



# Creative Ways to Motivate Your Children



Do you feel as if you are always correcting? Disciplining? Reminding? Yelling? Is there a way to get your kids to do what they should without nagging? Here are few ideas to create a positive spin on training our kids.

**Give positive reinforcement for good behavior.** This angle is definitely under-used by many parents. We all love praise! Notice and praise your kids when they do the right thing. Be specific. (*I saw how gentle you were with your little sister. I like how you stayed with that project even though you were frustrated.*)

**Play “Beat the clock.”** Set the timer and see if they can pick up their toys in two minutes. A similar one is “See if you can \_\_\_\_\_ (put your plate in the sink, put your socks on, put away your crayons, etc.) by the time I count to 20.” (This works best with little ones.)

Draw a face on a paper plate. Cut strips of paper and add a link to create a paper chain every time they do a kind deed (or whatever behavior you want them to do). **When the chain reaches the floor, celebrate!** Go for ice cream, stay up late, or do whatever your kids would enjoy.

**Create a Reward Jar.** Fill a jar with treats or slips of paper with fun things to do. If they lay down for their nap (or do whatever they are expected to do), let them choose something from the Reward Jar. Similar to that is the **Sticker Chart**. I’m constantly amazed at how excited kids are to put a sticker on a chart. (Example: fill in 10 stickers and earn a special privilege.)

**Create a Chore Jar.** List each chore that needs to be done on a slip of paper and put them in a jar. Everyone picks out a chore (or two) on Saturday morning and does it.

**When taking a trip, give each child a bag (or wallet) with spending money** (best if they are in one dollar bills). Tell them that every time they argue, they lose one dollar. Whatever is left when they arrive at the destination is theirs to spend.

**Diversion and distraction** (especially with toddlers) is a great way to change behavior. Re-direct them to another activity, give them a hug or different toy, or just announce that you happen to know the greatest kid on the block and you are looking at him/her!

