kids to live this kind of existence? I hope not. Discipline trains us to act in accordance with a set of rules, boundaries or expectations. To be self-disciplined means doing the same thing, but without external prompts. When we see the benefits that structure and training create for us we want to internalize these skills so we can work autonomously. We become self-motivated. We have often been asked why kids get so much homework. Doing homework helps create self-discipline, because it trains kids to carry out instructions without the structure of school or the teacher standing over them.

How can we train our kids to become self-disciplined? Firstly, we have to be self-disciplined ourselves. Kids will always learn by example. When you have goals and plans, and work to a schedule, you will naturally train your kids to do the same thing. You teach them the value of time and how satisfying it is to start AND finish projects. When there are consequences for not fulfilling self-directed tasks in a timely manner, they will learn to adapt very quickly. If Susie is always late, give her a schedule that includes times to follow. This structure will help her meet her deadlines. If she doesn't follow the schedule, then she needs to suffer the consequences. That may mean she misses the movie, fails the test, or misses a meal. Parents are their own worst enemy when they continually rescue their kids from negative behaviors. If your kids don't learn while they are with you, they will learn the hard way without you.

Make sure your household operates to a timetable. While there should be time in all kids' days when they can have free time, it is not healthy for them to sit around playing games and talking on the phone. They need to be stimulated. They need to have projects that they can't wait to get back to. Expect great things from your kids. They love it. They will work like crazy for your approval.

Reward them when they complete self-motivated tasks and projects. Support them when they get stuck.

There are many advantages in training your child to be self-disciplined.

Remember a busy child is a happy child. They will be less likely to get into trouble when they have positive things to look forward to each day.

A self-disciplined child is a pleasure to have around. He will do chores and homework without being asked. He never wanders around saying, "I'm bored." Self-disciplined kids generally have a positive attitude and a hopeful outlook on life.

If you have any comments or questions on this subject, please do not hesitate to contact us at [sally@forefrontfamilies.org](mailto:sally@forefrontfamilies.org). We invite you to also check out our website at [www.forefrontfamilies.org](http://www.forefrontfamilies.org) and our blog site at [www.forefrontfamilies.blogspot.com](http://www.forefrontfamilies.blogspot.com) for further assistance.