



Family and Consumer Sciences Newsline

OSU Extension—Tulsa County
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Setting Limits for Children

When you set limits for your children, you demonstrate your love and concern. Setting limits tells a child, "I care about you, I want you to be safe. I want you to act responsibly so that you will learn to get along happily with others." Limits are like the guardrails on a bridge - they provide a sense of security.

What Kinds of Limits?

Carefully select the limits you think are necessary and, as much as possible, consider the child's point of view. The limits you set should:

Protect children from physical harm.

An example would be keeping a preschooler away from a hot stove; a school age child out of the street on bikes; a teenager has a curfew.

Protect property. For example, insisting that your youngster return tools to their proper places or showing a preschooler how to use the television set are limits that protect property.

Protect children and others from psychological harm. For example, helping children learn how to put their anger into words that are not obscenities, or showing children how to resolve conflicts without vicious teasing are limits that show respect for others' feelings and ideas.

Limit Your Limits

Before you set a limit, ask yourself: "Is this rule really important? Am I willing to deal with the conflicts that occur if my child disregards the limit?"

Rules should reflect your deeply held convictions or values you are committed to keeping. For example, do you really need to insist that a child eat all his or her peas, wear certain clothes, or not associate with a particular person? Or is it more important to take issue when a child destroys a friend's toy, swears at a parent, or takes money out of your wallet or purse?

Parents who set too many rules can overwhelm their children with too many demands. You are more effective focusing on important rules you believe in.

Set Reasonable Limits

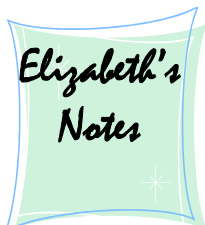
Consider whether your children are able to do what is expected of them. It is not reasonable to expect boisterous 10-year-olds to always remember their mealtime manners. Denying a child the right to experience emotions such as anger and fear may be unreasonable because these feelings are often natural, healthy responses to difficult situations.

To judge whether a limit is unreasonable, observe the way your children act. They may try their best but still fail, or they may show no sign of being able to perform the task. They might become moody and depressed or even angry and defiant. *Remember, if children can't be good at succeeding, then they are easily tempted to be good at failing.* With this in mind, set limits so your children can succeed. Then gradually raise your expectations so they can continue to be successful.

Be Clear and Positive

State your limits clearly and simply. A clear limit tells a child exactly what is expected and when. For example "Every day this summer, right after supper, you are to take the garbage, put it in the trash can outside, and make sure the lid is closed," your child knows exactly what to do. In contrast, saying "Clean up everything after supper" is vague.

Limits will be more effective if they emphasize the possible - if they tell a child what to do rather than what not to do.



Reminders and looking ahead:

Watch Outreach for registration forms for State Meeting July 8-10, 2007 in OKC

JULY

- 2 OHCE Scholarship Applications due
- 4 Extension Office closed
- 8-10 OHCE State Meeting, Oklahoma City
Registration forms in Outreach - Mail in
- 20 Leader Training 10:00 am Extension Office
Buying USA Products

AUGUST

- 1-5 County Fair
- 28 Leader Training - Leadership Development,
Life Savors, Decorating Gourds, Owasso 10:00
- 29 4-H Gate Sign money due to County Treasurer

**SILENT AUCTION
at the Tulsa County Fair**

Once again it is time to gather items for the Silent Auction. Ask Family or Friends for items they no longer want. Watch for things at garage sales (sometimes people will donate at the end of the sale or give us a cheaper price for HCE).

Each club is asked to contribute 25 baskets on stand alone items. Bid Sheets will be furnished to each club. Books and plants will be for sale as cash-and-carry.

Any questions, contact Linda Lawrence 627-7730 or Kathy Erwin 445-1665

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

This is the time of year to recruit new members to your group. We recently have had contacts from people to become new members and even start a new group.

As an incentive, any member who finds a new member, gets their membership paid for the year. On the State Membership Form, fill out the bottom Recruited New Member section of the form before you send it in to Earl Moore. This membership drive starts August 1 and has a cutoff date of October 12.

Sincerely,



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This newsletter is published by OSU Extension Service/Tulsa County Family and Consumer Sciences Department. Information about Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE) groups may be obtained by contacting Tulsa County Extension, 4116 East 15th St., Tulsa, OK 74112-6198 918-746-3703 or log onto: www.oces.tulsacounty.org

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