

JCCCA

Parent Page

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"I said, No!"

Have you ever been to a store or a restaurant and your young child is flailing his arms like a bird while screaming a "you done me wrong" song. Feeling the eyes of the entire world on you, you say "If you be quiet, you can have it." Why is it so hard to say "No" to our kids? What consequences are we setting ourselves up for when they become teenagers?

When our children are babies they can be so darn adorable that we hate to do anything that displeases them. However, if we want to raise children who understand the meaning of the word 'no' and want to keep the number of screaming, kicking tantrums to a minimum, we must start from the very beginning with a firm stance that shows we mean business and won't back down, no matter how adorably sad our little one's face may be or how embarrassing it may be for us.

Even If we tell a baby or child no and then eventually end up letting the child do what he wanted in the first place, we are setting ourselves up for disaster. Even if you have changed your mind and decided that what the child was doing wasn't so bad after all, you need to stick to your guns and let the child know that what you say, you mean. If he gets his way after a minute or after an hour, he will know he's got you pegged. Children won't give up if they see that any sort of behavior

gets them what they want, whether it be to just quiet him up until you can get out of a store or doctor's



appointment, or if you're just too busy to stay on top of him. If you put your child in a time-out for something or you say no, you need to enforce it.

Of course, we all have times when we just want to throw our hands up in the air and let the child have his way because we are tired or busy or just fed up.

These are the dangerous times that give children their glimpse into what might be if the tantrum is long enough, if mom is tired enough, or if there are enough other people watching on. If he sees you give up once, it is possible you will again, and he will never give up.

Consistency is the key and when you are consistent with your words and actions, your child will know you mean business.

It is important that parents are able to set boundaries for their children that instill values they can carry with them throughout adulthood. This includes developing coping and relationship skills with the rest of the world. If a child is used to always getting his way, think of how devastating it will be for that child

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to grow up and realize that the world isn't always as positive.

The best thing you can do is stay calm. Unlike that kicking, screaming child in your shopping cart, you have the ability to control your emotions and restore the peace. You can't bring your toddler to his senses by raising your voice or making threats. Getting mad will only escalate his emotions. You don't want to cave in, either. If your child is screaming because you passed up the candy aisle, don't make a U-turn just to calm him down.

Instead, tell him firmly that he has to stop throwing a fit. If he keeps it up, it's time to use your most potent weapon: the exit door. Even if you're in the middle of a big shopping trip, you can always whisk your child out of the store. Children like to shop, and there's a good chance he'll calm down once he understands the consequences. If he continues throwing a fit, take him home, if possible. The shopping can probably wait.

Keep in mind that children are more likely to lose their tempers when they're hungry or tired. If you're about to embark on a marathon shopping trip, try to make sure your child is tanked up and well-rested. It's also a good idea to establish the ground rules before you reach the store. If he's likely to lobby for a new toy, you can explain ahead of time that you're only there to buy groceries.

Frustration is also a big tantrum-producer. If you know your child is going to insist on visiting the pet store when you go to the mall, make sure you have time to do it or think twice about the trip. Thinking through his probable reactions, the consequences, and the alternatives isn't really "giving in" to him; it's being a wise parent.

Because he's out of control, a

tantrum can be scary for a child. Once it subsides, give your toddler hugs and reassurance. It's fine to acknowledge his feelings. You might try to make leaving less painful by offering to read a favorite story when you get home.

Keep in mind that your child's tantrum is nobody's business but yours. Your toddler will have tantrums, and some of them are bound to happen in public. It doesn't mean you're a bad parent, only that you're the parent of a toddler.

If you handle the situation with calm and grace, expect to see a lot of knowing glances and sympathetic smiles. Regardless of any looks you get, remember that your child doesn't understand your embarrassment. Public tantrums aren't meant to humiliate parents, so you should treat your child the same way as if the tantrum happened at home.

Kids Health

By Dr. Claire McCarthy

Q. Our 3-year-old still mispronounces some words -- instead of "cocoa," he'll say "toto." Could he have a speech problem?

A. Odds are it's nothing to worry about. Speech isn't generally 100 percent intelligible until age 4. Some sounds are simply harder for kids to pronounce than others, too:

Many children don't master sh, th, s, z, l, r, sp, tr, or bl sounds until they're 6 or 7. My daughter Natasha had a terrible time with her l's and r's -- for a while there, I even found myself saying "yunch" instead of "lunch" -- but now, at 7, her speech is just fine (and I kind of miss the cute mistakes).

That said, it's worth keeping an ear on his errors. Sometimes mispronouncing words can be a sign

of a hearing problem, or a developing speech or language difficulty. If you have any concerns about your child's hearing (for instance, if he doesn't always respond when called, says "What?" a lot, sits very close to the TV, or often wants the volume turned up), get it tested as soon as possible.

Otherwise, talk to your pediatrician about your son's speech slipups at his next general checkup. Chances are he's right on track. *Parenting.com* 3/2008

Stop and Go!

Outside activities for preschoolers should not only be fun, but also help to develop physical and mental discipline. This is a wonderful and fun way to show the importance of listening to appropriate commands. Have the children line up in a running stance. When you say the word "Go" they run a course you have laid out. They keep running until you say "Stop". Now the fun begins when you switch it up on them, by using other words such as freeze, slow down, walk, run and so on. They only should respond to Stop or Go. Whoever misses the call must sit out. This continues until there is only one child left, and that child is the winner.

My Provider is Special because...

What makes your provider special to your child and your family? We would like to hear from you.

Send a small paragraph telling us the name of your provider along with your nomination describing their outstanding performance and efforts to:

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Provider of the Month
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