



September 2020

parenting CHRISTIAN kids



**Eagle's Landing First
Baptist Church**
2400 Hwy 42 North
McDonough, GA. 30253
770-957-3500
www.eagleslanding.org

Address Rebellion with Love

POWERSOURCE

ASK JESUS:

1. To help you deal with rebellion in a loving, calm, and positive way.
2. For guidance as you set age-appropriate boundaries and rules.
3. To forgive you when you rebel against God and his laws.

After a summer of “freedom” and relaxed rules, September’s return to school and schedules often poses a challenge for children. On top of that, 2020 has been filled with new restrictions and limits that are tough for everyone to comply with and comprehend.

As the pandemic drags on, kids are likely to have more questions about why they need to stay home or wear masks, and why they can’t enjoy certain activities or venues that are temporarily shut down.

Although rules are set for our own good, following them isn’t always fun or easy. Because of sin, all humans rebel against authorities and against God. Children are no exception, as new parents quickly

discover. From a surprisingly young age, little ones begin asserting their independence by pushing back against limits and saying “no!” Just as God deals with our rebellion out of love, he instructs parents to raise and discipline children lovingly. That approach molds them into followers of Jesus who strive to obey God and respect other people.

Rebellion takes different forms as children grow (see the next page), so you’ll need to adapt your approach to rule-setting and discipline. No matter your children’s age, however, one of the most important things you can do is pray for them—and for yourself in the vital role of parent. Thank Jesus for each of your children by name, and ask Jesus to work in their hearts and lives, giving them a strong desire to always follow God faithfully.

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Staying on the Right Path

Use these strategies for dealing with rebellion as children grow:

Birth to 2 years: Accept that God gives even infants and toddlers unique temperaments. Provide lots of comfort, physical touch, and warmth.

3 to 4 years: Listen carefully, and respond to physical and emotional needs. Explore what upsets children. Model Jesus' love through affection.

5 to 7 years: Offer choices and clear consequences for disobedience. Balance your growing demands with warmth and reason.

8 to 12 years: Be consistent. Express trust, and praise kids for jobs well done. When kids fall short, ask what they can do differently next time.

Commandments 2.0 As a family, work to reword each of God's Ten Commandments as a loving rule with positive purposes; for example, "Because I want you to be protected from religions that would mislead you, don't worship any other god besides me."

Walking with God Either trace one another's feet on paper or make footprint impressions with plaster of Paris. As prints dry, read Joshua 22:5 (NIV) and discuss what it means to "walk in obedience" with God. Also talk about what it's like to veer from God's path—and how he brings us back to his ways.

Grace Abounds During family devotions about people in the Bible who rebelled, address not only the consequences each person faced but also God's abundant grace. For example, King David paid a hefty price for sinning, but he asked for—and received—forgiveness.

Going God's Way Beforehand, use tape to mark start and finish lines at opposite ends of a room. Share times you've done the opposite of what you should have done. Gather on the starting line and say: "See how fast you can get to the finish line—but you must crawl or crabwalk backward. Go!" Read John 1:35-40. Ask: "How was

this game like or unlike following Jesus? When it's tempting to do the opposite, how can we live God's way?"

Rules Roulette Search online for outdated rules that were in communities and schools years ago—or that might still remain today. Share some funny rules with family. Then read Luke 16:17. Ask: "Why do rules exist? Why do they sometimes need to change? How does it feel to know that God's rules will never change?"

Starting Over As a family, choose an item to draw on an Etch-A-Sketch. Every 60 seconds, pass the toy to someone else. When it returns to you, start drawing and say, "Oops, I messed up!" Shake the toy. Say: "Sometimes we mess up by not following God's rules, but he lets us start over." Read Luke 15:11-32. Discuss how the prodigal son rebelled against his father but got a second chance.

Map Treks Hand out paper and pencils. Say: "Keeping your eyes closed, draw a map from our house to school, church, or a friend's house." After comparing maps, read Psalm 119:10. Ask: "How is the Bible like a map for our lives? How can the Bible keep us from wandering away from God?"

"So why do you keep calling me, 'Lord, Lord,' when you don't do what I say?"
—Luke 6:46



TEACHABLE MOMENTS

A Muddy Situation

Set out a dishpan full of mud with some coins mixed in. Tell family members to dig for coins, which they can keep.

Don't let anyone wash up. Ask: **How did it feel to dig for treasure? Now that our search is over, how do your hands feel?**

Say: **Jesus tells about a boy who left his father to hunt for a better life. As I read, stand when you hear good actions and attitudes, and sit for bad actions and attitudes.** Read Luke 15:11-32. Review by asking people to describe times when they stood or sat.

