

NO FUSS PARENTING – TEACH KIDS TO SIT STILL

*You can find this article at <http://thedomesticfringe.com/no-fuss-parenting-teach-kids-to-sit-still>.

Teaching my kids to sit still is the best thing I ever did as a parent, and by sit still I really mean to sit quietly on my lap or beside me with minimal fidgeting. Let's face it, sitting still is hard work, even for adults.

This teaching process happened by accident. It wasn't a genius act on my part. We were attending a church with a very small nursery. They had lots of babies and had to make a rule that all children over the age of one year (you heard me right – 12 months) had to sit with their parents. The children who could walk were becoming a danger to all the wee-little babies. Sitting with my child on my lap in church could have been worst case scenario, but it became my biggest parenting blessing.

Suddenly, I had to teach my child how to sit and be quiet for an entire church service. This did not happen overnight and I'll be honest, it was hard work. I mean, how do you teach kids to sit still and be quiet?

TEACH THEM AT HOME READ TO THEM – LISTEN TO MUSIC AND STORIES ON CD - SIT WHILE YOU EAT – BE PATIENT

This skill was not learned during the church service, but rather at home. Every day we would practice. I would make my child sit with me on the couch while I read him a story. I wouldn't let him jump around or climb all over me. We would sit and read. At first it was one book and then two and three and more. I often had a house full of toddlers, because I babysat when my kids were small, so I would sit on a chair and have all the kids sit on the floor in front of me and listen to stories.

It can be done.

Then we started listening to stories on CD. We would sit on the floor and just listen. My children sat and ate all of their meals at the table without getting up and walking around. They sat on the floor or at their little Clifford table and ate their snacks. We did little things all throughout the day in order to teach them this new skill. We sat in a chair at the table while we colored.

We had quiet time every day where my children had to sit and do something like look through books, do puzzles, and play with Play-Doh. It took time. Lots of time. Lots of direction and redirection. And patience. It took walking out of church when he became fussy.

Here's the key: When we left a service because he wasn't quiet or sitting, I held him the entire time we were out of the service. I didn't put him down and let him run around, because I didn't want leaving to become a fun escape.

I know this probably sounds like child torture, but it wasn't at all. It was simply learning a new skill. It's a parent's job to teach their children skills that will help them in life.

After my children learned this skill, I never, ever had to worry about going places. A wait at the doctors? No problem. A ride on an airplane? Nailed it. I took my kids everywhere with me. I didn't have any family around to help me out, so where I went, my kids went, and I went a lot of places. I don't know what I would have done if they never learned to sit still. When my son was three and a half year's old and my daughter was around eighteen months, my cousin graduated from Air Force school (I don't remember the exact name of the event) and we attended. We were living in the Panhandle of Florida at the time and we drove three hours to Mississippi in a vehicle that had no air-conditioning. We're talking deep south summer heat. We're talking about two babies being trapped in a car for three hours. When we arrived, we took some time to walk around, visit with family, and get a drink. Then we went to the graduation ceremony. People gave us funny looks when we walked in with the kids. The lady next to us expressed some concern, but we were confident the kids would be fine. My son sat on his own chair next to my husband and my daughter sat on my lap. To them, it was just another service. It could have been church. They were already accustomed to sitting, so we had no problems. Afterwards, people were shocked and impressed.

My kids are just like most other kids. They hate sitting still and being quiet, but they did it. They learned how to sit still. Till today, I say it's the best thing I have ever taught my children. Children who know how to sit and be quiet are a blessing to their parents and all those around them. I need you to know that I'm not a child whisperer or anything. I've seen many other parents teach their children the very same thing. Believe me, it helped tons when it was time for preschool.