

# Child Care Choices Partners in Parenting



A Publication of

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## *Bet on Better Behavior*

“Self-esteem” was the buzzword of the past; we thought that if we could build our children’s egos they would feel good about who they were and behave in an exemplary manner everyone could be proud of. Well . . . it didn’t work very well!

What we **have learned** is: good behavior makes a child feel good about herself; feeling good about herself does not necessarily cause better behavior. Some of the best parenting methods for encouraging behavior that results in high self esteem:

- ◆ Encourage accomplishment in each child’s special interest or ability—sports, art, music, animals, fishing, organizing—wherever she can “shine.”
- ◆ Acknowledge good behavior without comparing one child with another. “Thanks for being so patient at church,” rather than, “You acted so much nicer than your brother did.”
- ◆ Promote excellence, whether it’s in pre-algebra, cleaning the cat’s box, or sorting the silverware; “sliding by” doesn’t make us proud of ourselves.
- ◆ Maintain a happy household; it’s hard to behave well in a negative atmosphere.
- ◆ Give respectful responses to off-the-wall ideas: “Have you thought about. . . .?” or “What are you going to do when. . . .?” rather than, “That’s crazy.”
- ◆ Exercise consistency in what you allow and don’t allow; a child who is confused about the rules tends to break them. If jumping on the bed is not okay today, it isn’t permissible tomorrow.
- ◆ Show confidence in your child’s ability: “I think you can figure it out; if not, call me and I’ll see if I can help.”
- ◆ Promote hard work and accomplishment over winning, and emphasize intrinsic over material rewards: “You must feel really good about how hard you trained; I know I’m proud!” *instead of*, “I’m so happy you beat out the other runners that I’ll buy you a new phone.”
- ◆ Make rewards an experience to share instead of buying toys, electronics, or other “stuff”: “I’m proud of you for sticking with that project to the end; call a couple of friends and we’ll order a pizza to celebrate.”

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### The Book Look

*My Backpack* by Eve Bunting

*Tiger and the Temper Tantrum* by Vivian French

*How Jackrabbit Got His Very Long Ears* by Heather Irbinskas

*I Don’t Want To* by Sally Grindley

*The Keeper of Ugly Sounds* by Eleanor Walsh Meyer

*Mean Soup* by Betsy Everitt

*Don’t Tell the Whole World* by Joanna Cole

*Shouting Sharon* by David Pace

*Yelly Kelly* by Nancy Rose Sweetland

*Because Brian Hugged His Mother* by David L. Rice

*A. Lincoln and Me* by Louise Borden

*Hector the Hermit Crab* by Katie Boyce

*The Mixed-Up Chameleon* by Eric Carle



A United Way Agency

## *Looking for a Preschool?\**

Different children thrive in different types of preschools, and parents have different ideas about what they want their children to experience. Some questions to ask yourself or to ask the preschool directors when you visit:

- ◆ Do I want a traditional preschool modeled after public school classrooms, or do I think my child is too young for that or that she learns best through play and hands-on methods?
- ◆ How does one school compare with another in cost, distance, teacher/student ratio, start/end times, application due date, and observations I have made?
- ◆ Does the school have a structured curriculum and know what skills it is working on? Are the activities varied and experiential?
- ◆ Does the school stress creativity and originality? (Does the art on the wall look as though the teacher might have done it? If so, skip that school!)
- ◆ Are floors and bathrooms clean and tidy? Are materials and toys organized but readily available to the children?
- ◆ What training has the classroom teacher had? Does she appear to be enjoying what she is doing?
- ◆ Are the children having fun? Do they seem to feel comfortable with the teacher? Who fills in if the teacher is ill?
- ◆ Does the playground have safe equipment and is it properly fenced?
- ◆ Does the school offer special classes, experience, field trips, and visiting programs?
- ◆ Is there opportunity for physical activity?
- ◆ Is it affordable? What is the application fee, the deposit, the monthly tuition? Does the school charge for late pickup? Is there a discount or can you work at the school to pay part of the fees?
- ◆ Does the school provide food, and if so are there measures to prevent allergy-prone children from having access to the wrong foods?
- ◆ Must your child be potty trained? What happens if she has an accident?
- ◆ How does the school communicate with parents? Are there regular conferences or progress reports? What does the school require of you?
- ◆ Do the start and end times work for your child's schedule? Does he still require a nap?
- ◆ What is the discipline policy and are you comfortable with it?
- ◆ Does the school do religious training and if so are you comfortable with the philosophy or theology?

\* These ideas are adapted from an article by Jennifer Rothacker, McClatchy Newspapers, Dayton Daily News, January 30, 2010.

