Building Strong Families

Reasonable Control

Key Points

- **Strike a balance** between giving children too much control and not giving them enough. A child with too much control can feel neglected and insecure. A child who has no control can feel inadequate and powerless.
- Give children the **chance to choose** when appropriate. They will learn their own likes and dislikes and understand how to make decisions.

"So Many Choices"

**Directions:**

*What is your level of comfort with the following activities that allow your children to have reasonable control over their environment? Place a check in either the comfortable or uncomfortable column according to age.*

*For example: I may be uncomfortable with my 5-year-old choosing his dinner, but feel very comfortable with my 10 year-old and/or 15-year-old choosing what to have for dinner. When you are done, discuss your answers in your small group.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Comfortable</th>
<th>Uncomfortable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5  10  15</td>
<td>5  10  15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choosing what to have for dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picking out clothes to wear to school</td>
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<td>Buying items at the store and counting change</td>
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<td>Planning a party for friends</td>
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<td>Choosing a movie to rent from the video store</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deciding how to spend their allowance/savings</td>
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<td>Decorating their room</td>
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<td>Staying home alone</td>
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<td>Buying presents for friends and family</td>
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<td>Ordering their own food at a restaurant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choosing a television show to watch</td>
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