

FEBRUARY  
2016



# KTK News of the Day

## Notes from Our Feathered Friends

**Baby Chicks:** Wow, it's February already! The babies hope there are only six more weeks of winter. Some of our babies have started to scoot this month, while others discovered how to roll. Our babies are enjoying our new room arrangement; we hope you do as well. January brought many changes to the baby room and February is just as busy. Martin started to visit at the end of last month and will officially become a Penguin. Declan S. will be climbing over the gate as well in February. The baby room welcomed Owen W. last month and he is doing phenomenally well. We welcome Lincoln, Hugo, and Dalton to the Baby Chicks family in February!

**Penguins:** Happy February from the Penguin room! We have a few new faces: Owen A. and Martin joined us after their time in the Baby Chicks room. We are glad to have them and welcome them to the moving and grooving that happens every day in our room. We have many proficient walkers and some crawlers. We love to practice our new-found moving skills. We are also taking in a lot of language skills. We talk as much as we dare in our classroom and it is amazing how much this age group soaks it up. Their understanding of words is astonishing. Of course they also try their hand at verbalizing through their own babbling, but occasionally we will hear words – words with meaning – and we all get pretty excited about that! As the weather allows, we will continue to get outside for stroller rides. Thank you for providing warm outdoor clothes for that. The themes for this month are Love and Feelings.

**Parrots:** January highlights from the Parrots included many different versions of the story of the three pigs, making handprint dinosaurs, and enjoying many books by Sandra Boynton. We were also able to get out to our playground a few times. Our themes for February are Transportation,

Valentine's Day, Dental Health, and Our Five Senses. Of course, we are also hoping for more cooperating temperatures for outside play. We will be bidding farewell to Declan, as he will be turning two and joining the Peacocks for new adventures. At the same time, we will be welcoming Alex, who will be graduating from the Penguins.

**Peacocks:** In the month of February, our classroom will be discussing our bodies and the five senses. We have many great experiences planned to explore the inner workings of sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste.

**Touch:** Explore different textures, finger paint, sand and snow play.

**Smell and taste:** Try different foods and spices and make a graph of our likes and dislikes. Make a class book about our favorite foods.

**Sound:** Practice clapping patterns. take a nature walk to listen and identify animal sounds. Make a list of the things we hear in our classroom.

**Sight:** Explore objects, Mix colors, Make binoculars.

This month we will be saying goodbye to our friends Hadley and Theodore as they graduate to the preschool. We're sad to see them go!



**Preschool:** Happy February; the new year is already flying fast here in preschool! We would like to welcome Ms. Kristi and Felix to our room. We are sad to say goodbye to Ms. Sara, but we know she isn't far away in the Peacock classroom. It's always fun when we see her and get to say hi. This month our theme is Taking Care of Myself. We will be discussing Groundhog's Day, Feelings/Valentine's Day, Dental Awareness, and Health/Nutrition. Please look for news in your child's mailbox about our Valentine's exchange. Remember that it is best if your preschoolers wear tennis shoes to school everyday. We are very busy and running around, so they work the best. Lastly, the preschoolers say "Happy Birthday" to Carson, who turns 5 this month!



# Out of the Mouths of Babes

A teacher was helping in the Peacock room. She asked one of the little girls what they were talking about that week. Her reply was, "Goldie Bears."

Ms. Tammy was asking one of the new preschoolers why he was getting so big. He replied with hands high up in the air, "Because I just keep growing and growing and growing!"

One of the little boys was playing in the Peacock room. The teacher went over to him and asked, "What do you have there?" "It's an own-a-corn," he said. (He meant unicorn.)

Ms. Sue was reading a book to one of the little girls in the Peacock room. The book had animals and items categorized by color. When they got to the color pink, there was a flamingo. Ms. Sue said, "What is this?" Both girls, at the same time, replied, "a mingo!"



## A Note from the Director

Dear Parents,

We are all looking forward to the Valentine's Day dinner. We can't wait to have a chance to visit with everyone and get to know you better. Let us know what other events you would like to do as a group or if you have suggestions for future gatherings.

We often hear about illness going around places of employment. In an effort to keep germs out of the center, please remember to wash your hands when you enter your child's classroom. It is much appreciated.

Would we be able to contact you if your child was in an emergency situation? If there are changes to your home phone, emergency contacts, etc. please notify me so I can update your child's emergency card. It's important that we have current information so that if an emergency arises, we can contact you.

Remember to give me a call or send me an email to let me know about any vacation time that your family will be taking. I can let Robin know to credit your account!

I'm hoping March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. I am so ready for spring!

