

Rules

Over the last few weeks, things have been building up in this house. The children have been making a *horrendous* mess with their toys, I have been having a terrible fight with them to get them to tidy up and this week it has all come to a head. We *needed* to do something about it!



I know children need to play and get their toys out and make a mess, that's fine, but I do also believe there should be a limit to it. They need to learn to respect their things, which means applying some rules.

I have always cringed at the thought of having a 'family meeting', but I was feeling desperate, so decided to have a family discussion about the 'house rules'.

We all sat around the table together. I explained about the mess and lack of respect for their toys and tidying up. We discussed what the rules of the house should be together and wrote down 10 house rules that we all agreed on:

Our house rules

1. Listen to each other
2. Play nicely (and share)
3. Play with 1 activity at a time, then put it away before playing with the next
4. Don't talk while others are talking
5. Always talk nicely - No shouting, No stamping feet!
6. Look after your toys and property
7. Ask before taking things from others
8. Good table manners - sitting nicely, no shouting, no toys at the table
9. Respect each other
10. TIDY UP!! - No TV until it's tidy!

This was quite a nice discussion and I am very pleased and reassured that my children were the ones

to come up with most of these rules, they clearly understand how things should be. To be honest, they are generally well-behaved children, so most of these rules they naturally follow anyway, but it's definitely a good thing to have spoken about them and have them written down.

I have written the rules out nicely and stuck them up on the wall for all to see.

Now for the implementation. I got 3 glasses, the same size, put an elastic band round the top and labelled each with each child's name. When a child is good and living by the rules, they get a piece of dry pasta to put in their cup. When they are not, they get pasta removed. Once the pasta fills to the top of the elastic band, they get to choose a treat of their choice, for example, Boo wants to make a chocolate cake with me and Pinky wants to make a cherry cake.

To get this process started, I set the alarm on my phone for every 30 mins and if they are being good and playing by the rules, they get a piece of pasta. This is to help remind me to praise the good behaviour, as I feel that can easily get forgotten.

So far the 'house rules' are working quite well, I have not been nagging at the end of the day to tidy up an enormous mess, like previously and the children are getting excited about their 'treat'. I am keeping my fingers crossed, this continues.

