



MANAGING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR (HOSPITALIZED OR NOT)

Children need limits, as do all people. Children need to know how they are expected to behave. They are happier and more secure when they know that the adults who are caring for them are not going to let them go out of bounds. They are grateful to the adult who is firm with reasonable limits which are appropriate and consistent.

Illness presents many problems for the child, the family and for healthcare professionals. We need to remind ourselves that the patient is a child and needs to be treated like other children their age, but still consider their special needs.

Setting limits is not simple. During illness, especially when a child is away from home, we must maintain limits so that the child can grow towards maturity and self-control.

A child must be **stopped if he is:**

- Hurting himself
- Hurting others (physically or emotionally)
- Destroying equipment
- Losing self-control due to over-stimulation

Avoid:

- Using words such as "bad" or "not nice"
- Using threats or bribes
- Punishing because of anger
- Giving punishment that has no relationship to the misdeed

Do:

- Redirect the child's attention

- Clearly define limits and consistently maintain them
- Listen actively and with respect
- Be positive
- Pay attention to good behaviors
- Ignore negative behaviors
- Involve the child in solving problems
- Use developmentally appropriate language

WAYS TO SAY "VERY GOOD"

Excellent, Super, Great, The Best, Glowing, Beautiful, Superior, Spectacular, I knew you could do it, That's better than ever, Now you have it, That is coming along nicely, You have just about mastered it, One more time and you'll have it, Keep working at it, That is quite an improvement, Keep up the good work, Good thinking, Fantastic, Marvelous, Good work, I am proud of you.

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