

## Respect

When it comes to parenting, often *respect and fear* are mixed up. A harsh parent often uses demeaning words, angry accusations and rigid rules. Disrespect is not tolerated. What they receive from the child may look like respect, but it is really fear. Discipline and respect are effective together. When a mom screams at a child to respect her and the child screams back at mom in defiance. There is a breakdown of *modeling*. Mom should model respect first. Then, if the child screams back, the child's behavior is in clear contrast to the mothers.

## Three Key Areas of Respect

- **Respect their body boundaries.** As children become school age they go through a modest stage. You might notice your little one who refused clothing, start to dress in private and want to do their potty business alone. Our attitude toward these changes and needs should be both accommodating and respectful.
- **Respect their opinions.** Kids come up with crazy stuff. Sometimes we want to laugh at them or make fun of their crazy ideas. Sometimes we want to shrivel up and disappear! As parents we must try our best to process all their ideas with grace and understanding.
- **Respect their things.** Favorite stuffed doggies, teddys, dinosaurs are just part of childhood. Their things are important to them. Those things that are really important to a child should be important to you.

**RESPECT IS TAUGHT, NOT BY OUR WORDS, BUT BY OUR ACTIONS.**  
CHILDREN THRIVE IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT WHERE THEY ARE RESPECTED AND REQUIRED TO RESPECT ADULTS. IT PREPARES THEM FOR SUCCESS WHEN THEY GET OUT INTO THE WORLD.

## Predictability

*Predictability means that a child is secure in what is coming next.* Predictability involves things being repeated on a daily basis. Predictability reduces stress because familiar patterns are calming to a child. Patterns do not require the child to wonder what is going to happen next or to feel some level of anxiety in preparation for something unexpected to occur around him or her.

## Series Conclusion

If you work on not shaming your child **you** will also naturally be more respectful. If you work on being more respectful, **you** will naturally be creating an emotionally safe place for your child. Every time you react in the proper way, i.e. remembering to address the action of your child instead of his character, you are changing yourself as well as teaching your child.

*Apologize when you need to and move forward.* You are in this for their lifetime and the **first five years are the most important for your child's development.** The concepts shared will work at any point in your child's life. It takes time to change, especially if you were parented in shame, neglect, anger or worse. But you can do it for your child. Like learning a new language, you start out with a few words and then build on them. As you speak it more, you internalize it and it comes more natural. Parenting your child without shame is the same thing. First you make small changes. Then you build on them as you apply respect, emotional safety, praise, affirmation, boundaries, acceptance, security, nurture, healthy discipline and unconditional love.

Reference: Wilson, Sandra D. Released from Shame: Moving beyond the Pain of the Past. InterVarsity Press, 2002.