

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

Parents



A Different Way

Have you ever gotten so frustrated with your children that you felt that you were going to pull your hair out? You ever feel like you've tried everything but nothing seems to work?

Well, I have been there, and I understand.

Sometimes the first thing you tried is actually the best to try again. Encouragement is a strange thing. It is simply words and a smile—consistent kind words directed toward a behavior you want to see happen.

Here is how life normally plays out in most homes. Little Timmy has a problem picking up his room. Mom regularly reminds Timmy to clean it up. Timmy regularly forgets. Mom

gets frustrated and mad at Timmy for the extra work she has to do. Dad gets mad at Timmy because Timmy has upset his wife and the rule is, "If Mom is not happy... no one is happy." So now Timmy gets yelled at or nagged at to clean up his room all of the time. Yelling and nagging don't work, but Mom and Dad keep trying, hoping that little Timmy will change.

Let me tell you something. **Kids respond to attention.** Positive attention, negative attention—for them it is just attention. You, as a parent, get choose what kind you give. Instead of focusing on a behavior or habit in your child's life that bugs the heck out of you, **find a way to encourage the behavior you want to see happening.** Keep it

simple at first. Help Timmy pick up his room. Tell him how good it makes you feel to see his clean room. Praise him for his help. Come back five minutes later and repeat the praise. Praise him often. I know I sound like a dog whisperer but praise and encouragement really do work. Remember, the scriptures tell us to teach the children in the way they *should* be, not in what they are doing wrong.

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

—Proverbs 22:6 NIV

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I'm praying for ya