

# PARENTING TIPS

## Get a Response

Parents give instructions many times a day. The difference between a drill sergeant and a parent has to do with relationship. The way you give an instruction helps a lot. In fact, a little forethought can head off resistance before it starts.

In addition, we encourage parents to teach children to respond with, “Okay Mom,” or “Okay Dad.” This answer reveals three things. First, it shows that the child has heard what you said. How many times have you gone back to check up on an assignment only to hear the child say, “But I didn’t hear you?” Some parents even teach their children to repeat the instruction back by saying, “I will...” and then fill in the blank. This helps clarify the instruction for both parent and child.

The second benefit of an answer is that it teaches the child to communicate the intent to follow through. One dad said, “I like it when my son says, ‘Okay Dad,’ because it shows me that he’s going to do what I asked.”

The third benefit of a response is that you can hear what kind of attitude your child has. If it’s one of those, “Okaaaay Mommmy!” responses then you know that your child has an attitude problem. The response reveals some important things about a child’s heart. Silence can mean too many things. A child may comply, while harboring anger, rebellion, resentment, or defiance.

Teaching children to answer after an instruction gives you a window into their hearts to see if they’re responding well to the instruction. If not, a parent has the opportunity to help make some adjustments.

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This tip was taken from the book, Good and Angry, Exchanging Frustration for Character in You and Your Kids, by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN