

## Do Dads Make a Difference? You Bet They Do!

*IT'S A FACT — Children look to their parents for help in developing self-control. Routines and clear expectations help children feel safe and grounded.*

# Discipline and Dads

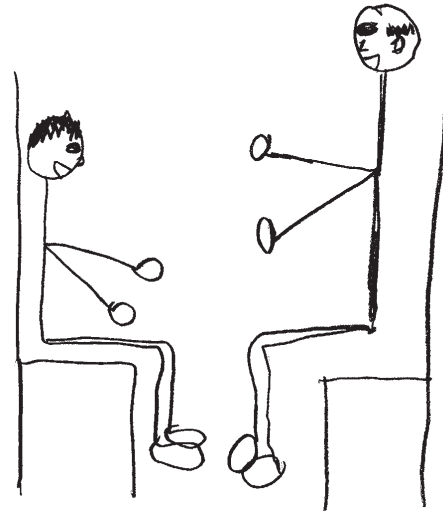
### A POSITIVE APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE

involves understanding why your child is behaving the way she is. Challenging behaviors like biting, hitting, and tantrums, may signal that your child is struggling to find a way to express her feelings. Over time, with your gentle yet firm guidance, your child can learn to handle life's difficult moments.

- **Nobody's perfect! It's normal for children to do things their parents don't like.** They may be tired, hungry or getting sick. They could be bored, frustrated or need attention. They may not really understand what you want them to do. Or, they may know what you want them to do, but don't have the skills or self-control to do it. Look for the cause of your child's misbehavior so you know how to respond.

- **Understand child development.** If you know that a four-year-old tends to be "out of bounds" you'll expect that he'll jump on the bed or off a rock, even though you've told him not to. It's part of his developing self. Knowing typical ages and stages lets you know your child is not misbehaving to annoy you. Don't take it personally. When your child needs discipline, do it in a way that preserves his dignity. Yelling, threatening, spanking and name-calling erode a child's confidence in himself and you.

- **Manage your anger.** Sometimes you may feel too angry to discipline. Don't take this anger out on your child. Stop in your tracks, step back, sit down, and take some deep breaths. Say the alphabet, do some sit ups, take a cold shower. Your anger may stop your child's



misbehavior in the moment, but this is only temporary. When you model behavior that is out of control, you may later see that same behavior in your child. When the pressures of life build up, take some time out.

- **Provide clear expectations, teach alternatives and use logical consequences.** Calmly tell and show your child what to do instead of what she is doing. "It's not okay to throw blocks. Someone might get hurt or something might break. Let's throw this foam ball into the basket instead." If she continues to throw blocks, "We have to put the blocks away for now. Would you like to do a puzzle?" Show faith in her ability to learn self-control. "Everybody makes mistakes. I bet tomorrow we'll have fun playing with the blocks."

**REMEMBER – It's no favor to our children when we allow misbehavior to continue.** Children can learn positive ways of handling their feelings and impulses, though it will take time and repetition. We discipline our children to help them grow to become confident, secure and caring adults.

# Join us for the VNA Fathers and Children Together (FACT) group

*Bring your child for a fun night with dad!  
Give your child's mom a night off!*

FACT brings dads and children together in groups. FACT is a fun place for dads to 'tune up' their parenting skills and connect with their kids through play and learning. All expectant dads and dads with children ages birth to 6 welcome. VNA FACT has been supporting dads and kids since 1993.

*Find a VNA FACT group in your area:*

<b>TOWN</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>DAY AND TIME</b>
Winooski	Winooski Community Center 32 Malletts Bay Avenue	Mondays 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Burlington	VNA Family Room 20 Allen Street	Tuesdays 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm
St. Albans	The Family Center 27 Lower Newton Street	Wednesdays 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Milton	Milton Family Community Center 23 Villemaire Lane	Thursdays 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

- ✓ **Free!**
- ✓ **Don't cook – eat dinner at FACT**
- ✓ **Learn more ways to be a great dad**
- ✓ **For dads and kids, or just dad:**
  - \* **Activities**
  - \* **Playgroup**
  - \* **Fieldtrips**

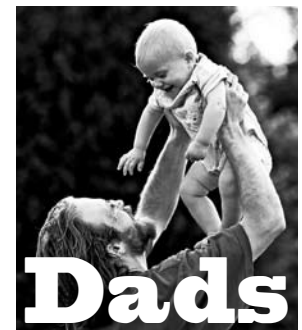
For more information about FACT and other programs for dads, call the VNA at 800 427-1908 or 860-4420, check out [www.vnacares.org](http://www.vnacares.org) or email Steve Mojica at [mojica@vnacares.org](mailto:mojica@vnacares.org).



Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Grant # 90FR002.

*All of these services are available to all eligible persons, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, or religion.*

*It's a*  
**FACT**



*Make a  
difference!*