



iQuestions Faculty, Dr. John Trent

Question:

Our child is very organized and a perfectionist. How do we get him kid to lighten up?

Answer:

Some of us have that Beaver child. They are organized, they are detailed, they are precise, they line up their shoes, even when they are little. They want the hangers to go the same way. They actually have a sock drawer that they will put their socks in. I mean, for the Otter kids, they are the ones who have sock *rooms*, you know? But the Beavers are organized and precise.

So, what do you do if you have that Beaver child? Here's a couple of things to keep in mind. Number one is, what is the number one thing that typically they get praised for? Well, it's "doing something well."

Boy, they want to draw everything within the lines. They want to make sure they do everything just right.

But the problem is, sometimes that is the only thing they get praised for. So, if you have a Beaver kid, make sure that you are praising them for just their character and who they are, and for being sensitive to others when you see that, not just for their performance.

Another thing with a Beaver child that's really important to realize is that sometimes they take more time, when it comes to preparation.

Let me give you an example of what I mean. I worked with a Lion mom one time that was really busy. She had a Beaver child, and she



decided, "Man, we've got to get to practice, and we've got tons of stuff to do, so when you get home," the Lion mom said, "here's how I'm going to motivate you." And she would take an egg timer and turn it and say, "OK, you've got 15 minutes to get that done, get your homework done, so we can go to practice."

Let me ask you a question. When have a Beaver child that wants to do everything really well, when you put them under massive time pressure, do they speed up or do they slow down? Very often, they will freeze inside, not just slow down.

Well, then she would roar into the room, and here's this kid that had barely started her homework, and she would roar at her, and it was just a nightmare. I mean, it was Wild Kingdom in that home.

When I finally talked to her and said, "You know what? The way this child is fearfully and wonderfully made is they are the kind of kid that can use some more time and use encouragement, and not just put that huge time pressure on them." She backed off the egg timer, and things began to change in their relationship.

So, again, praise that Beaver for who they are, not just what they do, but also build in some time so that they can do things in a really quality way.