



the family values toolkit

For Children Ages 5 to 7

This Month's Featured Value Is: **Patience**

Patience is the ability to endure trying situations without complaining or quitting. Patient people are self-controlled; they remain calm and relaxed in the face of pain, frustration, or tedium. Patience implies an understanding that bad times can improve and rewards may arrive at some point in the future. Patience is related to perseverance--the capacity to continue in some effort despite difficulty or opposition.



What Can Parents Do to Nurture This Important Value?

First, Set Goals:

Help your children see that good things are worth the wait and help them learn strategies that build patience.

When children reach school age, they often begin to show greater patience. Two major factors are at work. First, kids this age are learning to tell and understand time; and second, they are beginning to be able to delay gratification. A six-year-old waiting on line at Disney World, for example, may calmly distract himself by chatting with parents or friends. He may be able to monitor the time on a watch, which gives him a sense of control.

At school, kids are starting to show perseverance in their ability to concentrate and complete a classroom assignment. However, many are still distractible and fidgety when asked to sit still too long, which is one reason why lengthy homework assignments are not recommended.

Next, Take Action! Try These Activities:

- ✓ **Plant a small garden together.** You can't rush plants, but you can show your child how nurturing them with water, plant food, and sunlight will allow them to blossom when the time is right.
- ✓ **When your child has a bad case of the "gimmies" and demands a toy right away, acknowledge his or her wish.** ("You wish you could have that toy right now.") Have them write it down on their "wish list" of presents they might receive at their next birthday or gift-giving holiday.
- ✓ **Play "Human Statues."** *Materials: Large mirror; scarves, hats and other props (optional).* Give each family member a turn to be gently moved and molded into position by the others while they patiently allow themselves to be manipulated. To get more creative, dress your "statue" with the props. Have a large mirror on hand so the "statue" can admire him or herself! (Adapted from *Keeping the Peace* by Susanne Wichert)

Then, Report Back!

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