

- ▶ Try not to preach to your children. They are now likely to turn to their peers and other adults for advice, so get to know the people who are important to them.
- ▶ Limit rules to those that are necessary for your child's safety.
- ▶ Be clear about your expectations for behavior, and follow through with logical consequences for misbehavior. (For example, tell your 17-year-old daughter that if she misses her curfew, she will not be allowed to go out the next night.)

A Word About Spanking

Experts disagree about the issue of spanking children; some say that spanking is necessary, while others say that it is abusive. Parents have to make their own decision. Before spanking a child to control behavior, first think about the following:

- ▶ Do not spank children who are less than two years old.
- ▶ Be aware of your own adult strength and the fact that physical punishment can become abuse.
- ▶ Spanking does not teach children what they *should* do; it may teach them only what *not* to do.
- ▶ Before you resort to spanking a child, try to figure out alternative ways to teach appropriate behavior.
- ▶ Spanking children for behavior that is natural and normal for their age may make them afraid to try things.
- ▶ Children who are spanked learn that it is acceptable to hit people.
- ▶ Spanking can make a child feel as though he or she is a bad person.

Leader Resource

Game Situations

1. Your three-month-old son cries a lot. The baby's mother tells you not to pick him up so much because you'll spoil him.
2. Your 18-month-old daughter can get stubborn at times. In the morning when you need to get to work or school, she often refuses to leave the house to go to the babysitter's.
3. Whenever you take your two-year-old daughter to the grocery store, she has a tantrum when you go past the candy aisle.
4. Your son is about to turn two. Whenever you have company, he refuses to share anything with other children. This embarrasses you.
5. You are visiting your girlfriend's house with your two-and-a-half-year-old son. Your girlfriend has a four-year-old daughter. While playing, your son takes away the girl's favorite toy, and she starts to cry.
6. When you take your three-year-old son to the basketball court with you, he often gets tired and begins to whine.
7. Your nine-month-old daughter puts anything and everything into her mouth.
8. Your two-year-old daughter wants to play with her younger brother, who is six months old. She likes to touch the baby's face, and to kiss and hug him. Some times she hugs him roughly and sticks her fingers in his eyes as she names the parts of his face.
9. You, your grandmother, and your four-year-old daughter are walking down the street. An elderly woman walks by and bumps into your daughter without saying "excuse me." Before you know it, your daughter calls the woman an "asshole."