



Making Good Decisions

When children are given the opportunity to make their own choices, they learn how to make good decisions and do the “right” thing. It lets them know that you trust them and helps them feel in control. Teaching children how to make good decisions builds problem-solving skills and helps them avoid peer pressure when they are older.

You can help your child learn to make good choices. Here's how:

Infants & Toddlers

- Read to your child every night. Let her choose the book to read.
- Place three toys within reach of your baby. Let him choose the toy to play with. He may pick up the toys, look, and play with one or all of them.
- Let your toddler choose her outfit. At first, give simple choices – show two shirts and say: “You can wear the blue shirt or the red shirt. Which one do you want to wear today?”
- Get creative! Ask your toddler to make you a picture. Provide different art materials – try paints, chalk, markers, crayons, colored pencils and different colored paper. Let your child choose what to use and what to make.
- Play with your child. Let her choose the game or toy to play with.

Preschoolers

- Ask your child to help you make lunch. Give him several choices: “Do you want a banana or an apple?” or “Do you want a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or chicken soup?”
- Role-play difficult situations with your child. Have your child pretend that she is at school and a friend takes a toy away from her; ask her what she would do if this really happened.
- Use puppets and dolls to show your child how to solve problems. For example, if the puppet is upset that someone took her toy, the puppet can say, “That make's me so mad. Can I please have my toy back?” Your child can say, “You can have it when I am finished playing with it.”
- Talk with your child about ways he can be helpful. Give your child suggestions – setting the table, caring for pets, sorting laundry, or making the bed. Let him choose how he wants to help. To help your child make a decision, limit the number of choices.

Book Suggestions

Making Good Choices: A Book About Right & Wrong by Lisa Engelhardt and Anne Fitzgerald
The ABCs of Making Good Choices by Dawn Young and Sarah Keaggy