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Parenting Tips

There's More to Giving Instructions Than You Realize

There's more to giving instructions than just accomplishing tasks or getting children to do what parents say for the sake of convenience. Valuable lessons for life are hidden within the instruction process. Through instruction, children learn character and skills that will help them to be successful outside the home. They

learn things like how to set aside their agenda for someone else, how to complete a job without Mom or Dad reminding them, how to report back when they're done, and how to be responsible when no one is watching.

Most importantly, children learn to respond to Mom and Dad so that they will have the necessary character to obey God as they grow older. Maybe that's why Solomon talks fifteen times in the book of Proverbs about the importance of listening to instructions. As you concentrate on a routine for giving instructions, you will pave the way for healthy spiritual relationships between your children and God.

By teaching children to follow directions you help them develop the character they need to listen to God's instructions and obey him. It's a lot of work but the time you invest now has benefits that will last a lifetime. After all, as adults, we must also comply with instructions that we don't particularly like. Sometimes God asks us to do something we don't fully understand or wish we didn't have to do. Obedience usually requires work, self-discipline, and humility, qualities not easily found in society today.

The instruction process builds character by helping children learn to follow directions without arguing or complaining. When parents give up on giving instructions, they miss valuable teaching opportunities. That doesn't mean parents should just overpower their kids. If you work to implement an Instruction Routine, both you and your kids will benefit. The ramifications are important because as you do the daily work of parenting, your children are learning how to respond not only to you, but also to their future employers, team leaders, and ultimately to God.

For more on how to build a good Instruction Routine with your children, consider the manual and CD, [Teaching Kids to Listen and Follow Instructions](#) by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN.