



# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

**YOUR CHILD IS  
3 YEARS, 7 MONTHS OLD  
THIS MONTH**



## YOUR DEVELOPING CHILD Spitting, hitting, biting, and scratching

If you witness your child spitting, hitting, biting, or scratching a sibling or a friend (or even you), your first tendency might be to panic. You might think, *Why is my kid acting so violently? Is this how a child becomes a bully?* Don't worry. Your child is only beginning to learn the coping skills for expressing frustration or getting what they want in an appropriate way. They don't fully understand their emotions or the feelings of others yet. Often, a physical response is a child's initial attempt to control a situation or demonstrate their anger if they feel they've been treated unfairly.

Take your child aside and explain how their actions made the other person feel. This will help your child to be sensitive to others and start growing in empathy.

As the parent, you can also use the situation as an opportunity to teach problem-solving skills. Model for your child how to politely ask someone else for what you want, or how to patiently wait your turn and find something else to do in the meantime. Encourage your child to turn to an adult if they still need help. And when you notice your child beginning to make these wise choices, offer abundant praise.





## GROWING IN FAITH

### Discipline that restores

Whether you are dealing with a three-year-old who's biting, hitting, and scratching, or who's struggling to obey in some other area, knowing how to discipline your child in an effective manner can feel overwhelming. Keeping some things in mind when disciplining your preschooler will help you remember what is most important along the winding road of training up your child in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6):

1. Gospel-centered, effective discipline isn't just about telling your child to drop a certain behavior or choice. It's also about probing their heart and then redirecting them to an alternative decision you want them to make.
2. Think about the language of Ephesians 4:20-24 that tells us to put off our old selves and put on righteousness. The behavior you want your child to "put off" is destruction. In exchange, you want them to choose or "put on" good stewardship as they learn to take care of their possessions.
3. The true, redeeming purpose of discipline is restoration. Your job is to help restore your child's heart with the one they offended, and ultimately with God. The aim should not be to set your child straight, seek revenge, or satiate your anger. You are training them to focus on Christ, who is able to strengthen them to do what is right.

*You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.—Ephesians 4:22-24*



## JUST FOR YOU

### Keep calm and correct on

Scripture teaches that foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child (Proverbs 22:15). The process of working to lovingly and wisely drive out that foolishness can be met with great resistance or, as some parents may describe it, much wailing, moaning, and gnashing of teeth.

With your child's heightened emotional response comes the temptation for you to jump on the emotional roller coaster with them. Before you know it, you raise your voice to match theirs. Your face is red and your pulse is racing. You become completely sucked into the conflict. While your child may recover in ten minutes, you're still fuming three hours later.

The next time a discipline-related explosion of emotion occurs, tell yourself to stay off the ride. The issue isn't about you—it's about your child's behavior and need to be redirected and restored. Their fury will pass and your authority will remain intact. Your child will also learn that the winds of their rage will not blow you down. This is another way you're teaching your child to accept—not negotiate—your instruction and what you believe is best.

