



# PARENTING TIP 2

## BIG CHOICES FOR BIG KIDS LITTLE CHOICES FOR LITTLE KIDS

children learn how to make good decisions by making decisions, not by following directions.  
-Alfie Kohn

### main topics



#### empowerment choices

Give two positive choices that accomplish the desired outcome.



#### enforcement choices

These help parents set limits in the context of choices.

homework  
practice  
giving choices

# Improve Self-Regulation

## DEVELOP PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

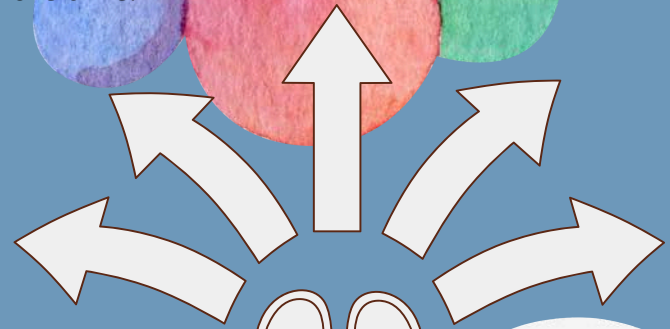
*Taken from Child-Parent Relationship Training by Sue Bratton and Garry Landreth*

Provide age-appropriate choices that are equally acceptable to the child and to you as the parent. Remember that you must be willing to live with the choice the child makes. Don't use choices to try to manipulate the child to do what you want by presenting one choice that you want the child to choose and a second choice that you know the child won't like. Give the child a moment to think. Younger children need more time.



### Calm Yourself First.

Be the thermostat not the thermometer.  
Pause. Take a deep breath before responding to your child's upset. Respond don't react.



"You may choose red juice or orange juice with your medicine. Which do you choose?"

"You can choose to do chores first or homework first. Which do you choose?"

### Give 2 Positive Choices.

Provide small choices for small kids and big choices for big kids.

### Enforcement Choices

#### Use A.C.T.

- A - Acknowledge the feeling or desire.  
*"You are really mad."*
- C - Communicate the limit  
*"But I am not for yelling at."*
- T - Target the alternative  
*"You can choose to yell into the pillow or go outside to yell."*

*Always try to use a neutral tone.*

*Your goal is regulation and connection with your child.*

