

# LESSON 6

## Whining, Pouting, and Sulking

### Getting Ready

1. Read through the lesson before working with the child.
2. Organize the materials you will need for the lesson:  
  
Progress Chart  
Items necessary for completing lesson activities  
Pencil or pen for marking charts  
Reward badge or other tangible reward
3. Arrange a work space that will best suit lesson activities.
4. Begin working with the child.

**Note:** Make sure you observe and chart the child's behavior for one week before you begin the lesson. You can then compare the first week's chart with those of the following weeks to determine progress. (For more information on charting, refer to "Monitoring Child Progress" on page 9.)

### Directions

A child whines, pouts, or sulks to get his own way. This type of behavior continues because the child has been reinforced for it. When he has whined, pouted, or sulked in the past, he has received what he wanted. The chances are the next time he wants something, he will act the same way. Because these behaviors are similar, they can be handled in much the same way. This lesson will help you learn to handle a child who whines, pouts, or sulks:

1. When the child whines, pouts, or sulks, ignore him. If you give in just once, you will have reinforced the behavior and it will appear again.
2. If it is hard for you to ignore a whining child, go into another room. Some children actually follow adults from room to room to make sure they are noticed. Ignore the child and eventually he will give up.
3. Be sure to watch the child. When he begins to give up whining, pouting, or sulking, praise him. Say "I enjoy seeing you happy" or "You're being cheerful today. That makes me cheerful." If the child doesn't sulk or pout when he has been disappointed, tell him how proud you are of him.

If you are in a situation where the child often whines but doesn't (such as during dinner when he wants dessert), praise him. Say "Thank you for asking for dessert in a normal voice. I like to hear your normal voice."

4. Be sure to chart the child's behavior so that you can determine his progress. Use the Progress Chart on page 62.
5. Once the child has mastered the skills in this lesson, give him a reward badge or other tangible reward.

**Remember:**

1. Notice when the child is behaving.
2. Be specific in your praise.
3. Reinforce immediately.
4. Reinforce small steps.
5. Follow the three steps for teaching.
6. Be consistent.
7. Ignore misbehavior.
8. Create a "quiet area" and use it when necessary.
9. Set conditions.
10. Make effective demands.
11. Reason with the child only when he is behaving.

**Adult Dialogue**

The skills to be taught in this lesson will vary from child to child. For this reason specific adult dialogue is not included. A few examples, however, are provided which demonstrate adult interactions with children in a variety of situations:

**Example 1: Ignoring whining.**

**C:** May I have some pie? Please, Please! I want some pie. Please, oh please! I need some pie.

**A:** **It's dinnertime and you may not have any pie now. If you ask me in a normal voice after dinner, you may have some then.**

**C:** Oh, but I want some pie now. Please? Please!

**A:** (Ignores whining and does not give child any pie before or after dinner. Explains rules to child once and does not repeat them.)

**Example 2: Praising for not whining.**

**C:** May I have a cookie?

**A:** **After dinner you may have a cookie. Thank you for talking in your normal voice. Your voice sounds much nicer when you don't whine.**

(Give the child a hug and make sure you give him a cookie after dinner.)

**Example 3: Ignoring whining.**

**C:** I want to stay up late tonight. There's a really good TV show on. Please, Mom! Please let me stay up to watch it.

**A:** **You have to get up early tomorrow to start for camp. You must go to bed at the usual time.**

**C:** Oh, Mom! I have to stay up. Please! Please! Let me stay up.

**A:** (Puts child to bed. Ignores whining and does not refer to it.)

**Note:** Some additional related ideas are found in "Unit Two, Lesson 1 Arguing."

