

# Moderation

[fyi.uwex.edu/parentingthepreschooler/](http://fyi.uwex.edu/parentingthepreschooler/)

## Tips to Avoid Overindulgence

- ◆ Have conversations with children to help them determine the difference between a "want" and a "need."
- ◆ When children ask for something at the store have them add it to their wish list. When people ask for gift ideas you can pull out the list and use it to discuss how wants may have changed over time.
- ◆ Set healthy boundaries and be consistent with them. This provides a sense of security for children.
- ◆ Let children hear you talk about setting goals and saving for them.
- ◆ Offer non-material incentives. Go to the park together, allow children to pick a free activity, or game to play as a reward.



Photograph by Christa Thao



Photograph by Lisa Woelbing

## Is it Misbehavior or Too Much?

Too much of anything - toys, treats, activities - can be harmful to children. Rushing from one activity to another can be stressful. It robs children of downtime to re-energize themselves. Kids who are tired and overscheduled are more likely to misbehave.

## Successful Children & Adults

Children need enriched environments, but too much is as bad as too little. Overindulgence prevents children from learning age-related tasks and life skills. Moderation helps develop basic skills, confidence, and self-esteem levels, as well as morals and emotions.



Photograph by Melinda Stuart

## What Do Children Need?

1. Children NEED love, guidance, shelter, food, clothing, medical care, and a chance to learn.
2. Children need structure. It is helpful to have both flexible and non-flexible rules. For example, one- to four-year-olds can never cross the road alone. They can cross with an adult carrying them or holding hands. However, at five they can learn to cross the road with an adult watching or holding hands with an older child.
3. Children need opportunities to do it alone. Use age to guide you. A four-year-old has the skills to dress and to tie their shoes.

### UW-Extension Family Living Programs

"Raising Kids, Eating Right, Spending Smart, Living Well"



For more information, please contact your county UW-Extension office:

<http://counties.uwex.edu/>

[Link To References](#)

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