

## Be Your Own Supernanny

Wearing a business suit and peering over her glasses, the Supernanny has made television history by giving parents pointers on how to discipline their children. “She’s just amazing!” one young mom gushed to me, describing how the Supernanny could whip a family into shape. Intrigued, I simply had to watch.

The Supernanny has some effective ideas, alright, but what she does with children is no magic. Instead, it’s just plain common sense. The Supernanny succeeds using some very basic child rearing techniques that good parents have used for generations. You, too, can do this at home.

The Supernanny is deadly serious about behavior. She knows that children are doomed to fail academically and socially if they don’t learn the basics of self-control. She understands that learning good behavior is their ticket to a good life. And because she cares, she is willing to do whatever it takes to help them learn about good citizenship.

To begin, the Supernanny spends a bit of time observing kids’ behavior. Sometimes parents can’t see the forest for the trees when they’re in the thick of raising their children. Taking a step back and really observing what’s going on helps us understand what children need from the adults in their lives.

After observing, the Supernanny develops a plan. She thinks things through. She chooses her battles, beginning with the most critical. She decides what has to change and what the consequence will be for failure to change.

Next, she communicates her expectations to the children. She speaks clearly and calmly on their level, looking them in the eye. She speaks in a way that conveys that she means what she says.

And then she is consistent. She brings her energies to the task of maintaining her expectations and following through if her expectations are not met. She demands good behavior every time.

The Supernanny doesn’t scream or hit or nag. Her own restraint serves as a model for children. These out-of-control children are grateful for an adult who helps them find control. Disciplined children feel loved and parents with a plan enjoy their children. The Supernanny leaves homes happier than she finds them.

The bottom line is that the Supernanny understands that children have a desperate need for the big people in their lives to mean what they say. She models for parents that confidence that they must develop to be competent leaders of their own children.

You don’t have to wear the business suit or the funny glasses, but you can be the Supernanny in your own home. In fact, you can be more effective with your children than she ever could be. Her techniques are ones anyone can learn, but no one else can love your children like you do!