



Newsletter

Obedience Discussion

As children mature, they gain freedom, and their obedience to our directives will transition to self-directed actions. With freedom comes choice—to either be responsible and thoughtful, or to act rashly and selfishly, perhaps to the harm of another person, animal, or object. Of course we hope that they will make good choices.

Sometimes children think adults are totally free and can do whatever they want. Here are some topics of discussion to help develop your child's understanding of obedience and free will in our society:

- Adults must follow laws that keep people safe and protect our freedoms and the freedoms of others. Some adults break the laws and are punished.
- Rules help people live together more comfortably, safely, and fairly. Discuss the rules of your family. Why are they important and how do they help you and others?
- Discuss one of your family's rules in terms of obedience. What would happen without the rule? What should happen if the rule is broken? Why is it better to follow the rule? Is it a good rule?

Engage your child in the process of thinking about rules, behavior, obedience, freedom, responsibility, and respect for people, animals, and property by asking him to think about and discuss (or draw a picture and write about) one of the following:

- An imaginary society living in an isolated spot: forest, desert, island, distant planet. What rules would be important for these people? Why?
- Rules for people visiting your child's room, desk, or area, or for borrowing his belongings.
- An imaginary miniature insect or "little people" colony living in a houseplant, tree, or fern. What rules might they have to keep harmony in the group?