

# PARENTING TIPS

## Recognizing Foolishness

One of the greatest sources of sibling conflict is foolishness. Children often don't recognize the future consequences of their present actions. Billy trips his younger sister. Karen teases her brother until he cries. Martin takes his sister's CD player and uses up the batteries. All of these are examples of children not anticipating the consequences of their actions.

One of the ways that you can recognize foolishness is to listen for the flags. Excuses like, "I was just kidding" or "I didn't mean it" or "I was just playing around" or "I didn't do anything wrong" are all cues that a child is not taking responsibility for foolish behavior. Children often evaluate life in terms of black and white and when they do something foolish the behavior may not have been wrong. These children don't recognize that a good behavior can sometimes be wrong because it leads to something bad.

The first solution is to help children learn to take responsibility for their part of the problem. This is hard for many children who view mistakes as a sign of weakness. Help children take responsibility for foolishness and you will go a long way to teach them about wisdom.

You might ask, "What could you have done differently to avoid this problem?" This question helps children look at an offense a little differently. Instead of evaluating it based on right or wrong, now the behavior is judged based on it foresight and wisdom.

Of course the solution for foolishness is to help children learn wisdom. You want to help them anticipate the consequences of their actions. Tell stories of people who didn't see what was coming. And of course pray with your children because God says in James 1:5, "If you lack wisdom, ask God."

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For more practical ideas on developing honor in your family consider the book [Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes in You and Your Kids](#) by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN