

PARENTMAKING EDUCATORS TRAINING PROGRAM

TECHNIQUES FOR BEGINNING LIMIT SETTING WITH OLDER BABIES

The clearer we are within ourselves about the need to say no, the less testing the child needs to do. Also, the fewer no's, the easier it is for the baby to learn.

To begin setting limits:

1. Babyproof the house thoroughly.
2. Assess those things your baby goes toward (e.g., the fireplace) to find out what is so appealing about them. Try to think of substitutes for those activities or interests that will satisfy the baby's curiosity or needs.
3. When you say no, say it firmly, and remove your baby from the activity/object. When possible, give a brief reason for your no to the child after you say it, then redirect the child's attention to some activity/object that is both acceptable and a good substitute. Put the first object away.
4. Use positive reinforcement (praise) for desirable behavior.
5. Engage in the new activity with your child and then in any other activity she was doing (rather than watching to see if she returns to the forbidden activity/object).
6. If the behavior persists after repeated removals (and if your patience is wearing thin), bring the child to another room or take her outside, if possible. Or have the child have a "time out" in the playpen, another room, etc; using a timer and setting it for just a few minutes can help both you and your child know when the "time out" is over.