



parenting

With **positive**  
guidance

Tools for Building Discipline from the Inside Out.

By Amanda Morgan, MS

Author of [www.notjustcute.com](http://www.notjustcute.com)

*::: This book is dedicated to my husband, my perfect partner in parenting, as well as to both sets of our parents, who first showed us the way. :::*

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*This book may be purchased at [www.notjustcute.com](http://www.notjustcute.com), where you may also read more from Amanda Morgan as she blogs about supporting whole child development with activities and articles that are more than just cute, for young children who are much more than cute too.*

*Underlined text is hyperlinked. Addresses may also be found in the Resources and References section. Referenced books are linked to Amazon.com simply to help you find them. At this time, I receive no incentive from Amazon.com, authors, or publishers for promoting their books.*

## The Author



Amanda Morgan is a proud graduate of Utah State University who holds a BA in both elementary and early childhood education and an MS in human development. She has a wealth of experience in classrooms ranging from preschool to sixth grade and has taught in private, public, and migrant schools. In addition, works as a consultant and trainer for a non-profit children's organization. She enjoys teaching other teachers and parents about child development and teaching strategies.

As a mom and an educator, she is passionate about moving learning objectives from the theoretical into the practical, with meaningful activities that are engaging, and always fun. At [Not Just Cute](#), she blogs about supporting whole child development with activities and articles that are more than just cute, for young children who are much more than cute too.

Amanda is a native of Eastern Oregon who now resides in Utah at the foot of the Wasatch Mountains. She and her husband are the parents of three boys. Her other interests include children's literature, running, cooking and baking (off-set by more running), home improvement, reading, and finding a good bargain.

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# Introduction

## A Disclaimer

**Before reading this book, it's important to me that you realize that I am not a perfect parent.** I've long been leery of the term "parenting expert" because such a title instantly invites scrutiny, and quite frankly, I don't feel up to the inspection. With three boys age six and under, I am still very much on the proving grounds of parenthood. My own kids, and those I work with, throw tantrums, tackle playmates, and even – if you can believe it – shout at me now and then about how much they don't like me anymore. In other words, they're normal kids.

While I still bristle at the term "parenting expert", I do feel qualified to be called a "child development expert". My bachelor's degree is in Elementary and Early Childhood Education, and I earned my master's degree in Human Development, where I focused on the early childhood years. I've worked with children in a variety of settings: As a university lab preschool teacher, as a public school teacher, as a supervisor to student teachers, and as a consultant and trainer to early childhood professionals. **Certainly all that experience has been put to the test on a daily basis in my ultimate teaching role as "Mom".**

Because of my background and work experiences I have become more aware of a variety of tools that I use inside the classroom and inside my home to approach difficult behaviors. While I don't claim to have supernatural powers that allow me to control all child behavior, turning each little one into the offspring of the Stepford Wives, I do use these tools to make what I do a little bit easier for me and more effective for the children I love and teach.

This e-book won't give you a magic wand to wave over challenging children, instantly instilling them with perfect behavior. There is no magical, easy, or perfect approach to dealing with challenging childhood behaviors. If there was, there wouldn't be shelves full of books on the topic in every book store

and library. There would be one very short book and we would all have it memorized! I won't promise to give you a new kid by next Tuesday, or outline specific steps to follow for just 10 days to elicit a magical transformation. **No book you read will ever change your child. It can only change *you* and how you react to your child in daily situations.** It's the difference in those interactions that will effect real change in your child. What I will share with you here are lifetime skills – tools, attitudes, and approaches that you can use every day to address difficult behaviors and teach children to make better choices about their own behavior, and thereby build internal discipline.

## Simple Tools for an Important Task

Raising good kids is hard work. **Don't let anyone try to tell you that you must be doing something wrong just because it's hard.** Other programs might make it seem easy or they may promise instant results. Too often these quick-fix programs rely on manipulating and bribing children into behaving rather than doing the hard work of teaching intrinsic moral discipline.

It is hard work, but with the right tools the hard work begins to *feel* easier. And the best part is, by doing the hard work of teaching for long term growth rather than controlling for short term results, you will eventually be able to step back more and more as your children become increasingly capable of monitoring their own behavior.

I'll be the first to say that these tools are not my own unique invention. I don't have a patent on the practical combination of sound theory and good judgment. What I am writing here is a compilation of my own internalization and application of the work of many, many people in the area of ***Positive Child Guidance***. After studying child development for years and applying that study in amazing teaching experiences in the university and public school settings, I became a parent. I found I had a new challenge: To reconcile my textbook and clinical knowledge with the often messy reality of parenthood.

**These writings are largely written to myself.** They are reminders and words of encouragement from the "child development expert" side of my brain

to the “often overwhelmed parent” side of my brain. I realized long ago that I learn best by processing my thoughts through writing. As I began to share what I wrote with others through my blog, [Not Just Cute](#), I was honestly surprised at the reaction I got. There were parents who, like me, found themselves in the typical daily battles with their young children, facing power struggles and tantrums, and they wanted a new approach. There were also parents who shared with me personal stories of childhood abuse and manipulation and a desire to create a better childhood for their own children. As I continued to write for myself, and then for them, some began to request it all in one book as a guide they could use and share with others. And so, ***here it is***.

This book is divided into three parts. Part one introduces the philosophy of positive guidance. Part two outlines the ten tools you can use to encourage positive behavior while building internal discipline. This section could be read all at once as an overview, but may also be helpful as a reference and reminder of individual tools. Part three discusses how this all comes together in a meaningful way for your individual family; how you can tailor all these principles to meet your unique goals and vision, creating a positive family culture and strong and loving family bonds.



