



**The Right Parenting Tools
Make All the Difference**

by Linda Aber

Parenting a child or teen with attention deficit disorder, learning disabilities and mild autism spectrum disorder can be wonderful and rewarding, yet often times frustrating and overwhelming.

As a parent there is a lot you can do, but most parents just don't have the right tools for the job. Think about it - a rake and a fork are both tools, right? Each individually is the correct instrument for a specific task. Eating soup with a fork and clearing snow with a rake are obviously not the appropriate tools for the job. You'll get some soup in your mouth with the fork, but the rest will dribble through its prong or tines. You'll move some snow with the rake, but you won't clear it. Using unsuitable tools will make your life more exasperating and problematic.

Traditional parenting and disciplinary methods are similar to the fork and rake analogy; they are simply the wrong tools! Lecturing, giving warnings, counting, removal of privileges, grounding and punishment create intense relationships around misbehaviour - it is upside-down parenting. All children and teens seek their parent's energy and relationship, but misinterpret that they get juicier reactions, more attention and connection when they misbehave.

When parents adopt parenting with "positivity" and utilize the right tools for the job, change happens. And ...it happens quickly. The approach turns traditional modes of relationship, character building and discipline right side-up.

Parents learn how to energize success without leaking negativity. They acquire a nourishing vocabulary of "positivity" and balance the art of limit setting with clear, simple consequences when rules are broken.

Using the right tools, parents become success mentors, helping their child/teen overcome daily challenges, channeling their energy into positive arenas, creating greater emotional regulation and calm for their entire family.