Ask: **What's so special about this father's love? What happened when the son wouldn't receive that love? How is that like the way your muddy hands feel? Who loves you the way this father loves his son?**

Say: **God loves us even more than this father loved his son.** Ask: **What's one way you know that God loves you?** Pray and then wash your hands.

MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIE

Title: *The One and Only Ivan*

Genre: Animation, Adventure, Comedy

Rating: PG

Cast: Sam Rockwell, Angelina Jolie, Phillipa Soo, Bryan Cranston

Synopsis: In this CGI/live-action film streaming on Disney+, Ivan the gorilla ponders life in captivity. He and other animals kept at an Atlanta mall form unexpected friendships while plotting an escape plan. The movie is based on Katherine Applegate's middle-grade novel, which won the Newbery Award.

Our Take: *Ivan* explores themes such as hope, freedom, one's sense of home, and new perspectives. It also can spark conversations about when to question or challenge one's situation. Because the movie is inspired by a true story, the concept of animal abuse could upset some viewers.



MUSIC

Title: *Smile*

Artist: Katy Perry

Synopsis: Perry's fifth album—and her first since 2017—coincides with the birth of her first child. Though the title track has an upbeat sound and lyrics, the pop singer says it emerged from “one of the darkest periods” of her life, when she'd lost her smile. “This whole album is my journey toward the light,” she says, “with stories of resilience, hope, and love.”

Our Take: “Daisies,” the lead single, talks about overcoming odds and defying expectations. On “Smile,” Perry expresses gratitude for renewed happiness, noting that “every tear has been a lesson.” Perry has been vocal about bouts with depression. Be aware: Some lyrics contain profanity or suggestive phrases.



CULTURE & TRENDS

Back to School? Experts predict a sharp uptick in homeschooling this fall, with many parents leery of health risks or unhappy with hybrid-learning options. Only 3% of kids were homeschooled in 2016, but that's expected to rise significantly—and possibly become a lasting trend. (*Washington Post*)

At-Risk Educators Kids who *do* return to classrooms should be prepared to see new people at the helm. Almost one-third of U.S. teachers are 50 or older, putting them at higher risk for Covid-19. Those with pre-existing conditions or at-risk family members may sit out this year, and more than usual are expected to retire. (*various sources*)

Games, Podcasts & Apps

Jump Rope Challenge

This simple Nintendo Switch game, inspired by pandemic-related lockdowns, is free on the eShop until Sept 30. Using the Joy-Con, players make a bunny jump in time with them. Jump Rope Challenge makes a noble yet limited attempt to get gamers moving.

Music Box

Using interactivity, this music-education podcast teaches children about fundamentals in fun ways. Episodes explore concepts such as meter and pitch, songwriting basics, and what different instruments sound like. Host Faith Murphy and special guests introduce listeners to a wide range of musical styles.

WideOpenSchool

From the nonprofit Common Sense Media, this app offers a vast, organized collection of educational resources. Parents new to online learning or home-schooling will appreciate all the subject matter—for pre-K through grade 12—from sources such as Scholastic, National Geographic, and PBS.

QUICK STATS

On the Move More than one-fifth (22%) of Americans moved or know someone who moved due to the pandemic. Of the people who have moved, three-fifths (61%) relocated to a family member's home. (*Pew Research*)

COVID Conundrum Though 59% of parents worry that their kids are falling behind academically during the pandemic, only 44% of adults with school-age children are willing to send them back to school this fall. (*ABC News/Ipsos*)



September

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Worship @ 11am Preschool Discipleship – register online	7 Labor Day	8	9	10	11 Patriot Day	12
13 Worship @ 11am 9:30 Preschool Discipleship – register online	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Worship @ 11am 9:30 Preschool Discipleship – register online	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Worship @ 11am 9:30 Preschool Discipleship – register online	28	29	30			



Misbehavior or Mishap?

Is your toddler acting up or acting like a child? Even when you don't know, guide him or her toward positive behavior

There were times — a *lot* of times — when there was no clear indicator. Was the container of flour knocked over due to innocently inquisitive fingers? Was the oatmeal on the wall due to a defiant flick of a fork?

When you learn how to decipher your child's behavior, it will make correcting and teaching him a lot easier. Here is how:

Is your little one experiencing a new situation or environment? If so, it's OK for your toddler to make mistakes. help him navigate new situations by providing simple guidance. Let him touch that fluffy cat, but show and tell him how to do it with a one-word prompt such as "gentle."

