

# ***ACT-TWO*** TECHNIQUES OF DISCIPLINE THAT WORK

## I. Firm limit-setting - ACT

### A. Three steps:

1. Acknowledge the feeling - "I know you'd really like to ...", or "I can tell you're really feeling ...", etc.
2. Communicate the limit - "...but you may not \_\_\_\_.", or "...but the cabinet door is not for kicking.", or "...but the answer is no."
3. Target an alternative - "You can \_\_\_\_ if you'd like.", or "You can choose to \_\_\_\_."

### B. After three-step process, DON'T discuss: "I can tell you'd like to discuss this some more, but I've already answered that question."

### C. If you're not prepared to answer the question (want to talk it over with someone; want to get more information; want to think about it).

1. "I can't answer that question now...(because...)." "I'll let you know (specific time)."
2. Nagging begins: "If you must have an answer now, the answer will have to be NO."

### D. If the child asks the same question again; Calmly - "I've already answered that question." Variations:

1. "Do you remember the answer I gave you a few minutes ago when you asked that same question?" (Child answered, "No, I don't remember.") "Go sit down in a quiet place and think and I know you'll remember."
2. "I've answered that question once (twice), that's enough."
3. If you think the child doesn't understand: "I've already answered that question. You must have some question about the answer."

### E. If you're undecided and open to persuasion: "I don't know...Let's sit down and discuss it."

2. Oreo Cookie Theory: Give the child a choice, providing acceptable choices commensurate with the child's ability to choose.

Garry Landreth, Center for Play Therapy, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas.