

STRONGER™

— FROM THE INSIDE OUT —

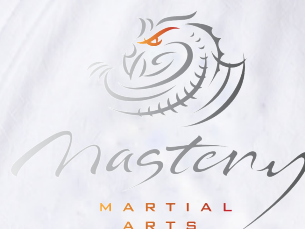
THE SELF-CONTROL ISSUE

Small Choices.
Big Futures.

DISCIPLINE
CONFIDENCE
RESILIENCE
KINDER PEOPLE
STRONGER KIDS

*Stronger
Kids.
Brighter
Tomorrows.*

REAL KIDS
REAL TOOLS
A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW



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FROM THE INSIDE OUT

THE BIG IDEA

ONE MARSHMALLOW NOW... OR TWO LATER?

The famous Stanford study made self-control unforgettable. The real lesson for parents is even more interesting.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, researchers at Stanford gave young children a simple choice: eat one marshmallow now, or wait and get two later. Some children covered their eyes. Some turned away. Some distracted themselves. Some waited. Some couldn't. The experiment became one of the most famous demonstrations of delayed gratification and self-control.



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WHY IT MATTERS FOR KIDS



Make better decisions

Pause, think, and choose what's right.



Build stronger relationships

Be kind, respectful, and considerate.



Stay calm and bounce back

Face challenges with a positive mindset.



Handle big emotions

Manage feelings and make healthy choices.



Reach long-term goals

Follow through, even when it's hard.



WHAT WE KNOW NOW

Later research showed the story is more nuanced. A child's ability to wait is shaped not only by willpower, but also by environment, trust, stress, and experience. The hopeful takeaway: self-control is a skill that can be strengthened over time.



WATCH THE RESEARCHER

Walter Mischel

explains the Marshmallow Test

Source: The Brainwaves Video Anthology

TAP TO WATCH ON YOUTUBE

EVERYDAY EXAMPLES

- 1 Wait your turn.
- 2 Finish homework before screen time.
- 3 Save money instead of spending it right away.
- 4 Pause before reacting when frustrated.

SOURCES • TAP TO READ

Harvard
Executive Function

Watts et al. (2018)
Later replication



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PARENT INSIGHT

WHY KIDS DO THAT?

**They know the rule.
Why don't they listen?**

You've said, "Shoes on." Twice.
Your child keeps playing. It can feel personal.

But hearing a direction and following it can draw on different, still-developing skills.^[1]



WHAT MAY BE DEVELOPING ^[1]



Switching gears

Leaving an absorbing activity and turning attention toward you.



Remembering the next step

Holding the instruction in mind long enough to get started.



Pausing the impulse

Resisting "just one more minute" of something that feels fun.

These skills grow through experience and support.
Knowing a rule is not the same as using it consistently.^[1]

A DIFFERENT WAY TO SEE IT

WHAT IT CAN FEEL LIKE

"They're doing this to me."

ANOTHER QUESTION TO ASK

"What are they still learning?"

SAME LIMIT. CLEARER NEXT STEP.

For younger children, try getting close and giving one specific direction:^[2]

"Please put your shoes on."

The expectation stays. The support becomes clearer.

**SEE THE DEVELOPMENT.
HOLD THE STANDARD. TEACH THE SKILL.**

Children can test limits, too. Understanding development doesn't remove boundaries.^[2]

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EXPLORE THE SOURCES - TAP TO READ

[1] Harvard - Executive Function

[2] CDC - Giving Directions (ages 2-4)

General education; adapt to your child's age and needs.



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REAL LIFE. REAL OPTIONS.

WHEN THIS HAPPENS...



Big feelings. Clear limits.

THE MOMENT

Your child loses a game—and the pieces go flying.

"That's not fair! I'm not playing anymore!"

Five options—not a perfect script. Start with safety, then choose what fits.

1

ACKNOWLEDGE THE FEELING

"You really wanted to win. That was disappointing."

Name the feeling without changing the result. [1]

2

HOLD THE BOUNDARY

"You can be upset. The pieces need to stay on the table."

Protect people first. Move unsafe objects out of reach.

3

OFFER A PAUSE

"Let's pause the game. I'm here."

Save the longer conversation for a calmer moment. [1]

4

GIVE A SMALL CHOICE

"Would you like some space, or would you like me nearby?"

Offer two safe options; stay available. [1]

5

TALK WHEN EVERYONE IS CALMER

"What could we try next time losing feels hard?"

Practice asking for a break. Pick up the pieces together. [1, 2]

A DIFFERENT WAY TO SEE IT

Instead of a label, look for a skill to teach.

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SOURCES & READING

[1] Child Mind Institute · How to Help Children Calm Down

[2] Child Mind Institute · How Can We Help Kids With Self-Regulation?

Illustrative scenario. Adapt the language to your child's age and needs.



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TRY THIS TONIGHT

THE OPPOSITE GAME

Can your child outsmart you?

Two minutes. No equipment. Plenty of laughter.

LISTEN

PAUSE



Then do the opposite.

CALLER SAYS

"HEAD!"



PLAYER DOES

TOUCH YOUR KNEES

"KNEES!"



TOUCH YOUR HEAD

HOW TO PLAY

1

START WITH THE TWO RULES.

Say "head," touch knees. Say "knees," touch head. Practise slowly together first.

2

TAKE TURNS CALLING.

Give five calls, then swap roles. Let your child be the caller and see how you do.

3

KEEP IT PLAYFUL.

Mixed them up? Laugh, reset, and try again. No one is out of the game.

LEVEL 2: SWITCH THE RULES

Say "switch!" Now match the word: head means head; knees means knees. Switch back when you're ready.

WHAT THIS GAME ASKS YOU TO DO

- **REMEMBER** Hold the rule in mind.
- **PAUSE** Resist the automatic response.
- **SWITCH** Adjust when the rule changes.

Play seated or standing. Make the movements and pace comfortable for your child.

A FAMILY CHALLENGE, NOT A TEST.

Celebrate the retry—not just the score.

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ABOUT THE SKILLS · TAP TO READ

Harvard Center on the Developing Child
Executive-function activities guide
Practice during play; no promise of wider results.



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KID HERO OF THE WEEK

LEMONADE FOR HEROES

Meet Ariana Guy, age 9.

KITTS HILL, OHIO

A summer lemonade stand became a thank-you for the people who help her community.



Illustration—not a photograph of Ariana.

\$1,500

Raised in one afternoon

+\$1,500

Matched by her family

\$3,000

For volunteer firefighters

A SMALL STAND. A GENEROUS IDEA.

Ariana and her grandmother raised money for the Lawrence Township Volunteer Fire Department. Her family doubled the gift, and the department later celebrated her effort.

Her explanation to WSAZ was simple:

“I didn’t need the money.”

— Ariana Guy, as reported by WSAZ

READ THE ORIGINAL STORY

WSAZ Hometown Hero



WHY WE LOVED THIS

She noticed. She cared.

She did something.

Leadership can look like a small idea that helps someone else.

ASK YOUR CHILD TONIGHT

“Who helps our community—and what could we do to say thank you?”

Reporting by Kimberly Keagy

Published September 4, 2026 • WSAZ

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SMALL ACTS. REAL IMPACT.

A story to share.
A conversation to start.



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AROUND MASTERY

IT STARTS FROM THE INSIDE.

Children are still becoming.

At Mastery, we aim to see a skill to support—not a label to attach. Respect, patience and follow-through are things we help children practice.



SEE THE DEVELOPMENT.

HOLD THE STANDARD. TEACH THE SKILL.

A DIFFERENT WAY TO SEE IT

WHAT IT CAN FEEL LIKE

"They're doing this to me."

A QUESTION TO CONSIDER

"What are they still learning?"

Understanding does not remove the boundary. It changes how we approach the moment.

PARENTS, YOU'RE PART OF STRONGER

What small win did you notice this week?

A second attempt. A calmer response. A little more independence.

Share it with your instructor.

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SMALL WINS. SHARED TOGETHER.

Real families. Real growth.

