

PARENTING TIPS

Bad Attitudes Come In Three Arenas

A bad attitude is a challenge to a family life and frustrates many a parent. Furthermore, if children don't learn how to deal with their attitude, they grow up to be adults with bad attitudes. One way to help children overcome a bad attitude is to take it apart and help them deal with it in smaller pieces.

Children are tempted to have a bad attitude in three prominent areas: when given an instruction, when corrected, and when given a "no" answer. One mom put a sign up in her kitchen listing those three areas with the heading, "Three opportunities for a good attitude."

Take time to talk about attitude with your children. Discuss the importance and benefits of a good attitude. Help your children understand these three areas and even warn your child when one of them is coming. Coach your children to have a better response.

The next time your child demonstrates a bad attitude, don't just point out the negative but teach how to respond rightly. When given an instruction, a child might say, "Okay Mom," in a pleasant tone of voice. When corrected, it would be helpful to say, "I'm sorry." When receiving a "no" answer, children might say to themselves, "Okay, maybe another time."

A bad attitude is often a sign of an angry spirit and the groaning, rolled eyes, sarcasm, stomping feet, or disgusted look are all attempts to communicate dissatisfaction with the situation. Gently point out these bad habits and help your children to practice better responses. Be careful of your own harshness in the process and look for ways to break the problem down into manageable pieces.

This parenting tip comes from the book *Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes, In You and Your Kids* by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN