

◇ Chapter 32  
Skillful Parenting

Relationship Skills

CONSISTENT PARENTING

Consistency is important to parenting. If two parents teach opposing values or if one or both parents send mixed messages, it is difficult for a child to learn appropriate behavior.

**Directions:** Read the situations described below. Then, on each set of lines, identify the inconsistency and give a possible positive resolution. Then answer the questions that follow.

**Identifying Inconsistencies**

**Family #1:** *Kayla and George's ten-year-old son, David, has always had trouble in math class. One day he is caught cheating on a math test. Kayla talks to David about cheating and grounds him for a week. George feels sorry for David and lets him play at a friend's house after only two days of restriction.*

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**Family #2:** *Diana's five-year-old daughter, Sarah, has a temper tantrum because Diana will not let her have a cookie before dinner. Diana ignores the tantrum, and eventually Sarah stops. The next day, Diana takes Sarah to a department store. At the store Sarah has another tantrum when Diana will not buy her a toy she wants. Diana, embarrassed by the noise, buys Sarah the toy to keep her quiet.*

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**Family #3:** *Rhonda tells her son that it is always important to be considerate and thoughtful of others. However, when they stop at the bank, she parks in a space clearly marked for special-needs drivers. She tells her son, "It's okay. We won't be here long."*

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 32

**Family #4:** Miguel and Rose prepare nutritious meals for their children and schedule regular medical and dental checkups for them. However, Miguel never wears his seat belt when he drives, and Rose smokes two packs of cigarettes a day.

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**Family #5:** Dean and Liu are very careful about which television shows they allow their children to watch. However, when they go out to dinner one night, they tell the babysitter that the children may watch any television show they want as long as they are in bed by eight o'clock.

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### Thinking About the Effects

1. How might parental inconsistency affect a child's understanding of values? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. How can inconsistency between two parents be used to show who has more power in the relationship?

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3. How can one parent use inconsistency to demonstrate power over a child? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Explain why parental consistency is important to a child's well-being. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. As a parent, what would you do to achieve a consistent approach to parenting with your spouse?

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