

CARING FOR YOUR CHILD

It is important to provide children with healthy food, a loving home, and a supportive family, as well as clear and firm discipline. The right balance of healthy food, positive living habits, and discipline can help provide children with a strong foundation that is important to becoming a good citizen.

HOUSING

Most landlords have rental agreements, which are legal documents between you and the landlord.

Here are some housing tips:

- Rent must be paid on time.
- Always submit a request to the landlord if there will be additional people staying or living with you.
- If there are questions about what you can or cannot do, always ask the landlord about the housing rules and policies. (For public housing, this is very important because if you are evicted, you are no longer eligible for public housing anywhere in Hawaii.)
- Keep copies of all important documents (rental agreement and receipts).
- Usually, at least two months rent is needed to get a place to live. This normally includes a deposit and the first month's rent. The deposit is usually returned when you leave, as long as there is no damage to the house or apartment.



HOUSING (Continued)



- Report any repair requests to the landlord.
- Keep the apartment and appliances clean. This may help you to avoid incurring additional costs when moving out.
- Keep your home and yard clean (mow the lawn, rake leaves); remove bulky trash items (mattresses, old furniture), old vehicles, and other items that pile up (cans, newspaper) on your property. (see Resources in Hawaii section, bulky items pick-up)
- Each county has its own rules about home trash pick-up. Check with your neighbors to find out when trash pick-up occurs.
- There are recycling (returning cans and bottles for money) centers around the state.

MEALS, NUTRITION, AND EXERCISE

Healthy meals and exercise may help children to avoid becoming overweight and developing diabetes, heart disease, or cancer.

Here are some ways to keep healthy:

- Drink water. Water in Hawaii is safe to drink. Drinking too much soda and sweet juices may make children overweight.
- Exercise every day by walking, swimming, playing sports, dancing, etc.
- Add vegetables and fruits to at least one meal per day.



CHILD SUPERVISION

To keep children safe, adults need to watch their young children at all times. Parents are expected to know what their children are doing. Children **SHOULD NOT** watch other children.

Here are some guidelines:

- Do not leave children under 7 years old alone.
- Do not leave children 8-10 years old alone for more than 90 minutes during the day or early evening. They should not be expected to watch babies or younger children.
- Children 11-12 years old may be left alone for up to 3 hours, but not late at night. They should not be expected to watch babies or younger children without an adult nearby.
- Teenagers 13-15 years old may be left alone, but not overnight.
- Teenagers 16-17 years old may be left alone and if necessary up to 2 nights.



Children and teenagers should always know how to contact their parents or another responsible adult.

Children and teenagers should know to call 9-1-1 in case of emergency.



SHOWING CHILDREN ATTENTION

Children are happy when parents spend time with them. Spending time together and doing activities with children is another way to show that you care and love them. This includes taking the time to talk and listen to each other and have fun together.

Here are some examples of what parents can do with their children:

- Go to the beach together.
- Sing songs with one another.
- Play ukulele with one another.
- Play volleyball, basketball, baseball, soccer, etc. with one another.
- Read together.
- Play games with one another.



DISCIPLINE

In disciplining your child, be careful to avoid injury. Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing physical pain, illness, or any impairment of physical condition is against the law in Hawaii. Negligently causing injury with a dangerous instrument is also against the law.

Since any physical discipline can easily become too harsh, and because children learn better from other methods of discipline, many parents do not use physical discipline.



