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Meet Kristi Miller



Kristi Miller, MA, CAPI, and Solutions in Parenting Founder, is a [Certified Aware Parenting Instructor](#) and Parenting Consultant who offers a distinctive form of parent education coupled with hands-on training for parents and their families. For more than a decade, Kristi has been dedicated to a specialized form of parent education she developed, [Bond Strengthening Parenting®](#), which honors and encourages parents and helps them define and maintain their own personal styles. This, in turn, allows children to thrive in a loving and collaborative environment.

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Solutions In Parenting News Office Space
For those of you living in the Southern California area who would like to meet with us in person, we are pleased to be able to offer you two convenient office locations.

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Parenting Center

Read our most recent [Parenting Book Review](#): Unconditional Parenting; Moving from Rewards and Punishments to Love and Reason. By Alfie Kohn.

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Monthly Parenting Challenge

How do you view conflict?

Do you get uncomfortable when you find yourself in a situation where someone is angry at

More Solutions in Discipline

Welcome to the April and May, 2008 Solutions In Parenting Newsletter!

We are continuing our **Spring 2008 Solutions in Discipline Workshop Tour**. We have been busy with our Solutions in Discipline Workshop and giving presentations about disciplining children of all ages.

If you missed the Spring workshop, not to worry. We will offer a discipline workshop again as well as a sibling rivalry workshop in the summer-so look for an announcement soon!

In this newsletter, we will dig deeper and learn the basic "formula" for how to effectively discipline your children. We will present some basic strategies for successful conflict resolution which can be used with children, as well as with anyone in your life with whom you wish to resolve an issue (or just meet each other's needs!).

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Conflict-Resolution

Last month, we addressed the meanings of discipline by taking a look at the critical, and sometimes very subtle, differences between punishment and discipline. This month, we will look more deeply into the concept of conflict resolution through mutually agreed upon solutions.

Keeping in mind that punishment, although it may temporarily stop the "misbehavior" for that moment, ultimately interferes with the accomplishment of your long-term goal of teaching self-discipline to your child. The fundamental issue is not punishment at all, but the development of morality and self-discipline. This includes the creation of conditions that not only allow for, but strongly motivate, a child to wish to be both a moral and self-disciplined person.

So how do you as parents create these conditions where your children learn self-discipline? Bond strengthening parenting® techniques teach parents how to communicate with their children in ways that are deeply respectful while articulating their own needs and helping their children to correct undesirable behaviors. This is not a "quick fix" and, at first, takes much commitment and time from all of the members involved. However, once both children and adults see the results, the work soon becomes well worth it.

The following four-part formula is a very brief introduction to a formula we teach to our families to encourage understanding, compassion and compliance from all members involved in a conflict. Please keep in mind that not all conflicts can be solved in only four steps. In fact, within these four steps, we provide further steps for families to follow to make sure many different aspects are covered. But because this is just an introduction for the purpose of stimulating ideas and thoughts from you, we are keeping it brief.

1. *Clearly identify the conflict.* For example, backpacks are left in the entry hall every day, the car is often returned with an empty gas tank, the dog is not getting walked or your son's music is too loud for you to concentrate on your work. Using appropriate, non-blaming language is essential so the other people involved don't become defensive and shut down or refuse to move to step #2.

2. *Identify and share needs of everyone involved.* Important! Remember that children's behavior is driven by what they need. If their needs are met, they are usually very pleasant to be around. If their needs are not met, their behaviors will reflect that in the form of tantrums, whining, crying, grumpiness, forgetfulness, etc. For example, if your child is leaving her backpack in the doorway everyday after school, is her need to use the bathroom, have a snack or drink, or check her email more pressing than putting her backpack away? You may not agree with their needs or motivations, but this step is where you are just listening without judgment or interruption. Helping them to identify what they need will allow them to be able to engage in problem-solving discussions. It is also equally important for the parents to identify what they need during this step, as well.

3. *Come up with solutions.* Ask your children to join you in coming up with **alternatives** to that behavior. This is a very important piece to this formula. This is where you are asking for your child's input and participation. Your solutions will begin to work so much better if many of the ideas either come from your children (and are honestly acceptable to you) or are agreed upon by your children (and are honestly acceptable to them).

4. *Mutually agree upon a solution.* Choose a solution that works for everyone. It is important for everyone to agree upon the solution (even your children!). Make sure you

you? Do you avoid difficult conversations with your children, spouse or boss for fear of upsetting them? Do you look forward to confronting your peers or partners if there is a problem because you know things will get better or you will feel relieved? We all deal with conflict differently, based in part on how we were raised to deal with it. Try noticing the different conflicts in your life. How do you choose to deal with them? Are you satisfied with the way you treat conflicts or would you like to change anything? We are curious...let us know

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What is Parenting Consultation?

We are offering personal parenting education and consultation for committed parents who want to raise confident, compassionate and responsible children.

It is now possible to bring an experienced consultant into your family life on a regular basis. Either by phone or in person, your consultant can help you create solutions to your daily parenting challenges with loving and effective lifelong parenting techniques. Start being the very best parent you can be **today**.

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Contact Us

For more information about our services, or to set up a consultation, please contact us at:

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We want to hear from YOU

Are you struggling through some parenting "rough spots" right now and need a bit of advice? We are always here for you. Whether you are in the middle of a divorce, potty training your toddler or screaming at your teen, we can help. Send us an [email](#) and we will respond with some helpful guidance to get you through.

know who is agreeing to do what and by when. The more details every one has, the better chance for follow-through and compliance. Follow-up in a week or so and make adjustments where necessary.

In our experiences, after practicing and following this formula, children and their parents begin to realize that fewer occasions occur where there needs to be any type of punishment at all. Children become self-disciplined because they are being taught how to behave by experiencing behaviors that work and those that don't. They learn how their behavior(s) affect others, and they feel they have a strong say in what happens to them. When people, even very young children, feel like they can help set rules and consequences for their own behaviors, they will be more motivated to comply and less likely to "misbehave".

Next time you experience a behavior-conflict with your child, instead of relying on other methods of punishment, try this formula and see what happens. Let us know how it goes.

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