

# PARENTING TIPS

## Correction's First Step

When you need to correct your child, start with calm words, avoiding threats or harshness. If children can respond to words then no further consequence is necessary. After all, that's the mature way to handle conflict and mistakes. When a boss sees an employee doing something wrong, the best thing is to start with words of correction. If that doesn't work, the boss may have to bring in some other kind of consequence.

You're teaching your child something very important when you start the correction process with words. You might even say to your child, "If words work, then that's all we need. If you don't respond to my words, then we'll have to go to the next step." Whether you're working with a preschooler jumping on the couch or a sixteen-year-old coming in past curfew, the principle is the same – start with words of correction.

We're not suggesting that every time there's an offense, you have a dialogue. If your son hits and you've already talked about hitting, then you can just proceed to the next step. What you're trying to do, however, is train your children to eventually receive correction through words without needing a further consequence.

Although your kids may need more than words at first, over time you're moving them in the direction they should go in order to listen to God. It's always best to respond to the whispers of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. But when we don't listen, he'll use other ways to get our attention. As parents, we don't like to go further, but we will if we have to. Children need to see that their responsiveness or resistance determines the extent of the correction.

\*\*\*\*\*

For more on how to build a good Correction Routine with your children, consider the book, [Good and Angry, Exchanging Frustration for Character in You and Your Kids](#), by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN