

Parenting

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For Colorado Parents

1-2-3 Magic technique really works

By Carol Schultz

With awe in their voices, parents tell how their children have stopped throwing tantrums, badgering them and running around wildly in public. Behind these dramatic changes is a discipline technique known as 1-2-3 Magic. This is a behavior modification program technique developed by Thomas Phelan, an Illinois clinical psychologist who wrote a book and produced a video titled "1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children 2-12."

It's so simple that many parents are skeptical at first. But simplicity is at the

heart of the technique's success. Basically, here's how it works:



one." If the child continues, the parent says, "That's two." If the child keeps going, the parent says, "That's three. Take five." That means the child has to go to his or her room for a time-out that lasts about one minute for each year of

the child's age.

During the time-out, off-limits are friends, phones, televisions, computers and electronic games. For really bad behavior, like hitting or cursing, the parent goes straight to "That's three," and adds time depending on the severity of the misdeed.

During the counting and after the time-out, the parent can give a two or three word explanation but doesn't say anything else--no lecturing, no arguing, no yelling. The "no talking" and "no emotion" rules for parents are essential.

(See "Magic" on page 4)

Serious About Drugs



Focus on... Over-the-Counter Drugs

Over-the-counter drugs can be purchased without a prescription. They are used by people to treat ailments, ranging from headaches to colds to minor injuries. While most OTC drugs are safe if the directions are followed, large doses or prolonged use of some of these drugs can be dangerous or even fatal. In addition, some OTC drugs contain ingredients, such as alcohol or codeine, that can alter the user's mood and cause psychological dependence. People believe that drugs sold over the counter can't hurt them. But all drugs have the potential to be harmful if not used as directed or if mixed with other medications. **Always read the label carefully and follow the instructions.** Most OTC drugs, used according to their

directions, help relieve the symptoms of minor illnesses and ailments, but prolonged use is no substitute for professional treatment. The longer these drugs are used, the higher the risk of developing adverse side effects specific to that drug, such as liver damage from acetaminophen. Prolonged use can cause: exhaustion or restlessness, gastrointestinal disorders, headaches, impaired night vision, impotence, irregular menstrual cycles, mood swings, respiratory difficulties, tension and muscle twitches. Approximately 12% of Americans 12 years and older have used OTC drugs nonmedically. Aspirin should not be given to children with chicken pox or flu symptoms, as it has been implicated in a rare disease called Reye's syndrome. Symptoms of acetaminophen poisoning can include vomiting, anorexia, nausea, stomach pain, jaundice, death (within 2 to 7 days). Antihistamine overdose can be fatal to children, causing heart and respiratory failure.

Parents' smoking kills kids

By Carleton Kendrick, Family Education Network

I knew smoking killed smokers. I didn't know parents who smoke could endanger their kids. 6200 a year, according to a recent research study covering reports from 1980 to 1996 on children up to age 18. "More young children are killed by parental smoking than by all unintentional injuries combined," the study's researchers said. The study was conducted at the University of Wisconsin's Medical School and published in the July issue of the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine.

Death Count Breakdown

2800 of these deaths are linked to low birthweight, the result of mothers smoking while pregnant. Approximately 2000 of the deaths are due to sudden infant death syndrome caused by secondhand

smoke. Another 1000 are due to lung infections. 250 die from burns caused by cigarette-produced fires. 14 children die from asthma.

Pregnant Women

Additionally, another separate study in July's Archives of General Psychiatry reported that pregnant women smokers are more disposed to give birth to boys who exhibit "conduct disorder." "Conduct disorder" is characterized by continuous antisocial behavior (fire-setting, vandalism, physical and sexual aggression, theft) beginning much sooner than most juvenile delinquency.

Kick It For Your Kids

As a psychotherapist, I've worked with many cigarette smokers in their attempts to quit smoking. Cigarette smoking is the toughest addiction I've worked with, tougher than alcohol, tougher than heroin. I've often counseled smokers to

"quit for yourself, no one else, or else you'll never own the victory; the freedom will never truly be yours." Now I can't think of all these kids who never should have died and still give the same advice. I'm now compelled to say, "Quit so your kids will be healthy--so they'll live!"

Let's Clear The Air

We at least owe our kids a chance at the healthiest life possible. It's their birthright. This isn't a guilt trip. It's a call to kick the habit that hurts you and that may seriously compromise your child's health. Each of those 6200 kids had a right to live. With courage, dedication and support, parents who smoke can kick the habit and give their children a healthy start in life and safe "family air" to breathe as they grow.



Losing weight or losing years?

Study finds that most teen girls smoke to lose weight

Most teenage girls who take up smoking do so in an effort to lose weight, according to a British and Canadian study. Those who smoke are 30 percent more likely to be overweight than their non-smoking peers, the study authors found.

The researchers surveyed nearly 2,800 girls in Britain and Ottawa, Canada, ranging in age from 11 to 18, and found that 20 percent smoked. Those who did light up were twice as likely as the other girls to be concerned about their bodies and to vomit frequently after overeating.

In addition, more than 30 percent of the smokers feared they would eat more and put on weight if they tried to give

up cigarettes, the researchers said.

Young girls are "trading pounds off their weight for years off their lives," said Arthur Crisp, the professor at London's St. George's Hospital Medical School who conducted the study.

The study, published in the Postgraduate Medical Journal, comes at a time when the number of young female smokers continues to grow. The most recent figures available from the Office of National Statistics in England found that a quarter of girls ages 11 to 15 were occasional or regular smokers in 1996, up from 20 percent in 1982.

The study, funded by the Cancer Research Campaign, also revealed that girls who drank alcohol were seven

times more likely to be smokers and that peer pressure and parental smoking were not major factors in their decision to smoke.

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Children and money: How to instill good values in your kids

By Nancy Drennen

What are the important considerations in teaching children good money management skills? The life-long benefits of teaching children good money habits make it well worth the effort. Children who are not taught these skills may pay the consequences for a lifetime. Some parents don't teach children about money, because they think they shouldn't talk about money with children, don't have time or think they don't have enough money to "worry about." Most educators and financial advisers feel that parents should take the time regardless of income, and that they should start when children are young.

Perhaps, the most important suggestion is that parents need to develop a consistent approach both over time and among the adults involved (if more than one). Most people have strong feelings and opinions about money. These come from childhood experiences and the values and beliefs of their families. Many times each parent has had different experiences, beliefs and values.

For the healthy development of children, it is important that parents talk about their own feelings and opinions, and establish a consistent approach to teaching children about money. Here are some of the questions parents should ask themselves and guidelines to keep in mind when educating children about money.

- How should our children receive money?
- How will we structure learning experiences about money?
- How will we deal with our children's

differences in handling money (by stage of development, special needs, or per-



sonality differences)?

• How will we respond to the effects of advertising and peer pressure on our children's buying requests?

Sharing ★★☆☆☆☆

Sharing teaches good feelings for giver and receiver and that helping other people doesn't always require public recognition, gives an opportunity to learn that we have obligations to give money to certain organizations (like taxes to government), and giving of oneself rather than giving money or gifts. Some aides parents might try include the following:

- Try explaining that sharing with others includes not only money, but also resources such as time, materials, or skills.
- Use special occasions to remind children about sharing with others who are less fortunate.
- Initiate a community service project, for which older children can take leadership.
- Help children recognize opportunities to donate time, energy, and skills to community projects.

Saving ★★☆☆☆☆

Saving is, perhaps, one of the greatest challenges for families in the United States; which has experienced declining rates of savings for many years. Teaching children how to save in balance with other money management activities is critical to their future well being. Saving teaches a way to get what you want or need, the "pay yourself first" idea, planning for and delaying gratification, the interrelationship of spending and earning, and the variety of different purposes of planned and regular saving.

Some suggested teaching ideas include:

• Explain the difference between planned saving (short-term) for a specific want or need, and regular saving (long-term) for unknown items or emergencies. Help children set up short-term savings goals and let them know how long it will take to save a particular amount.

• Provide non-money rewards to encourage younger children to save. It is hard for a ten-year old to appreciate little amounts of interest, when the child can't get a special want. Older children can learn to appreciate the reward of delayed gratification that goes with unseen amounts of money building over long periods of time. Praise and encouragement help children learn to save for the long term.

• Consider motivating saving by matching the amount the child saves on an annual or even a monthly basis.



...1-2-3 Magic technique really works (from page 1)

If parents violate these cardinal rules, Phelan says, the child can't clearly hear the warning ("That's one."), which gets mixed up with the rest of a parent's "verbal garbage." And many children will take yelling, nagging and arguing as a challenge. Unwise attempts on your part at talking are guaranteed to take the child's focus off the possibility of good behavior and put their focus on the possibility of an enjoyable argument. Consistency is the key, say those who have learned the technique.

"What makes it work is repetition and backing up what you say," says Rick Sykes, a psychiatric nurse who introduced 1-2-3 Magic to a Memphis psychiatric hospital where this technique is used for all patients in its child and adolescent unit.

Parents gain confidence with 1-2-3 Magic because it gives them a simple

structure and helps them avoid manipulation by their children. It puts parents in the driver's seat immediately. Parents often need something more simple and structured than the discipline centered on logical and natural consequences. After a year of 1-2-3 Magic, most children stop a lot of badgering and back-talking.

Common mistakes parents make when starting to use 1-2-3 Magic include arguing with their children, talking too much and trying it for a week and then stopping. A parent or relative may sabotage the strategy if they do not agree to follow the 1-2-3 process. It actually works if you continue to do it, but you have to stick it out. Don't give up after two weeks.



What's a parent to do about discipline?

1. Be consistent with the discipline. Spontaneous discipline yields spontaneous behaviors.
2. Make sure the child is told in advance what the system of discipline will be and the consequences involved (This may vary depending on the age of the child).
3. Try to change your vocabulary to "you chose," "you made the choice," "for your choice the consequences are," and/or "this is not my fault, you made the decision too."
4. If you are too angry from your child's misbehavior, wait to discipline at a later time, but make sure you tell the child the reason for the delay (i.e. "Because I am angry and I want to be fair in delivering the consequences for your behavior, I am going to wait until I am calmer."
5. Make sure if you state consequences to behavior that you carry out the consequences-DO NOT THREATEN. It may change the child's behavior temporarily, but you are losing credibility with your child for not sticking to what you said.

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