

## Pre-School

*Disciplining As You Go*

## Sharing



HOME  
22.6

## Parenting Tools: *Sharing*

It's not at all unusual for children who are four years old or thereabouts to have difficulty sharing. Why this is typical of this age is anyone's best guess, mine being that toddlers are just beginning to grasp the concept of private property. When the issue of sharing is addressed, parents should definitely use the opportunity to teach their children that we should love others and show that love by how we treat them. The problem of simple, garden-variety non-sharing can be solved by parents and other caregivers who are firm in their expectation that children share and who provide the disciplinary structure within which sharing can be learned. One way to do this is to use a simple kitchen timer to signal when the toys in question have to be exchanged. In most cases, once children have learned to take turns in this fashion, they begin spontaneous sharing in almost no time at all.

The answer to a four-year-old who hits, kicks, pinches, and bites is to immediately remove the child from the group, even if it's a group of two, until he or she is ready to apologize and share. If an aggressive incident occurs twice in the same play session, I'd recommend confining the child – even at the tender age of four – to his or her room for the remainder of the day, along with an early bedtime. If one wants the aggression to stop, which should be everyone's aim, and quickly, the consequence must be memorable. It must create a strong mental imprint that will hopefully begin to inhibit aggressive outbursts. Use this as an opportunity to explain that our actions show what is in our hearts. Also explain that our family is a family who follows Jesus and that Jesus would not want us to hurt others, but to help our friends.