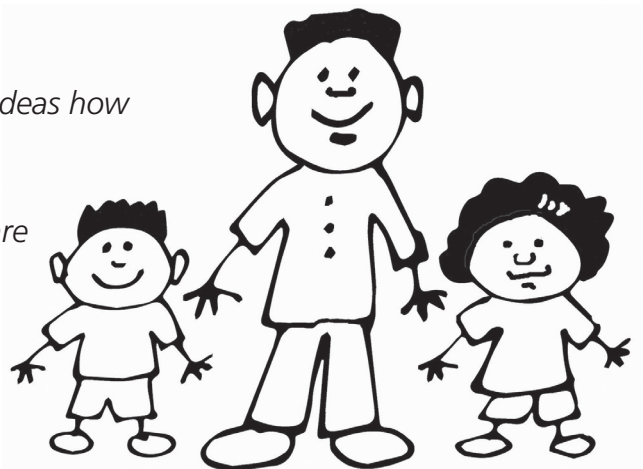


Choosing Words that May Help

Parenting can be a difficult balancing act when trying to support your child while maintaining discipline. However, the right words at the right time can make all the difference. This tip sheet offers ideas and phrases that can be used to encourage cooperation by using and teaching your child strong communication skills. The suggestions that follow are considered examples of the Authoritative Parenting Style (sometimes called "Positive Parenting").

- **Use Pre-Emptive Praise and Reinforce Wanted Behaviors:** *"I like how you... (waited your turn)".*
- **Express Clear and Consistent Expectations of Behaviors:** *"When we're in the store, I expect..."*
- **Explain Natural Consequences:** *"You are cold because you chose not to put on your coat..."*
- **Offer Choices:** *"We're going outside. Would you like shoes or boots on your feet?"*
- **Pattern Built-in Rewards:** *("When you're done clearing the table, you can have dessert" instead of "No dessert until the table's clear.") Patterning creates Positive Natural Consequences, rather than bribery.*
- **Disapprove of behavior, not the Child or Emotion:** *"Running into the street is dangerous.", "I understand that you are angry right now. It's OK to be angry, but I won't let you get hit. We need to keep everyone safe."*
- **Redirect, Redirect, Redirect:** *"I need your help right now. Could you please go pick out 3 really good oranges?" (instead of the misbehavior)*
- **Set the Stage:** *"Tomorrow we're going to..." (can be combined with a sentence about expectations)*
- **Encourage Problem Solving:** *"Do you have any ideas how to solve this? What way would you fix it?"*
- **Use "I" Statements:** *"I feel upset when the toys are not cleaned up because it makes it difficult for us to find things."*



Choosing Words that May Help *(continued)*

- **Encourage thinking through the process:** *"What do you need to do to be ready to leave?"*
- **Encourage Family Identity:** *Impress that all members are equally important and that all contributions are necessary. "We are a family and this is one of the ways that our family helps each other."*
- **Strengthen your team:** *"This is a tough one, huh? We're going to figure this out together."*
- **Accept mistakes and encourage adaptability:** *"This isn't working, but maybe together we can think of a way that will work.", "If we could start over, what would you want me to do differently?", "If we could start over, what could you try differently?"*
- **Take Responsibility for your mistakes:** *"I am not proud of how I acted.", "I could have done that better."*
- **Acknowledge that what the child is saying to you matters:** *"I want to hear more from you. Can you tell me more about what you think about this?"*
- **Remain open to alternate solutions:** *"I understand. How would you do it then?", "Let's try this again, can you show me your way?"*
- **Offer assistance: "May I help you?"** *"Let's try this again, this time together." "Would you like a helping hand?", "How about we take turns?", "Would you like to hear my idea?"*
- **Encourage productive action:** *"Can you show me how?", "Can you show me what that would look like? I see. Now what should be our next step? , "That might work. Shall we try it then?"*
- **Neutralize the negotiation:** *"I love you too much to argue."*



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