Among the many available guides to parenting, Foster Cline and Jim Fay’s “Parenting with Love and Logic” materials (see Figure 1) stand out as providing clear, practical strategies – and examples – for raising responsible children. Cline, a child psychiatrist, and Fay, an educational consultant, developed “Love and Logic®” to assist parents in becoming more effective in interactions with their children. As an alternative to the “helicopter” parent or “drill sergeant” approach, Cline and Fay advocate a “consultant” parent role. This approach is built on a base of empathy, love, choices, consequences, and understanding. It fosters a conscious parenting approach designed to raise competent, confident children able to use problem-solving skills successfully as they negotiate life’s challenges.

One Parent’s Experience With “Love and Logic”

Lisa C. Greene, the mother of two children with cystic fibrosis (CF), attended one of Cline and Fay’s “Love and Logic” workshops. She saw its benefits as a parenting approach and wondered how it might best be applied to caring for her children and others with chronic illness. As she tells it (personal communication, Lisa Greene, June 14, 2012):

Jacob, my second child, was very strong willed, and when he was 2½ years old, he started the typical toddler “no, no, no” behavior. Although given his CF, taking daily medication was really not negotiable, and I knew how critical his meds were, I was not finding a way to successfully give them to him. I became very stressed about this and questioned my ability to care for him properly. I realized then that I had two kids with CF, each needing a lot of care and requiring tons of meds, and I did not have the skills I needed to parent them properly and assure that I could keep them healthy. Out of my worry, I began to search for advice and support. I asked many people, including my health care team, for advice. I also read many parenting books. Still, I learned little that was applicable to parenting strong-willed kids with chronic illness. Even reassurance that I was a really good parent did not feel adequate for me when parenting my two

Foster Cline, a child psychiatrist, and Jim Fay, an educational consultant, developed a parenting approach, called “Love and Logic®,” to assist parents in becoming more effective in interactions with their children. As an alternative to the “helicopter” parent or “drill sergeant” approach, Cline and Fay advocate a “consultant” parent role. Lisa Greene, a mother of two children with cystic fibrosis, found aspects of the “Love and Logic” approach very applicable to parenting children with medical concerns and has written a book with Dr. Cline titled Parenting Children with Health Issues. This book applies the “Love and Logic” approach to specific concerns, including, most notably, developing responsibility and increasing the likelihood of young people’s adherence with required medical routines and self-care. Key aspects of this parenting approach include providing a good example of self-care and a positive attitude; giving children many experiences in which they can practice both problem-solving and experience the outcomes of their decisions; offering empathy when things do not go well, even when consequences are necessary; setting expectations of improvement and success with self-management; and offering encouragement as often as possible. Cline and Greene’s book provides discussion, examples, strategies, and tips for parents of children with health concerns, and it is an excellent resource for both nurses and parents.

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The Family Matters series focuses on issues, information, and strategies relevant to working with families of pediatric patients. To suggest topics, obtain author guidelines, or to submit queries or manuscripts, contact Elizabeth Ahmann, ScD, RN; Series Editor; Pediatric Nursing; East Holly Avenue/Box 56; Pitman, NJ 08071–0056; (856) 256–2300 or FAX (856) 589-7463.
Effective Technique

Table 1. Sample Enforceable Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ineffective Technique</th>
<th>Effective Technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get your inhaler and backpack ready.</td>
<td>I’m happy to go as soon as your inhaler and backpack are ready.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop banging your brother with your cast!</td>
<td>I only play chauffeur to kids who don’t bang others with their cast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quit being mean to your sister. I mean it!</td>
<td>My mouth doesn’t respond when my ears hear snippy comments about your sister’s condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m sick and tired of your complaining.</td>
<td>I drive when the company I’m driving with doesn’t complain about their check-ups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No TV until your treatments are done!</td>
<td>I am happy to turn on the TV when your treatments are done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need to take your insulin shot before you eat.</td>
<td>I’ll serve dinner when you have finished your shot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make sure you bring your enzymes with you.</td>
<td>I am happy to take you places when I don’t have to worry about your stomach cramps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can’t go until you finish your IV meds.</td>
<td>You’re welcome to leave as soon as your meds are done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch that attitude with the doctor!</td>
<td>If all goes well with Dr. Anderson, I’ll probably feel so relaxed I’ll want to take us to a movie!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Reprinted with permission from Cline and Greene, 2007, p. 59.

Basic “Love and Logic” Principles

Parenting Children with Health Issues begins with an overview of the basic “Love and Logic” parenting approach. This approach includes several key principles, as well as what the authors term the 5 Es of “Love and Logic.” The 5 Es for parenting children with medical concerns are example, experience, empathy, expectations, and encouragement.

