

# Relationship Tip of the Day



## Don't Yell at Your Children

Dear Parents,

Don't yell at your children. It sets a very bad example and undermines your authority. It gets you all worked up sometimes to the point of saying or doing something you will later regret. Then you end up apologizing for your behavior and the lesson that needed to be learned about their behavior gets lost. You are the grown up. Behave like one.

Speak kindly and calmly about them; discuss the *behavior* that needs addressing. Remember, your words will stick with them forever. Don't insult them; reason with them. If you sense you are angry, ask them calmly to go to their room to think about what just happened. Then go talk to them about the behavior that needs to change. Ask them to say they are sorry, and if need be, apologize to the person they offended; then tell them you forgive them. This is a good time for a hug and a chance to tell them that everyone makes mistakes, even Mom and Dad, but growing up means being willing to change our behavior.

Also, Mom and Dad, don't yell at each other, and especially not in front of your children. Not only does it set a bad example for how to deal with conflict, it makes their world unstable.

If you and your spouse are going to have an argument, then have it in private. At least have enough control to go out of the room.

Here are some other helpful parenting tips.

First of all, make it clear to your children what behaviors are and are not acceptable, so they are not surprised about some new rule. The rules should be reasonable. Here are the primary ones we used. Not obeying these rules resulted in an immediate consequence. We did not remind our kids about the rules

1. Obey Mom and Dad immediately.
2. No violence.
3. Be kind to others with your words.

Before going somewhere, discuss what will be and what will not be appropriate. Some examples are: how to behave at school, when visiting other families, or any other social situation. Help them know what is and is not acceptable BEFORE they face the event. Are they going to a fancy dinner? Maybe sit down with them and practice some basic etiquette such as waiting for everyone else to be served before eating, using utensils

instead of your fingers and not speaking with food in one's mouth. There are plenty of videos online to watch together.

We went to the park a lot. So before each excursion, we would review the rules.

1. Have a good time while we are at the park.
2. Do not go to the bathroom facility without a parent.
3. Play safely, staying within our sight.
4. Take turns with other children and be nice to them.
5. Do not go with anyone else anywhere or take gifts from strangers.
6. When it is time to come home, there will be no complaining about it. When we say, "It's time to go home," you reply, "Ok, Mommy." Doing this means we are more likely to go to the park again soon.

Parents, be present for outings. Put your phone away and play with them. Watch them closely to keep them safe.

This worked well for us. You can also have silly rules. For example, we had a rule at the table that no one was allowed to choke. If someone as much as coughed, we would say, "No choking allowed." We had other rules for eating, but you get the idea. Kids should know what is expected of them and what the consequences will be if they choose to disobey.

You, as the parent, are to remain calm. If a child breaks a rule, no reminders. Give the consequence immediately or when you get home. Do not publicly humiliate them, though. Take them aside to talk to them privately.

Don't be lazy, Mom and Dad. It is important that your children learn to obey you immediately. This will keep them safe if there ever is an emergency.

If a child hits her bother, don't remind them of the rule, take them to their bedroom, talk about it and give the consequence while remaining calm. (You and your spouse can discuss what the consequences will be.) Stick to it. Don't put off discipline. If you give reminders, they will keep it up until they perceive you mean it. Mean it from the start and they are more likely to obey you sooner and more often. If they think it might be ok now and then, they will try it now and then. I will say it again; do all of this without a hint of anger. Even if you choose to paddle them, do so peacefully.

Finally, encourage them to apologize and then forgive them. Notice when they do better in that area as you go through your day. "Joey, I like how you didn't hit your brother when he grabbed your toy. That shows me you are growing up. I am so proud of you!"

Again, no yelling.

Demonstrate how to deal with conflict in positive ways.

Love them.

Speak loving and kind words over them.

Hold them accountable for inappropriate behavior.

Set an example with your own behavior.