



FROM THE GROWING KIDS' PARENTING RESOURCE LIBRARY

Teaching Kids to Wait

Have you ever met an impatient adult who demanded to be served without ever having to wait? As a teenager and young adult, I worked a few restaurant jobs where I *really* got to see the long-term results of poor parenting in some of our impatient patrons. Years later as a psychologist, I met many couples whose on-going marital conflict had a lot to do with the fact that they never learned to delay gratification as kids. On the highways of life, how many times do we see impatient people risk their lives - and the lives of many others - by trying to get just one car length ahead?

Are you giving your kids enough practice waiting? Or, have you fallen into the habit of serving them quickly to avoid a fit? Using behavioral conditioning, many children train their parents to jump to their every whim. They do this by gradually increasing the frequency and intensity of the punishment they provide when their parents don't move fast enough to meet their demands. As you well know, this "punishment" comes in the form of constantly repeating the same demand, whining, yelling, screaming, or even hitting.

Wise parents avoid this trap by setting solid limits:

- *I'll get that for you after I've seen you wait patiently.*
- *I do things for kids who aren't being pushy and demanding.*
- *You may have that when you've earned it.*

Wise parents also remember:

The more I appease my child when he is young, the nastier and unhappier he will be as an adult.

If your kids have already become a bit too demanding and argumentative, learn how to put an end to this manipulation by reading [Love and Logic Magic: When Kids Leave You Speechless.](#)

Thanks for reading!

Dr. Charles Fay