

## HOME REWARDS FOR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

Giving children rewards – along with your sincere and enthusiastic praise – is a great way to encourage them to behave appropriately. When using rewards with children, it's important to remember:

- **“Reward” doesn’t have to mean “money.”** Most kids want, more than anything else, to spend time with their parents and to have their parents’ attention.
- **Rewards should be accompanied by specific praise** for the child. For example “I like how you were quiet and stayed with me in the store. Let’s stop at the park on the way home.” This is better than saying “You were good in the store.” Keep the praise focused on the behavior of the child.
- **Don’t give a reward as a bribe.** It should be given after the child has behaved appropriately when told (or on their own) and not offered beforehand. Don’t say things like “If you are good in the store, I will buy you something.” Your child may decide your bribe is not worth behaving for. Remember – you are trying to teach good behavior, not pay off bad behavior.
- **Keep rewards related to behavior whenever possible.** As often as you can, create a reward that supports what you want the child to learn.
- **Don’t promise rewards you can’t deliver.** Sometimes we are desperate for good behavior from our kids, and we get ourselves trapped by rewards that we can’t afford, either in time or money. Think through you plan for rewarding good behavior and don’t promise more than you can deliver.
- **Don’t give rewards if bad behavior occurs with good behavior.** If you ask your child to clean up his toys, for example, and he does, but throws them or swears at you when doing it, don’t reward him. Sometimes parents reward bad behavior because they want to reward progress, even if the child is still misbehaving. Decide ahead of time what behavior you want and how much “less” than that you’ll accept.



Here is a list of rewards that you may want to try with your school-aged kids. Many of them are low or no cost and can be done anywhere. Be sure to think of your own rewards and add them to the list!

## Home Reward Possibilities for School-Age Children

Taking a trip to the park	Playing with friends	Having a bedtime story
Playing at the playground	Spending the night with friends or grandparents	Going to a ball game
Eating out	Going someplace alone with dad or mom	Baking something in the kitchen
Planning a day's activities	Riding on a bicycle	Going skiing or snowboarding
Choosing a TV program	Taking time off from chores	Holding hands while walking
Doing a craft or art project	Dressing up in parent's clothes	Setting the table
Camping in the backyard	Going to the library	Chewing gum
Telling a story	Decorating the home for the holidays	Helping to make cookies, popcorn, or something similar
Helping to take a gift to a friend	Feeding the baby	Staying up late
Going to the movies, especially with a friend	Having a friend stay over	Playing favorite music
Coloring	Riding next to the window in the car	Picking a radio station in car
Watching themselves on a video recording	Choosing the menu for a meal	Calling grandparents
Riding the escalator three or four times in a store	Putting up schoolwork on the refrigerator door	Buying something
Planting a garden	Going for a picnic	Going skating, swimming or bowling
Playing a video game	Ordering pizza	Going for a hike
Going canoeing, camping or fishing	Sleeping in a different place in the house	Doing a jigsaw puzzle
Decorating your own room	Having a special after-school snack	Having a special treat in their school lunch
Choosing a special breakfast	Playing a board game with mom or dad	Taking a special dance, karate or art class