Dear Parents:

As California considers "no spanking zones," network news shows different viewpoints, even video of parents spanking their children while others watch. The research on spanking shows that while, spanking stops the behavior at the time, it increases the chances that the behavior will be repeated. So spanking works as a quick fix, but leads to problems later.

Parents say that they do not feel good about spanking their children but do not know what else to do. Your county extension office has Guiding Young Children, a series of fact sheets telling parents discipline techniques that work better than spanking. Some extension educators offer parenting classes.

Call the extension office or visit our web site www.okstate.edu/ag/oces/parenting/ to get the fact sheets and a schedule of classes.

Yours for Children,

Elaine Wilson
Parenting Specialist

www.okstate.edu/ag/oces/parenting
Child Care

Child care helps Oklahoma families work, but child care costs. DHS can help with payments to licensed homes and centers. You do not have to be on welfare to qualify. In fact, child care assistance helps families stay off welfare.

To apply contact your local DHS office - 1-888-521-2778
To locate child care contact your Resource and Referral Agency - 1-405-528-0951

Reach for the stars. One star programs are licensed. Two star programs are licensed and parent involvement.

Building Self Esteem

Unconditional love builds self esteem. How do we show children that our love is given freely? How do we help them see that they do not have to earn our love through good behavior, good grades, athletic success, popularity or earning money?

- Hug your child when your child has done nothing special.
- Send an 'I love you' note, post card or phone call for no special reason.
- Listen to your child.
- Assume your child is capable.
- Help your child help others.
- Let your child hear you telling someone you always love your child.
Crafts for Children

Make a wooden stacking toy for your toddler. Paint or stain pieces in different colors or shades. Alternate light and dark, paint a repeating sequence of red, yellow, blue or make each piece a different color.

Material:  1 base piece of wood 1" thick and 6" wide
Square, triangular, or round pieces of wood, 3/4" thick in sizes graduating from 2 to 5 1/2 inches
One 8-inch length of broomstick or dowel rod

Construction:
Fasten the 8-inch broomstick in an upright position in the middle of a board 12 inches square and 1 inch thick. In each block make the holes large enough to permit them to drop easily over the broomstick peg. Sand the blocks well before painting for a smooth texture.

This toy can be made from odd pieces of lumber of the same thickness or from a single piece of 1"x 8" white pine about 2' 8" long. You will also need one piece of 3/4" dowel, 8" long. The pyramid can be made with squares or circles. Squares are shown here.

Square end of board, measure for base block (6" x 6"). Then measure the eight graduated blocks that slip on the spindle (see working drawing). Avoid knots in center of blocks where hole is to go. Working drawing shows how to find center of block.

Bore holes in all squares before cutting to size, otherwise the small ones may split. Place board in vise with extra piece of wood back of center where hole is to be bored. This prevents splintering of wood as the bit cuts through backside of board. With brace and 3/4" bit, bore hole in base (A). Change to 13/16" bit for holes in blocks. This bit will make holes slightly larger, so blocks will slip easily over spindle. Cut out blocks with hand saw or power saw. Glue dowel in base block, smooth top with sandpaper.

Sand blocks with fine sandpaper until smooth. Sand edges and center holes just enough to remove sharpness.

A combination of stain and bright-colored enamels makes an attractive finish. Stain base and spindle with a light brown oil stain. No priming coat is needed under stain. Under the color paint, one coat of priming paint such as shellac or flat white may be used. When priming coat is dry, rub lightly with fine sandpaper. Apply two coats of enamel paint with at least over-night drying between coats. Alternate different colors for each square of the pyramid. Apply a very thin coat of paint in center holes. If holes are thick with paint, squares will not slip easily over dowel.
Developing Teens

Studies of capable teens, especially successful teens from difficult situations, show several factors that seem to make a difference. Look over this list and think about what your teen and the teenagers in your community experience.

- Local, personal role models
- Family and community cooperation
- Confidence in personal abilities
- Skills to get along with self, manage feelings, accept change
- Skills to get along with others, communicate, accept differences
- Good judgment and self control

Fun Family

Museums offer good family entertainment. Visiting a museum is an inexpensive alternative to television. If your family includes young children a small, local museum will be more manageable. All museums offer interesting things to talk about. You can choose among many types of museums: art, music, natural history, science, gardens, forests, sports.

The US Department of Education offers a guide to help families enjoy museums with children ages 4 to 12. The guide includes activities before, during and after the visit. It tell ways to encourage children’s thinking skills. Parents and teachers will want to see this booklet before planning field trips to museums. To receive a copy visit:

www.ed.gov/pubs/Museum
or write
Consumer Information Center
Department 376E
Pueblo, Colorado 81009