

5 Ways To Increase Self-Control in Your Child

by Gabe and Heidi Landes, Parent Coaches

The essence of self-control is that your child will do what's right regardless of their feelings, and will do what's necessary whether they feel like it or not.

1. Expect A Lot More

- *Your child is made in the image of God, therefore you honor them when you have high expectations.* You should expect them to grow in self-control over time as you set the standard and hold them to it. If you don't train them now, they will grow up to be a slave to their impulses and desires.
- For starters: expect your child to do basic things like (a) not interrupt, (b) wait patiently, (c) not act out in anger, (d) act respectfully, (e) do what they're told the first time, (f) say please and thank you, (g) carry a conversation with an adult, (h) set their own alarm and get themselves up in the morning, etc.

2. Unplug the Electronics

- We took away ALL electronics in our house for eight weeks! Yes, all of them. No iPad/iPhones, no Wii, no Playstation, no TV, and no computer or internet. At the end of eight weeks we had a *brand new family*. It was the best thing we ever did for them. Their self-control increased through this experience.
- Our boys rediscovered playing outside, playing with Legos, passing football, and building things. Our girls rediscovered playing with Barbies, dress-up, and dramatic play.
- And ALL of our kids re-discovered the awesomeness of BOOKS and READING!

3. Use Consequences that Count

- Most parents deliver such tiny, insignificant consequences when their child misbehaves that the child doesn't care about the consequence, and continues to misbehave.
- We spend a lot of time helping parents use consequences effectively in our parent coaching program.

4. Serve Together As a Family

- We have found fun ways to serve together. We visit several orphanages in Mexico 3-4 times a year and help out. We also host medical-mission children from Africa in our home for months at a time while they get needed medical care. These experiences open up our kids' minds and hearts to the needs of the world, and teaches them they are not the center of the universe.

5. Assign Household Responsibilities

- Why are so many adolescents and young adults irresponsible these days? Because they've never been given meaningful responsibilities. They need responsibilities beyond academic, athletic, and musical performance.
- Our kids started doing laundry for the entire family when they were as young as 6 years old. They were not "helping" us as parents — the laundry was their responsibility. We taught them, trained them, and expected them to do a good job, all the way from washing in the right temperature, to drying, to folding and delivering the clothes to the right person.

BONUS!

6. Make them Earn and Save Money

- Our children set a savings goal every year, with our input. The goal ranges from \$150 for our 8-year-old to \$1,250 for our 14-year old. We do not give allowances, nor do we pay them for work around the house (because that's just part of being a family and having mutual responsibilities to one another). They must work and save their money (usually they put half in savings and keep the other half for spending money).
- Our kids have figured out lots of ways to earn money: babysitting, pet sitting, dog walking, lawn mowing, leaf raking, etc. Your kids can figure this out, too.

This outline is just a start.

Do you like this information but aren't sure how to implement it?

Read about our [Parent Coaching Process](#).