

Get Kids to Listen, Episode 8



Power of Moms A Gathering Place for Deliberate Mothers

Amy McCready is the founder of positiveparentingsolutions.com and author of “If I have to tell you one more time.” Business background includes Fortune 500 Training and Development senior sales director. After having a baby, she took months off work and found that motherhood was a much more difficult job. Because she was struggling, Amy started taking courses, developing tools and strategies, and combining it with her business background to compile a training curriculum for parents.

Dealing with misbehavior is very difficult. Our gut responses can often make that misbehavior worse, which can be quite discouraging.

We want to parent in a positive way. We seek advice and information. We end up trying all these helter-skelter strategies, then they don't work and we end up upset and frustrated, so we yell, which makes us feel worse. Hundreds and hundreds of parents say the same thing: their biggest problem is yelling. The good news is that we can get out. If you establish a plan, then it really does work, yelling disappears, and moving on to enjoying being a mom, or working on a project that you are excited about is possible.

If you are constantly fire-fighting, then you cannot do any long-term good. You are using all the energy to stop short term issues. When moms are looking for a solution, we see what other mothers do – hitting, isolating, time-outs, take toys away etc.—a lot of the initial solutions that we come up with are just to get control over the kids, which will be an ineffective long-term solution.

You want kids to behave. Be respectful. Pick up toys. Listen. However, we have to remember that everybody is hard wired for a need for free will, control, and power. It is not something that our kids choose—it is inborn that they have some power over their world. However, most of the strategies that are out there – forcing the child to go to their room, spanking them, figuratively wrestling them out of bad behavior—are not going to work in the long term because whether at 18 months or 18 years your child will *choose* to behave. Find and use strategies that go along with your child's needs for power and control.

What is their base need? Belonging, significance. They need control and power. Treat children with respect.

Be very respectful to children. We don't want our children to leave the house thinking finally I am out of her power. When parents use power techniques to get their children to behave, when those children become adults their relationship are really going to suffer. The overpower strategy is short term. Where

do you want this relationship to be when this child is a teenager? Emotionally these kids can move out before they actually physically move out due to the power struggle. Enhance that relationship for the long haul.

It is never too late to begin enhancing the relationship. The key is coming clean. Admit faults with a conversation that goes something like this: "When I look back over the years, I can see that I was always bossing you around. Starting today, I want to do things differently. I want to treat you with the respect you deserve and the respect that I want to give you." It is a balance between kindness and firmness. You are still the parent, but you give your child some of the power and the attention.

Body Mind Soul Time

Kids come with a hardwired need for emotional connection. They need to have positive attention on a regular basis. Whining and crying serve the child's purpose in filling their attention needs, because it warrants a response from the parent. Instead carve out 1 or 2 times per day where you spend one on one time with that child. There is nothing more important than that child during that 10 minute interval and you are doing whatever it is that the child likes to do.

The child gets her attention basket filled, and her attention seeking behaviors begin to fall off the radar screen. Those kids are getting what they need at a deep emotional level, so there is no need for those behaviors anymore.

Do one 10 min. time each day or if you have a lot of kids, then sit down with the kids and create a BMS time schedule. That way everyone knows when they will have their special time. Put the schedule right on the fridge so that everyone is accountable. If something comes up, like a doctor's appointment or something, then everyone knows, and you just reschedule.

Label it:

Initially parents think that there is no way that we can find time to do this. Just think about it like an investment. The more you do on the front end the less you negative behavior you have to deal with. You will see the direct return of your investment.

5 Rs

Respectful. Related. Reasonable in duration. Reveal in advance. Repeat back.

How do you come up with consequences?

Rather ask: what would be most helpful for this child to make a different choice in the future? Do they need more ways for positive power? Training? Do they need more encouragement? These questions on what would be most helpful for each child are more empowering than picking consequences. Role play can be a tool for kids to switch with the parents and understand the situation better.

Transcribed by Jessee Stewart