

# MISBEHAVING WITH COMPANY

PARENTING CHALLENGES ★ PAGE 1 OF 1

Whenever there is a question in a child's mind that you will enforce something, the child will challenge a rule or request. There may be a question in your child's mind that you will enforce the same rules when guests are in your home as you will on a "normal" day.

It is your birthday. You have friends over and they sing "Happy Birthday" when the cake is served. Your youngest daughter starts shoveling an enormous piece of cake into her mouth before she sits down. "(Kasey) stop! Put your dish down on the table. Sit down please. Cake stays where it is. When everyone has been served, you may get your cake and eat it in small bites." Don't take the cake away or lecture the child. A birthday is more exciting for a small child than it is for the adult celebrating the birthday.

Consistency is the key to training your child how to be in the world. This consistency needs to be present with or without company.

If a child is wild and misbehaving, excuse yourself and that child. All children fear being embarrassed, so don't reprimand the child in front of your company. Take the child out of the room and ask him/her what needs to happen to have that child calm down (take deep breaths, go outside and run off some of the energy, etc.) If the child does not come up with a plan, give him/her a choice: "I can see you are really excited to have company today. You are too wild. Either calm down or I will give you a ten minute time out in the big chair in the living room."