Sue Schneider  
Koala-T-Kare Director

## Upcoming Events

- Feb. 1: Constitution Day
- Feb. 2: Ground Hog Day
- Feb. 8: Chinese New Year
- Feb. 10: Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 14: Valentine's Day
- Feb. 15: Presidents' Day
- Feb. 24: Flag Day
- Feb. 29: Leap Day

## February Birthdays

- Feb. 1: Carson
- Feb. 15: Hadley
- Feb. 19: Theodore
- Feb. 20: Declan K.
- Feb. 29: Sawyer

### Due in February

- Feb. 3: Beckett Kvasnicka
- Feb. 14: Baby Bohler
- Feb. 17: Baby Williamson



# Discipline Your Kids With Natural Consequences

Let your child learn from the natural consequences of his own actions, and you can prevent power struggles without being the bad guy.

By Renée Sagiv Riebling from Parents Magazine

When I was a kid, “discipline” meant that my parents revoked one of my favorite privileges whenever I misbehaved. Hit my brother? No TV for a week. Didn’t do my chores? Forget that trip to the mall. Not only did this method reign in my house, but it was the MO in the home of everyone else I knew.

Although this classic approach to discipline can make kids cooperate in the short term, research has now shown that it’s not the best way to teach lifelong lessons. “Kids don’t learn when they’re feeling threatened,” says Jane Nelsen, Ed.D., author of the Positive Discipline series. Your child may comply with your demands because he’s afraid of what will happen if he doesn’t -- rather than because he has grasped anything about right and wrong.

These days, experts encourage us to let our kids experience what they call the natural consequences of their actions instead. If your child refuses to wear his jacket, just let him be cold -- and he probably won’t put up a fight the next time. Logical consequences entail more adult involvement, but they’re also connected to the misbehavior: If your child runs out into the middle of the street, he must hold your hand for the rest of your walk. It’s this connection that helps your child understand and learn from the repercussions of his actions.

Sounds easy, right? I thought so too -- until my kids did things that didn’t seem to have a natural consequence. What was the real-world outcome of my daughter’s needing to be nagged 30 times before doing her chores? Or my son’s refusal to walk to day care in anything but his birthday suit on a hot day? The fact is, ideal corrective consequences can’t do the trick every time. But they’ll be effective in more situations than I’d realized. Follow these tips to get better behavior now--and in the future.

## Consider the Three R’s

A consequence is most likely to teach a helpful lesson when it is related, respectful, and reasonable, explains Dr. Nelsen.

**Related**, of course, is the opposite of random. So if your child makes a mess, her consequence should be that she has to clean it up (not that she can’t play on your iPad).

**Respectful** means that the consequence doesn’t involve shame or humiliation. “Your child already feels bad when he does something wrong,” says Dr. Nelsen. “If you say, ‘I told you so,’ or if you shame him afterward, you’ll lessen the potential for learning because he’ll stop processing the experience and instead focus on the blame.”

When 7-year-old Vander Cheadle, of Ferndale, Michigan, wanted to take his favorite superhero ski mask to the town’s library celebration, his stepmother, Amanda Hanlin, knew it was a bad idea. “I reminded him that it was warm outside and that neither his dad nor I would hold it if he got hot. But he just said, ‘Don’t worry, I’ll take care of it.’” Vander brought the mask -- and lost it. “It was tempting to say, ‘I told you not to bring that mask!’” Hanlin admits. “But I could see he recognized he’d made a mistake and was very disappointed.” Instead, she and his dad helped him retrace his steps. When the mask didn’t turn up, they agreed to take him to the store another day so that he could use his allowance to contribute to the cost of buying a replacement. By staying calm and choosing their words, they allowed Vander to learn a valuable lesson about being responsible for his things -- and his choices.

**Reasonable** implies that a consequence should be a task your child can handle -- given her age and know-how -- and that’s proportionate to her misbehavior. This will help her concentrate on what she’s

done rather than on resenting you. If your 3-year-old is goofing around and knocks over a carton of milk, don’t expect her to mop the whole floor by herself to drive home your point. Instead, wipe up the spill together. If she refuses, put your hand gently on top of hers and physically do the motion with her, suggests Fran Walfish, Psy.D., author of *The Self-Aware Parent*. If she is screaming uncontrollably, you can hold her in your lap after at least part of the mess is cleaned up. When her crying stops and you feel her muscles relax, praise her for being able to calm down and just move on.

An older kid might give you back talk instead of having a meltdown, but resist the urge to get angry or let her weasel out of things. You can help defuse arguments by mentioning a consequence ahead of time (“I’ve noticed a lot of gum wrappers around the house -- please put wrappers in the garbage, or the consequence will be no more gum”). When advance warning isn’t possible, help her brainstorm solutions for a problem she’s gotten herself into. For example, you might say, “You must be upset that you forgot your project is due tomorrow. I understand that you’d like me to go buy you those materials now, but it’s late and I’m not willing to do that. Do you need help figuring out something you can make with the supplies we have?”

## Find the Missing Link

Natural consequences are pretty straightforward if your child has done something he shouldn’t have done. I had trouble figuring out how to use them effectively when my kids failed to do things they should (like chores) and the natural consequence (a dirty house) wouldn’t faze them. Although I was tempted to take away TV time like my mother had, my approach actually just needed a little fine-tuning.

“When you tell your child, ‘If you don’t sort your laundry, then there’s no TV,’ that’s punishment, because the connection between doing the chore and watching TV isn’t apparent,” says Madelyn Swift, author of *Discipline for Life: Getting It Right With Children*. Plus, the “If you don’t ...” phrase makes it sound like a threat, so he’ll think the point is to make him pay for not doing what you asked. However, you can turn this into a logical consequence by substituting a “When you” construction: “When you have finished sorting the laundry, then you may watch your show.”

By putting it this way, you articulate the principle that you’d probably like your kids to live by: Do what you have to do before doing what you want to do. Your child may end up missing his favorite show that night -- and not be able to talk about it with his friends the next morning -- but once he’s finished his chore, he’ll experience the natural consequence of enjoying a fun activity more because there’s no chore hanging over his head.

Another mantra to emphasize is that privilege equals responsibility. “Our family’s rule is that all toys must be put where they belong by the end of the day, and any toy left lying around is food for the garbage can,” says Amy Kertesz, a mom of five kids, ages 4 months to 10 years, in Palmetto Bay, Florida. “My kids know that if they don’t take responsibility for their things, the consequence is that they lose the privilege of having them. Only my 3-year-old gets a pass. I’ll ask him to put something away rather than just tossing it.” (If you’d rather be less hard-core, you could put toys on a high shelf or in a box in another room and return them when your child demonstrates that he’s been cleaning up his other toys.)

This is effective not only for material privileges but also for non-tangible ones: If your child can’t handle the responsibility of playing nicely with his siblings, then he loses the privilege of getting to play with them. When he doesn’t speak to you respectfully, he won’t have the privilege

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# Happy Valentine's Day!

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of being listened to. However, instead of telling him, "Don't you dare speak to me that way!" calmly explain, "I will be happy to discuss this when you are able to talk about it respectfully. You can find me in my room when you're ready."

And this technique is just as powerful when your child does something right. When my 6-year-old asked if he could play a video game ten minutes before we had to pick up his sister from school, I told him there wasn't enough time. He promised he'd stop as soon as we had to leave, so I decided to give him a chance -- and I made it clear that if he upheld his end of the bargain, then I would let him do so again in the future. To my surprise, when it was time to go he hit the pause button on his game and put on his shoes. Now it's become routine. He'll say, "I know we only have a few minutes, but you can trust me."

Parents often overlook the simplest strategy: Tell the truth. For example, if your child has been misbehaving all day and then asks, "Can we go out for ice cream tonight?" go ahead and say what you're thinking: "You know, after the way you've behaved today, I really don't feel like taking you out for ice cream." The lesson? When you do people wrong, the consequence is that they're unlikely to go above and beyond for you.

## Have a Back-Up Plan

Even with these rules of thumb, there will be instances when this approach won't work. It won't work if your child considers the natural consequence to be no big deal (think tooth decay as a result of refusing to brush her teeth) or if allowing her to experience a consequence could hurt someone else (you can't let her see how it feels to throw rocks at someone). And searching for a logical consequence usually doesn't make sense when you're in a hurry to get somewhere, like when my son refused to put on clothes before day care.

In fact, parenting author Madelyn Swift says you shouldn't ever search too hard: "If the consequence isn't glaringly obvious, then it's probably not the right strategy." Problem-solving, redirecting your young child to an appropriate activity, and family meetings (with kids ages 4 and up), are some examples of strategies that may work when natural consequences won't. "They are just one tool in your discipline toolbox," says Swift. "A hammer is essential to any builder, but he'll need other tools to build a house."

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## News from the Kitchen

Happy February, everyone! Hope everybody's new year is going great. Let's hope that groundhog comes out and doesn't see his shadow on February 2nd! An early spring would be much appreciated.

This year we will be having a Valentines dinner for all the families. It will be February 17th in the MPR from 5pm to 7pm. We will have 2 pastas to choose from, breadsticks, and salad. We hope to see you all there!

With Valentine's Day in mind, I wanted to find a cute healthy treat you could do with your kids when it's too cold to go outside. Unfortunately, the kids can't help with the cutting of the strawberries, but while you are doing that they can mix up the yogurt dip to go with them. You can of course use other fruit along with the strawberries to make a delicious fruit platter that is a fun healthy treat at any Valentine's party-or any party for that matter! Enjoy, and have a wonderful Valentine's Day!

### Strawberry Hearts and Yogurt Dip

**Strawberry Hearts:** Wash a quart of large, fresh strawberries. Remove the stems with a paring knife by cutting out the green stems down at an angle, making a V-shaped notch into the berries. Cut the strawberries into slices about 1/4-inch thick to get "hearts."



**Yogurt Dip:** Blend an 8-ounce package of light cream cheese (softened) with two 8-ounce containers strawberry yogurt and season to taste with cinnamon.