

Removing Privileges/Losing Personal Things

Removing privileges can be used if your child tests your use of time-out or withholding attention. Loss of privileges is also an appropriate consequence by itself if your child fails to carry out an agreement made between you. Used in this way, it is probably the most appropriate method of discipline for older children and adolescents.

Directions

1. **Decide which behaviors will be dealt with by removing a privilege. List them here.**

2. **The privilege must be something you can actually deny your child.** For example, if you work and don't get home until after 5:00 p.m., you probably can't deny your youngster the privilege of watching TV in the afternoon. Ideally, the privilege taken away should not affect others. For example, if the child is to be denied TV, what effect will this have on other family members who wish to watch it? With these points in mind, list here those privileges your child would miss if they were taken away.

| | Privilege | Time |
|----|-----------|-------|
| a. | _____ | _____ |
| b. | _____ | _____ |
| c. | _____ | _____ |
| d. | _____ | _____ |
| e. | _____ | _____ |

3. **The number of privileges lost and the length of time for which they are removed should be matched to the age of the child and the seriousness of the particular behavior.** Most parents make the mistake of taking away too many privileges for too long a time. This action turns what might have been a good learning experience into one of lingering hostility and resentment. We recommend that a privilege be removed for only 24 hours. In fact, parents often get better results if they use even briefer periods such as taking away a toy for a few hours or preventing the child from watching a favorite TV show for each episode of swearing or talking back. Next to each of the privileges you listed in 2, indicate the length of time that it will be removed.
4. **When taking away a privilege, be calm but firm.** If your child tried to ignore the restriction, remove an additional privilege. Finally, once the privilege has been lost, the punishment accepted, and the time spent, the privilege should be restored and the incident dropped. Avoid any further lectures or reminders.