



Loving Your Spirited Child

**Spirited children are passionate,
adventurous and incredibly curious!**

Being a parent of a spirited child can be exhausting, but it doesn't have to be overwhelming, if you understand that your child is not intentionally being defiant. Spirited children are often expressing themselves in the only way they know how. Even so, their temperaments can challenge the most patient and loving parents.

Follow these suggestions to help you and your child grow together through the process:

Be consistent.

If you give your child a rule, stand your ground. If he doesn't clean his room, for example, stick with your consequence of not allowing him to watch his favorite TV show. When you give in, you teach your child that rules don't matter.

Talk Less, Do More.

Give your child the options and then stop talking. Let her make a decision in a particular situation, then allow her to deal with the (good or not so good) consequence of her choice. Arguing with your child will leave both of you frustrated.

Be patient.

Giving in to your child's temper tantrums because you're in public teaches your child to misbehave to get what he wants. Instead of giving in or pleading with your child to calm down, let him have the tantrum, and calmly inform him, "When you are done crying, we will talk."

Give yourself a time-out.

Remember that you are human, and sometimes parents need a break, too. Hire a babysitter or arrange for your child to play at a friend's house so you can have some alone time to regroup and relax. When you are calm and focused, you're better able to meet your child's needs.