



The **BLUE** pajamas?  
 or the **RED** pajamas?

**Y**ou're losing your mind! Every time you ask your preschooler to do something, she responds with a big, fat NO. By now, you think her favorite words are me, myself and mine. And whenever you explain a boundary, she rushes to test it before you even finish the sentence.

Take heart, weary warrior. You are in the midst of a power struggle, but it's not unique to you or your child. As children grow, they naturally desire to express their individuality and independence from Mom and Dad – which can easily turn into sinful disobedience.

Your job in this battle is not to argue with your child or coerce him into submission. Your job is to help your child develop power over himself – to develop self-control. One way to do this is by giving your child the freedom to make choices within reasonable limits. Choices give your child some of the power he craves, and they help him to see that he, and he alone, takes responsibility for the outcome of his choices – whether the outcome is positive or negative.

**You may be surprised by the many choices you can give your child each day!**

**1. Choices about what to wear** – Depending on the day, set out play clothes, church clothes or school clothes and let the child select an outfit from one of these groups. If she chooses a mismatched outfit, the same outfit day after day,

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or the outfit you dislike most, let her do it! Give her a chance to express her uniqueness in this neutral, non-life-threatening area.

**2. Choices about food** – Instead of constantly forbidding that piece of junk food, remove it from your house or from your child’s sight. Fill the cupboards with a variety of healthy snacks and let your child choose from these instead. Give choices at mealtimes too: “Do you want two scoops of potatoes or one scoop?” If your child does not eat his full portion, don’t nag. Store his leftovers and serve them to him if he asks for food later. This action will

help him realize his need to choose better portion sizes and not waste food.

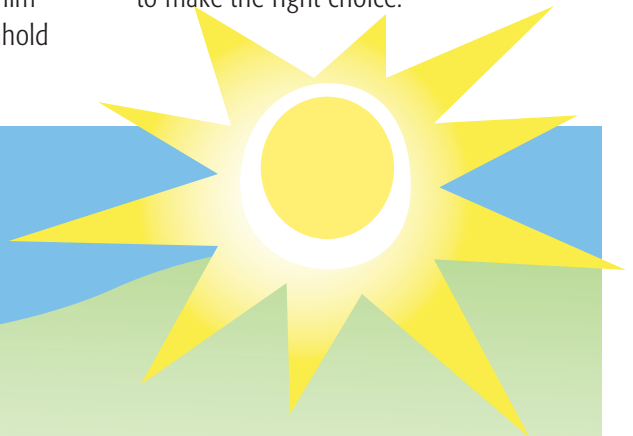
**3. Choices about activities** – When your schedule is flexible, let your child choose whether she should stay in and play or go to the park. When you have a family meeting to plan your next vacation, let your preschooler offer some input too. You may not want to give your child a choice about when to go to bed, but let her choose her pajamas and the bedtime ritual, like a Bible story, a book, a backrub, a song or a prayer.

**4. Choices in discipline** – Emphasize to your child that he has the choice to obey you or disobey. Although – if he chooses to disobey, he is also choosing the consequence. Design consequences that fit the crime. For example, tell him if he leaves toys on the floor after you’ve asked him to put them away, then you will withhold

those toys from him for a week. Don’t back down on the consequence, even if he whines or yells. Your child must experience the negative effects of his choices to develop self-control.

As your child is learning to make choices in all these areas, provide a foundation of love. When your child makes a bad choice, say, “I don’t agree with your choice, but I always love you!” Celebrate the good choices and increase your child’s responsibility and choices in other areas, like chores or handling money.

As image-bearers of God, each human, including each child, has a right to exercise choice in some matters. Don’t fight your child’s power to choose – instead, do what you can to empower him to make the right choice.



# PARENTS in the PARK

## WHAT DO REAL PARENTS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT DISCIPLINE? READ THESE WORDS OF WISDOM FROM PARENTS OF TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS.

“After discipline, I talk to my children about what they did wrong and why they were punished. I also encourage them not to do it again and let them know how much we love them. ... Now that Micah is older (almost 5) we have more serious talks about sin and asking for forgiveness – good discussions!”

Michelle, mother of three

“I think that kids do best when they know the expectations ahead of time. For example, our kids know and expect the routine in eating and sleeping, so there aren’t any conflicts. Also, we don’t have ‘beggars’ at the store. I’ve never bought them candy or toys at random times, so they don’t even bother asking. Instead of spoiling them, I want to teach my kids to have a grateful spirit.”

Shawna, mother of three

“Everything works better with the child sitting in your lap, and discipline is the same. When you reprimand, the physical action of setting the child on your lap brings her close to your face and reminds BOTH of you of your love.”

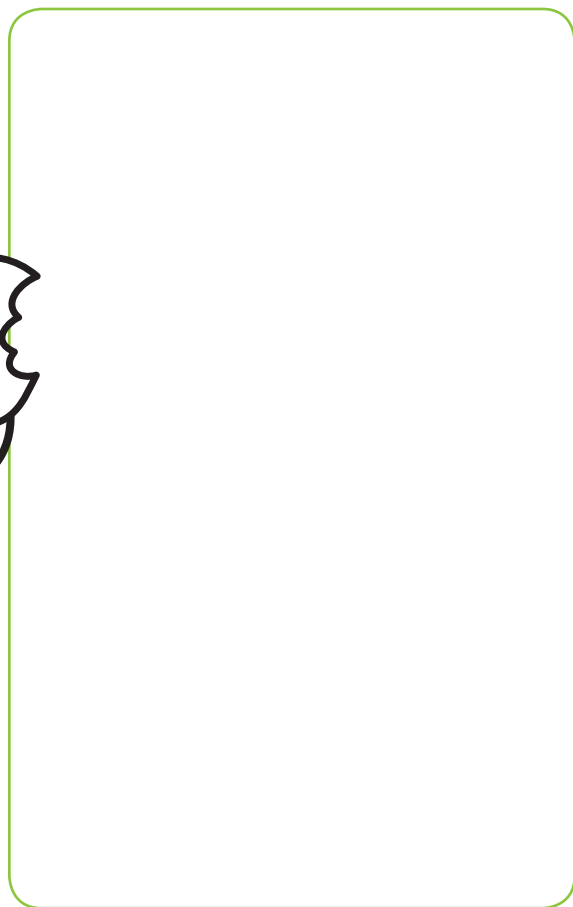
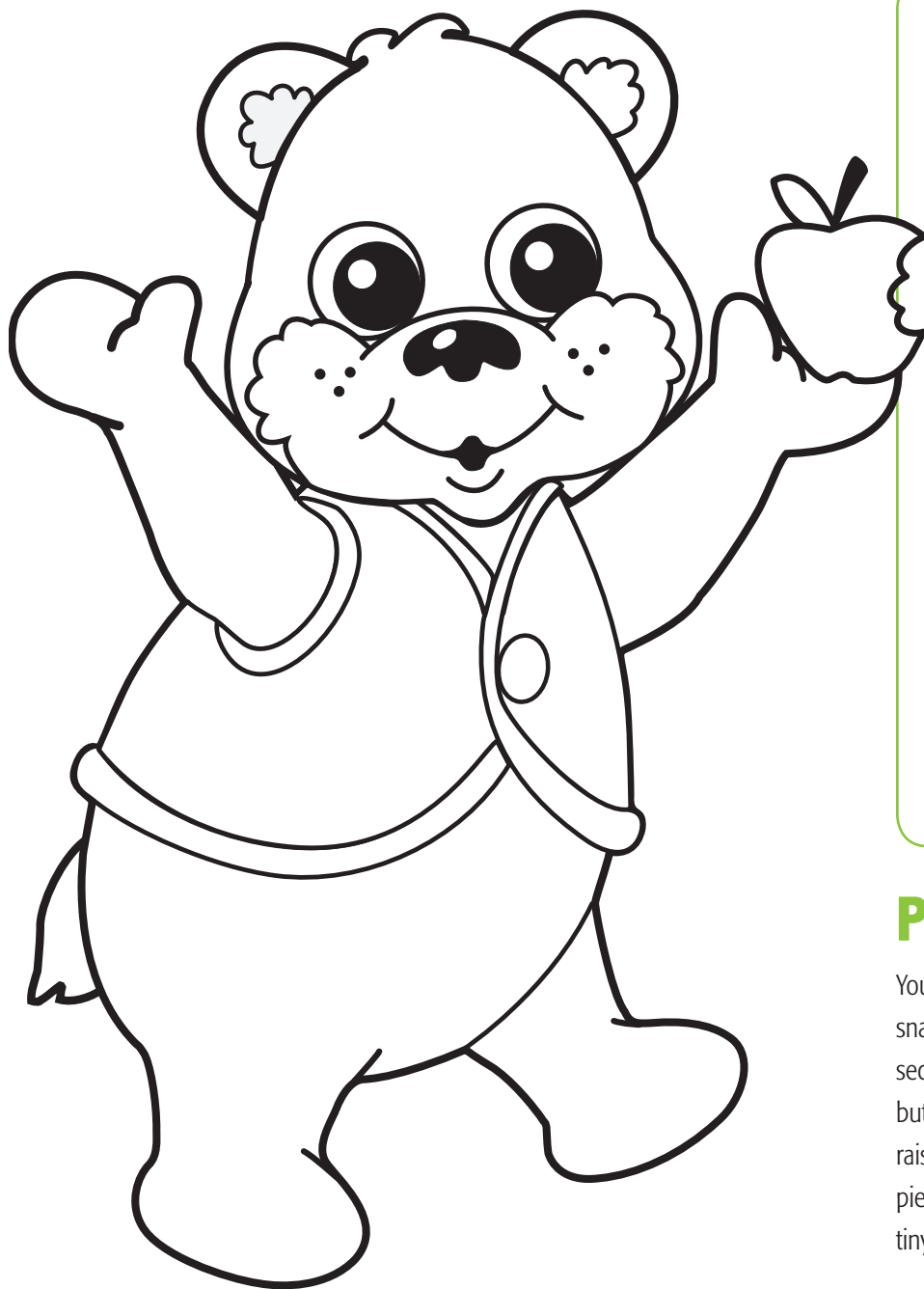
Lisa, mother of two

