



# Parenting Age Specific Course

## Lecture I: Preschool to First Grade

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*"Jesus and the Children" by Hugo Vogel*

## Parenting Young Children: Taking Care of God's Gift

+ Psalm 127

- “1 Unless the LORD builds the house,  
They labor in vain who build it;  
Unless the LORD guards the city,  
The watchman stays awake in vain.
- 2 *It is vain for you to rise up early,  
To sit up late,  
To eat the bread of sorrows;  
For so He gives His beloved sleep.*
- 3 Behold, children *are* a heritage from the LORD,  
The fruit of the womb *is* a reward.
- 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,  
So *are* the children of one's youth.
- 5 Happy *is* the man who has his quiver full of them;  
They shall not be ashamed,  
But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.”

### I. Characteristics of 4-7 year old children:

#### 1. Egocentric

- ❖ Understanding of their world revolves only around themselves
- ❖ Lacking empathy
- ❖ Attribute to themselves events around them

#### 2. Concrete

- ❖ Do not understand abstract concepts
- ❖ Interpret things literally
- ❖ Understand more what they can see and feel rather than what they cannot see and feel

#### 3. Establishing their independent identity

- ❖ Experiencing efficacy – balance between abilities and demands
- ❖ They seek to assert themselves
- ❖ They seek to test limits and boundaries

#### 4. Highly suggestible

- ❖ Easily influenced
- ❖ Will believe what they are told

- ❖ Can even have their memories distorted

#### 5. Learn a lot by modeling

- ❖ Copy behavior of others- especially parents but also other kids

#### 6. Immature in many skills

- ❖ Lack good impulse control especially boys
- ❖ Lack emotional control

## II. Important Needs

### 1. Time and attention from the parent

- ❖ Easy to ignore – TV and other distractions
- ❖ Attention from the parent is a basic need - Negative attention preferred by the child over no attention
- ❖ Easy to neglect positive attention

### 2. Relationship with God

- ❖ Based on parent – relation with them, with God,
- ❖ Based on characteristics of their age

### 3. Unconditional love and parental approval

- ❖ Separating the behavior from the child
- ❖ Not based on mood or circumstances
- ❖ Parents often love but may not like the child

### 4. Play – fulfills multiple needs and facilitates multiple areas of development

- ❖ Relationship with others

### 5. Safety and security

- ❖ Physical safety/security – consistent food, shelter, freedom from harm, attention to basic needs
- ❖ Emotional safety- consistency, structure, freedom from emotional harm and neglect

### 6. Opportunities to learn and develop

- ❖ Critical windows for development
- ❖ Early intervention when needed

The challenge of parenting is to balance love with discipline and to understand how parents can be simultaneously loving and disciplining with their child:

**The Bible says:**

*“Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.”*  
Prov 22:6

*“He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.”*  
Prov 13:24

**The Bible also says:**

*“And you fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”* Eph 6:4

*“Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”* Col 3:21

### III. Principles for Behavior change or discipline

#### 1. What is the child capable of?

- ❖ Reasonable vs. unreasonable expectations
- ❖ Selfish vs. unselfish expectations
- ❖ Consistent vs. inconsistent expectations

#### 2. Every Behavior is dependent on what happens before, during, and after the behavior

- ❖ Before- know the motivations of the child – Why may not be what is obvious but something less obvious
- ❖ During- attention given
- ❖ After – consequences of the behavior
- ❖ To change a behavior all 3 have to change so all 3 need to be understood first

#### 3. Proactive is better than reactive

- ❖ More effective to stop a behavior before it starts than to stop it after it starts
- ❖ Less emotional problem for all involved

#### 4. Effective use of rewards and consequences

- ❖ Rewards more effective
- ❖ Consequences- natural ones are best, consistency determines success, explained
- ❖ Chance to redeem self

#### 5. Taking action is more effective than talking, repeating, yelling

- ❖ Children learn by experience more effectively than by words
- ❖ Words often contradict actual experience and become ineffective

### IV. Common Problems

#### 1. Lying

- ❖ If too young may not understand concept yet.
- ❖ Understand motivation for the lie.

- ❖ If fear is a motivation, need to work on source of fear
- ❖ Emphasize effect of the lie – for self, relation with others, relation with you, relation with God
- ❖ Give graded consequences for lying that are separate from what was lied about
- ❖ Reward honesty apart from consequence of what was lied about

## 2. Tantrums

- ❖ Coercive tantrums are different from reactive tantrums where the child has lost control.
- ❖ Coercive tantrums need to be ignored and never given into and also need consequence.
- ❖ Reactive tantrums need soothing and helping the child to learn to soothe self

## 3. Sibling rivalry

- ❖ It is natural and will occur in the best of families
- ❖ Encourage age appropriate roles for each sib toward the other such as older sib helping younger with something they have an advantage in and younger helping the older when help needed.
- ❖ Encourage problem solving between the kids among themselves and suggest solutions when they can't come up with one, such as taking turns, sharing.
- ❖ Intervene as limited as possible mainly to help them to problem solve or when there is a major unfairness.
- ❖ Avoiding favoritism is important.
- ❖ Being fair to each sib does not mean equal (differing needs)

## 4. Spanking

- ❖ It is often harmful not just physically but mentally especially when done in anger.
- ❖ It needs to be measure of last resort as has many potential harms.
- ❖ There are state laws against abuse- a parent can be reported.
- ❖ Don't use an object to spank.
- ❖ Don't use excessive force - for instance force that leaves a mark.
- ❖ Don't hit on the face or head.

## 5. Parental disagreements

- ❖ Unity is important for effectiveness.
- ❖ Unity is important for emotional health of each member of the family.
- ❖ Unity is usually more important than the actual issue causing disagreement

## 6. Common negative parenting styles

- ❖ Authoritarian – Expects a lot but gives little, controlling, relies on punishment.
- ❖ Kids tend to be withdrawn, lacking in initiative and social competence
- ❖ Permissive – Expects little and gives little, afraid to discipline, a form of neglect
- ❖ Kids tend to be dependent, irresponsible
- ❖ Authoritative- Expects a lot but gives a lot of support, understands the child's needs and respects them
- ❖ Kids tend to be confident , self-reliant and self controlled

## V. Communication Principles

1. Listening – Take advantage of when your child has something to say

2. Reasoning – Helps respect, self esteem, compliance, understanding the child

3. Appealing to the positive- Conveying positive regard that expects the positive

“You’re too smart to be doing dangerous things like that” “This is not like you”

4. Always convey that you are on the child’s side

❖ Even in disciplining or correcting

5. Avoid overreacting and when you do, apologize for it

❖ Learn to forgive yourself and your child

❖ Mistakes are to be expected, taken responsibility for, learned from, and moved on from

❖ Mistakes do not define your child – separate the mistake from who your child is when talk