To illustrate this parenting approach and how it can be applied to parenting children with health issues, the principles, including the 5 Es, are outlined below. Sample phrases parents can use to implement each approach are offered to bring the principles to life. Additionally, each principle below is contrasted with one or more common, but less effective, parenting approaches (see Table 1).

1) Help a child learn to value self-care by providing an example of optimistic and responsible behavior. Try:

- Verbalizing one’s own self-care: “I have a cold, so I am going to take care of my body by drinking extra water and juice and going to bed early.”

The book that resulted from this collaboration, Parenting Children with Health Issues (Cline & Greene, 2007), is designed to help both parents and children. Cline and Greene offer strategies to help parents increase their effectiveness through setting loving limits; avoiding both power struggles and over-protection; managing a child’s resistance to cooperation with health care routines; easing communication about difficult issues, such as quality and length of life; and navigating both sibling concerns and relationship challenges. By improving parental effectiveness, the ultimate purpose of these strategies is to benefit their children. For children, this parenting approach promotes the development of traits, such as confidence, resilience, and hope; competence; responsibility; and wise decision-making. As a result, it promotes eventual readiness for capable self-management of a chronic condition.
5) Provide empathy before following through with consequences, whether natural or imposed.

**Try:**
- Offering empathy: “I am sorry that didn’t work out for you.”
- Giving empathy and consequences: “I know it is disappointing to miss the class trip because your symptoms are flaring up, but it might be better than getting hospitalized away from home where you’d be all alone because we couldn’t visit you.”
- Showing anger: “I can’t believe you went out for recess when I said not to!”
- Laying blame: “I told you you’d be sorry you didn’t plan ahead for your meds.”
- Giving unreasonable consequences: “You are grounded for a month for …”

6) Promote competence and confidence by offering encouragement as often as possible for a job well done.

**Try:**
- Offering encouragement: “You must be proud of yourself for the choice you made. That’s what I’d call very responsible behavior.”
- Doing for an older child: “Here, let me check your blood sugar now.”
- Belittling: “You never write down your peak flows! You know you are supposed to do that every day.”

The following example of a young teen who, despite urging from his mother, was not taking responsibility for his afternoon meds illustrates many of the “Love and Logic” principles in action:

Jose, a 13-year-old boy with epilepsy, takes medication to control his seizures three times a day. His mom, Gloria, had been making sure he took his meds on schedule since he was diagnosed as a young child. She came to us frustrated at Jose’s lack of responsibility in remembering to take his meds.

After determining that missing a dose did not have life-threatening implications, we advised her to let Jose know she would be turning over full responsibility to him to manage the afternoon dose of his meds, and that she knew he could handle it just fine. When Jose had a mild seizure at school because he forgot to take his medication and was embarrassed by the attention (the ambulance was called by the concerned school administrator), his mother was empathetic and understanding about the fact that he was upset. Jose had rightly expected particular toys for Christmas. His mom helped him figure out which ones he could do without. Jose had rightly expected particular toys for Christmas. His mom helped him figure out which ones he could do without. Jose had rightly expected particular toys for Christmas. His mom helped him figure out which ones he could do without. Jose had rightly expected particular toys for Christmas. His mom helped him figure out which ones he could do without.

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**Cline and Greene’s Parenting Children with Health Issues: Essential Guidance**

Cline and Greene (2007) note that allowing natural consequences to occur, especially when medical considerations are the issue, is always a difficult call. The seriousness of allowing consequences has to be weighed against the possibility of more serious complications resulting from ongoing irresponsible behavior. Each situation is unique and calls for a team evaluation in consultation with the parents.

**Topics Addressed in the Book**

In addition to reviewing the “Love and Logic” principles, Parenting Children with Health Issues addresses a number of important issues faced when parenting children in
this population. Explanation, advice, tips, and practical examples for parents are available in the following chapters:

- Loving Limits: Preparing Kids for the Real World
- No More “No!” Avoiding Power Struggles and Arguments
- From the Inside Out: How Children Really Learn
- Now What? Tips for Parenting from Infancy to Adulthood
- It’s Not Birds and Bees: Talking to Kids about Life and Death
- You’re Not Alone: Psychological Issues Presented by Medical Challenges
- “It’s Not Fair!” Handling Sibling Relationships
- Unique Situations: Developmental Disabilities and Eating Disorders
- Caution: Medical Challenges Affect Marriage and Family Relationships

How Nurses Can Use the Material

Nurses who understand the challenges faced by parents of children with special health care needs will benefit from learning about parenting approaches that may be most effective for these families. Nurses’ ability to provide parents with both anticipatory guidance and practical strategies to address challenges will strengthen the teaching role. Additionally, providing parents with resources to reinforce, as well as learn more about, effective parenting strategies will increase the likelihood they will implement these approaches – and, as a result, that their children will benefit. In a broader context, providing or hosting educational sessions about the “Love and Logic” approach to parenting children with chronic illness or disability will also make information about these powerful techniques available to an even wider audience.

