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## Parenting Tips

### Look for Positive Qualities Misused

All children have good character qualities that, when taken to the extreme, have a negative side. One child may be quite organized, but if not careful, may become inflexible in a less structured situation. It's like the saying, "your strength can be your greatest weakness."

One mom told about her son who had a genuine sensitivity to others' needs. He was compassionate and cared for others and often felt things deeply. "I remember one time when he was younger, he began to cry when he saw an ambulance speeding down the road because he knew that someone was hurt inside. He's very caring. Unfortunately, sometimes this sensitivity can cause him to become moody or overly emotional, pouting or crying over the least little problem." So the positive quality is sensitivity but it can have a negative side of being moody or being prone to emotional outbursts.

Another mom saw that her son had the ability to work hard at a task without being distracted. "He focuses intensely, with real determination to succeed." This quality of being persistent can be a real asset, but sometimes it would show itself as stubbornness.

As you look at your children's weaknesses, look for a positive character quality they may be misusing. Look for ways to balance it with other character qualities. Give praise for the positive quality and encourage practical ways to bring balance. Envision a positive future for your child based on those qualities. Encourage small steps of adjustment to bring them in line.

Focusing on character is one of the ways to touch a child's heart and bring about lasting change.

*This parenting tip is from the book [Home Improvement: The Parenting Book You Can Read to Your Kids](#) by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN.*