As a parent of a toddler you will find yourself repeating things over and over again. Keep corrective statements short, simple and positive as you can. Disobedience becomes easier to spot when you know your toddler has heard and understood your expectation. But you will probably have to repeat the instructions, again.

~ Focus On The Family

Less Scream Time, More Fun Time

Helping young child understand how to work through their emotions instead of screaming or throwing tantrums

Emotional outburst or tantrums are normal for toddlers. Between 18 to 36 months, toddlers will experience a "period of separation and individuation. This is a time when they become increasingly mobile and seek to have more control over their environment.

When a toddler discovers he can't do something on his own and that Mom and Dad will not let him have everything he wants, he experiences frustration. Because his language skills have yet to develop, he will express his frustration in the only language he knows: Angry Tantrums. In Toddler speak: Frustration=Tantrum.

Here's 4 simple ideas to help with the toddler tantrums:

1. Wait out your child: Sometimes the best thing parents can do is wait it out. Remain calm and patiently wait for your child to stop. Even though it may take some time, it's important not to give in to the tantrum. Rewarding this behavior teaches a child outburst are effective. Once the child is calm say "Screaming will not get my attention, next time you are upset let's use your words to tell Mommy what is wrong. You will have to repeat this many times, but the lesson will soon stick.
2. Take a Break: If the tantrum escalates, a "time-out" or "a break" may be required. Put the child in safe place. The screaming may continue for a moment, but what the break does is removes the child from the "activity of the house" temporarily for the child to realize their behavior is keeping them from the family fun. You should not lecture her or scold her; simply ignore her, because to a toddler even *negative* attention is better than no attention at all.
3. Learn to Identify Triggers: Are there certain situations or specific activities that commonly result in your child feeling overwhelmed or frustrated? If so, plan ahead on how to respond. Transitioning from one activity or location? Verbally prepare the child in advance for change. Several times if needed.
4. Hangry? Tired? Tiredness and hunger are a recipe for disaster in a toddler. Know your toddler. Do they need snacks in-between meals? Before you leave the house, put some snack in your bag. Is your toddler going to miss a nap while out and about? Bring along a favorite blanket, or toy to comfort and calm her.

As parents, we do not have to fear the toddler tantrums. Instead, with the right tools we can feel ready and equipped to our toddlers deal with their emotions and learn a healthy way to be independent. ~ Excerpts taken from "4 Ways to Calm a Toddler" Ashleigh Slater

Age Level Insights: Dealing With Rebellion at Any Age

Birth to 2 years – How Children Rebel

Babies know the world only by looking, grasping, and putting things in their mouths. Care-givers may think children “rebel” when they cry for no apparent reason. Infants may “rebel” by reacting negatively when they are separated from their mothers. The new reactions of a previously agreeable infant are perfectly normal and part of learning that there is a world beyond a mother’s lap.

Ways to Respond

Understand and accept that God gives even newborns the ability to display unique temperaments. Some researchers have concluded that there are three general kinds of babies: easy, difficult, and slow-to-warm-up. Provide comfort and warmth. Gently talk to and hold babies.

3 to 4 Years Old – How Children Rebel

Children at this age are less likely to obey adults when they’re tired, ill, hungry, or emotionally upset. They’ll whine and scream because adults don’t understand what children need. Children may rebel by taking something away from another child even after they’ve been told to keep their hands to themselves.

Ways to Respond

Listen carefully to understand the needs of younger children. Respond to their needs. If they are hungry, give them a snack; if they are tired, encourage them to rest. When they don’t want to share their toys, explore why sharing upsets them. Model Christ’s love by giving kids affection.

5 to 7 Years Old – How Children Rebel

The rebellious child at this age is often a nonconformist. For example, some children may not want to be quiet because they are not in a quiet mood. They like being noisy and are surprised by your need for quiet. Children at this age may not understand another’s feelings. They may rebel because they don’t fully understand the consequences of their behavior. They may continue playing loudly even after being told to keep quiet. Children want a reason for obeying a rule.

Ways to Respond

The Bible advises never to drive children to frustration (Colossians 3:21). Offer choices. For example say, “You can play quietly with others or play by yourself.” Or “Do you want to clean up the crayons on the table or pick up the scraps of paper?” Give “I” messages. “When you do not clean up your play area, it means more work for me and it makes me unhappy.” Balance your demands on a child with warmth and reason. Explain why you have a rule. Setting limits in a loving way minimizes children’s rebellion.