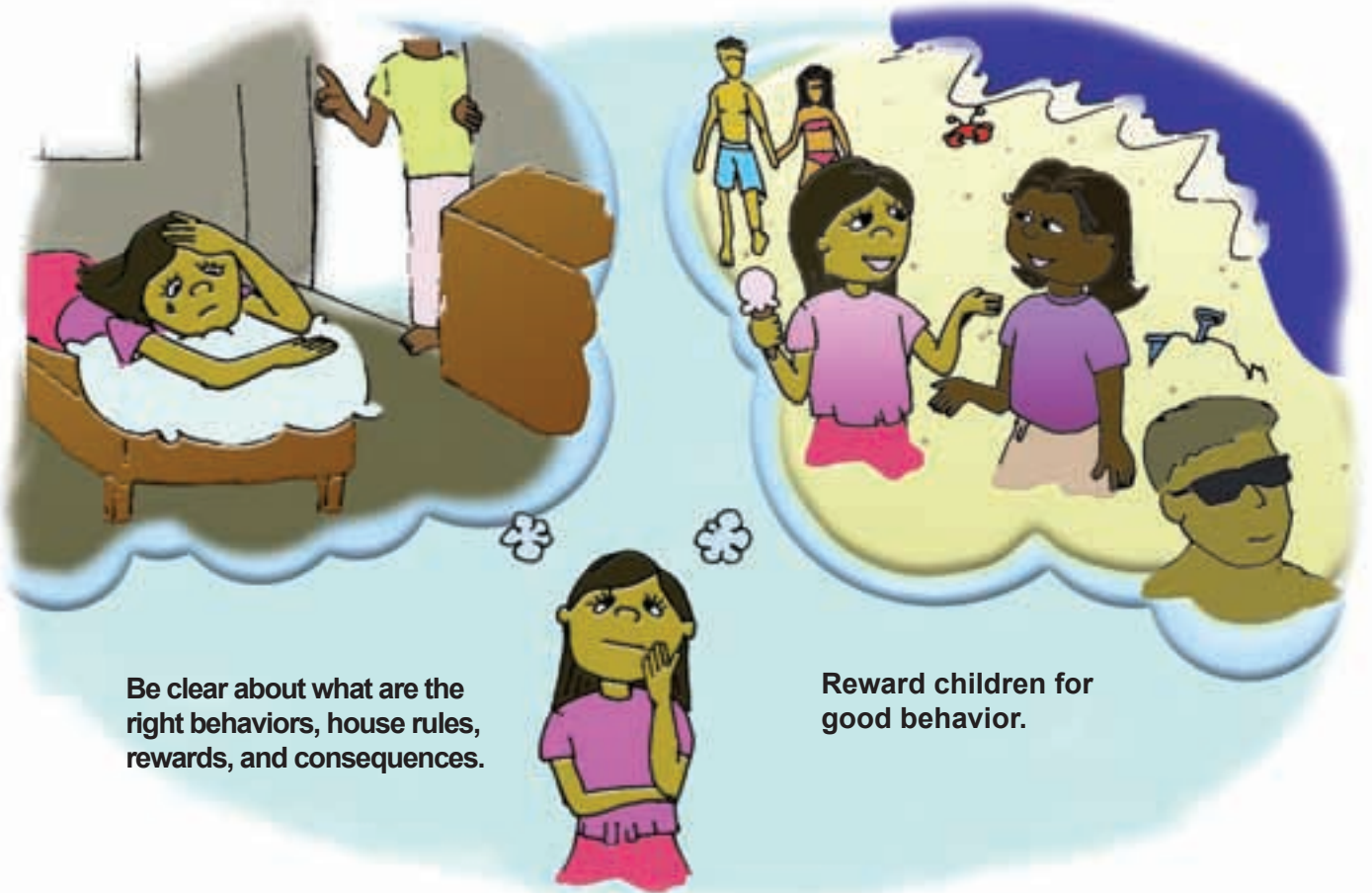
“Time Out” is one safe method you can use. To learn about time out or other methods, talk to a teacher, a school counselor, or a health care professional. (See Resources in Hawaii section for information on parenting assistance.)



SUPPORTING GOOD BEHAVIORS

Children can be disciplined with rewards and consequences. Good behaviors are rewarded. Rewards can include spending time with friends, going to the movies, or special treats. Bad behaviors result in consequences, which can be the taking away of a privilege, such as talking on the phone or watching television. To be effective, children must understand what the consequences of bad behaviors will be.

Children can earn privileges when they follow a parent's rules or lose privileges when they disobey the rules. To be effective, parents must be consistent about rules and follow through.



Be clear about what are the right behaviors, house rules, rewards, and consequences.

Reward children for good behavior.

HYGIENE

Good personal hygiene is important for good health. Bathing and brushing teeth daily, wearing clean clothes, keeping hands and fingernails clean, and wearing slippers and shoes helps prevent colds and the spreading of germs to others. Spitting in public is a way germs can be passed to other people and should not be done.

Here are some tips:

- Wash hands, bathe body, and shampoo hair daily.
- Each person should have his or her own toothbrush.
- Brush teeth after every meal and before going to bed.
- Turn away from people and cover nose and mouth when sneezing.
- Use a tissue when coughing and blowing or cleaning your nose. Throw used tissue in a trash can. Do not use clothes to wipe runny noses.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water, especially after blowing your nose or sneezing.