“It’s all about picking your battles. You can’t discipline them for every little thing or it would consume your entire day. For us, we have a zero tolerance policy for hitting or being violent ... If one of our daughters does something like pulling stuff out of the cupboards, well, it’s annoying, but it’s not really hurting anyone, so there wouldn’t be much discipline for that. More likely, we would just lock the cupboards or take other measures to prevent her from doing it.”

Noel, father of two

# CUBBIE BEAR'S CORNER

**Hi Cubbies!** Color the picture of Cubbie Bear eating a tasty, healthy snack. What is your favorite snack? Draw a picture of your favorite snack in the box beside Cubbie.



## Parents,

Your Cubbie can help you make this easy, healthful snack. Wash and cut a stalk of celery into shorter sections. Fill the inside of the sections with peanut butter or cream cheese. Ask your Cubbie to press raisins, chocolate chips or other small dried fruit pieces into the filling. Imagine the fruits or chips are tiny bugs sitting on a log!



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## Our Club News

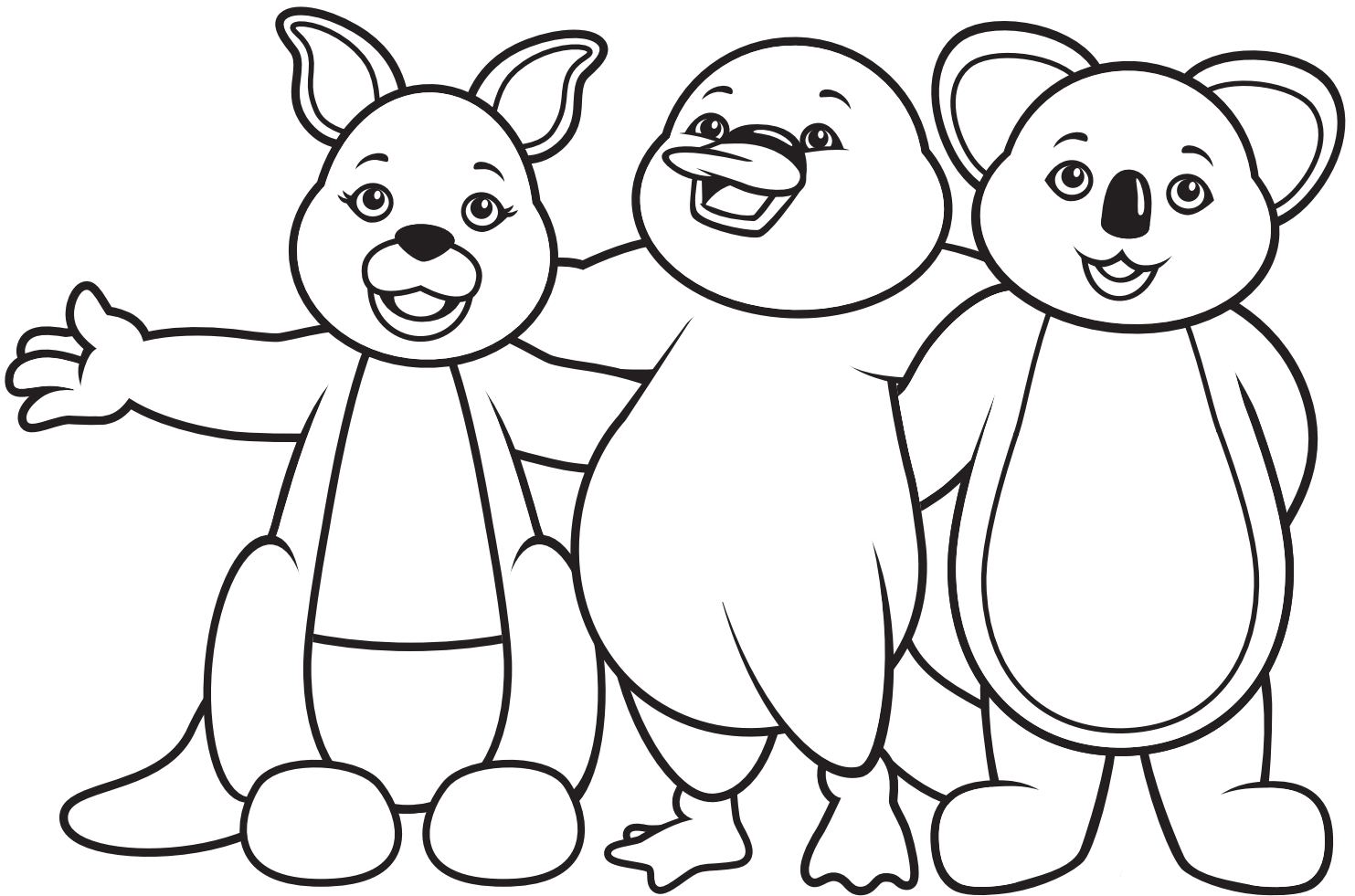
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# Puggles Page



**Hi Puggles!**  
Color the picture of Alice, Puggle and Sydney.



**Parents**, did you know we have finger puppets available for all three Puggles® characters? Imagine the adventures your Puggle could have at home with these soft, cuddly creatures. These make perfect gifts! Purchase at [www.awana.org](http://www.awana.org).