Understand the Challenges And Effective Strategies

First, wise nurses realize that parenting a child with special medical needs is an enormous challenge accompanied by grief, fatigue, anxiety, confusion, and hope. Nurses who read Parenting Children with Health Issues will find the recommended strategies and their rationale(s) easy to understand. A free study guide for the book provides review questions for each chapter, emphasizing key points, as well as sample scenarios to use in “practicing” the skills. Use of the guide will likely increase the reader’s ability to retain and apply the principles illustrated in each chapter. The guide is available at http://www.parentingchildrenwithhealthissues.com/catalog/item/7761577/8280224.htm.

Other resources nurses can use to learn more about this approach to parenting are available through the “Professionals” page of the Web site for Parenting Children with Health Issues (http://www.parentingchildrenwithhealthissues.com). These resources include:

- A free copy of the CD Top Do’s and Don’ts for Parenting Children with Health Issues and Other Special Needs.
- A free DVD of The Five Essential E’s for Raising Responsible Kids.

Any of these materials can be used by individual nurses or as resources in educational sessions for colleagues or staff. (See “Host Workshops” below for additional resources.)

Provide Anticipatory Guidance and Education

An important aspect of the nursing role is to provide parents with both anticipatory guidance and effective strategies to handle parenting challenges. The “Love and Logic” parenting approach, generally, and the Parenting Children with Health Issues materials, more specifically, offer important skills for parenting children with special health care needs. Nurses who understand this approach can share its basic principles and offer tips and strategies to help parents develop effective approaches that in the words of Cline and Greene (n.d.):

- Are simple and easy to learn.
- Teach responsibility, character, and good coping skills.
- Lower [a parent’s] stress level.
- Have immediate and positive effects.
- Up the odds [a] child’s transition to independence will be fun instead of frantic.

Share Resources with Parents

Although parents may take in some information and advice in clinic sessions, or during a child’s hospitalization, providing resources – whether print or online – that they can review at home reinforces their learning and increases the likelihood of follow through. The “Love and Logic” Web site offers free general parenting resources for families in both English and Spanish (http://www.loveandlogic.com/articles.html), as well as links both to workshop registration and to ordering various resources related to its parenting approach.

The Web site for Parenting Children with Health Issues (http://www.parentingchildrenwithhealthissues.com/resources.html) offers the following resources for parents:

- Free video and audio resources (same as those available for professionals).
- Print resources in English and Spanish.
- Over 30 articles and blog posts related to topics in the book.
- A Question and Answer section exploring several topics from the book in greater depth.
- Information (under the “Workshops” link) about an annual tele-class on “Love and Logic” for parents of children with cystic fibrosis as well as workshops open to the general public.
- The opportunity to order the book and DVD for Parenting Children with Health Issues, shorter booklets in English and Spanish, and/or a CD on “Winning with Diabetes.”

Under the “Professionals” link on the Web site, nurses can also order free informational brochures for families that will direct them to both the book and the Web site. Further, sample articles are available through the “Professionals” page of the Web site that can be reprinted, with permission, in institutional or support group publications.

Host Workshops

PowerPoint™ slides about the “Love and Logic” approach to parenting children with medical concerns can be obtained by contacting Greene and Cline through links on the Web site. These could easily be used to introduce key concepts in support group meetings or in parent/family education sessions on a unit or in a clinic – as could the free DVD mentioned above. Additionally, a free eight-section DVD for use during patient education or on inpatient education video channels is available through the Web site (http://www.parentingchildrenwithhealthissues.citymax.com/catalog/item/7761577/9465959.htm).

continued on page 49
Greene recommends use of the book combined with study guide and the DVD as a format for a more in-depth study in either support groups or nurse-led classes. Greene and Cline are also developing a support group package that will include guidance for leading a group as well as additional video clips to accompany the book chapters.

Greene and Cline also offer workshops for parents and/or professionals addressing the parenting approaches described in *Parenting Children with Health Issues*. These workshops have been successfully conducted at a number of hospitals and non-profit organizations. A workshop offers the opportunity to reach a large number of parents both connected with the hosting institution and throughout the community. Arrangements for an institution or group to host a workshop can be made by contacting Cline and Greene through links on the Web site (http://www.parentingchildrenwithhealthissues.com/workshop.html).

**References**
