

PARENTING TIPS

Teaching Kids to Accept a No Answer

Teaching children to accept a “no” answer is important. Knowing how to help children in this area can be a challenge. The following two examples illustrate different ways to help children change, based on their own uniqueness and personality.

One dad said, “I sometimes continue to say no until my daughter accepts my answer and then, after the discussion is over, determine whether to reevaluate the decision based on her response. If she gets angry and mean with me, I point out her demandingness. If she has a gracious response I consider whether I can change my answer.”

Another dad had a different approach. “As I evaluated my interaction with Joey I discovered that I would say no too early in the dialogue. This would move him into an attacking mode because he was frustrated that I didn’t hear him out. I realized that I was making a decision too quickly. As I spent more time listening and affirming his ideas before I made a decision, I saw a change in his attitude toward my final answer.”

Both of these parents accomplished the goal of helping their children learn to accept a no answer. The first dad determined to say no in order to train his daughter to respond graciously. The second dad postponed his answer to let his son feel understood. Because children and parents are all different, you must look for things that will work for your family. By evaluating your present routines and then making some well-planned adjustments, you will see change in your children as well.

This parenting tip comes from chapter 5 in the book **Good and Angry, Exchanging Frustration for Character in You and Your Kids** by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN