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Mommy & Baby: Styles Of Parenting

By Kirsten Hawkins

As a parent, you have the opportunity to set the tone in your home based on the style of parenting you choose. You can choose child-centered parenting or family-centered parenting—the differences will be discussed here.

v Child-centered Parenting o Intensely pursue the child's happiness, taking great strains to avoid discomfort or emotional stress for the child. o The child receives what she wants when she wants it: no delay, no waiting.

These concepts might not sound too bad, but what happens when Mom is sick? Or when Mom & Dad want to leave the baby with a sitter? There is little-to-no freedom in this parenting plan—and the baby will not grow in to a child who understands delayed gratification or how the world works. Additionally, this sets a child up for a bad case of “me-ism”—other people will not matter to her. Her goals and needs are paramount to everyone else's goals and needs, and the ability to look outward and understand being part of a team will be compromised.

v Family-centered Parenting o Keeps the baby's needs met, but within the appropriate context of the family unit. o The child enters in to a team-setting; she is not the center of the universe, but part of the family-team.

These concepts might not seem very different from the child-centered approach to parenting, but the results of the two methods are starkly different. Parents have the freedom to meet their child's needs and look ahead to developing skills and abilities, as they aren't catering to every fleeting whim or fancy a child might express. Sitters are okay for the family, as the parents will take time out to “date” and be intentional with each other. Because a baby raised in a family-centered plan understands that she is part of a team, she will learn “we-ism,” not “me-ism.” She will consider others as she grows and how her goals and needs can be met within the framework of a team—without compromising the others on the team.

You may know people on either side of these parenting styles who go overboard. That's not what I'm advocating here; a balance must be achieved. Remember these things:

Ø Life doesn't stop because you have a baby Ø Date your spouse Ø Continue those loving gestures

you enjoyed before your baby came along Ø Invite some friends over for food and fellowship Ø At the end of each day, spend 15 minutes sitting with your spouse, discussing the day's events

Kirsten Hawkins is a baby and parenting expert specializing new mothers and single parent issues. Visit <http://www.babyhelp411.com/> for more information on how to raising healthy, happy children.

The Three R's - How To Handle A Tantrum

By Maureen Arnold

Tantrums - the bane of the parenting world - need not be quite as feared as they have been in the past. Why? Parenting in the last several years has undergone a quiet revolution, a revolution that, while evincing a truly valuable outcome, has gone largely unnoticed in the general population.

What is the gist of the parenting revolution? Understanding. Understanding what makes our children tick, what makes them act and behave the way they do, which in turn leads to more effective parenting skills and tools for the rest of us.

One of the blocks in this revolutionary foundation of understanding is the 3 R's of tantrum control. The 3 R's are Reiteration, Request and Repetition. How exactly does this work? It's actually VERY simple, and will dramatically change your toddler's response to stressful situations.

So let's jump right into a typical meltdown. Two year old Johnny wants an ice-cream sandwich at 9 am, and he has not even eaten his breakfast yet. Mommy says no. Johnny immediately flings himself to the floor in frustration and proceeds to cry and scream that he wants ice-cream while Mommy stands there staring in resignation at the crumpled little ball of emotion on the kitchen floor.

Sound familiar? I thought so. Let's change the scenario a little bit. Two year old Johnny still wants ice-cream for breakfast. Mommy knows Johnny cannot have ice-cream for breakfast, but instead of saying no, Mommy remembers the three R's of tantrum control, because she knows what is coming when she says no. Instead, Mommy says to Johnny, "You want ice-cream for breakfast?" Johnny says "Ice cream!" Mommy says, "You want ice-cream for BREAKFAST?" This will continue until she knows that Johnny knows that she understands what he wants. This is Reiteration. This is repeating the "order" that your child has given you until you are sure that they get that YOU get it.

Next, Mommy moves on to the second R - Request. This is where Mommy puts in HER request, now that Johnny knows she understands him. Mommy says to Johnny, "I understand that you want ice-cream for breakfast, but you need to eat a banana instead." At this point, Johnny is much more likely to acquiesce to Mommy's request because he knows that Mommy understands what he wants.

At first, Mommy may need to revert back to step one a few times (Repetition), as well, to get through to Johnny that she understands. Toddlers can be pretty thick, especially when they are frustrated, which is the ultimate emotion behind a tantrum. It may take several repetitions before your toddler understands that you GET IT, and that they are being heard.

The key to the three R's is making sure your frustrated little guy or gal understands that you ARE hearing their request. Another great way to head off tantrums during the day is to make a few requests of your toddler that they can say no or yes to and win no matter what the answer is - that way they feel like they get what they want many times anyway. A little understanding and help from the parents can go a long way toward making your toddler feel valued and heard in his world of giants.

<http://www.teenager101.com/> <http://www.teenager101.com/aboutteenager101.htm>

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