

Kids Can Work Things Out, Episode 57



Power of Moms A Gathering Place for Deliberate Mothers

With April Perry, Rachelle Price, and Danee Davis

Rachelle tells a story about her daughter and another daughter's friend having a misunderstanding. Both mothers got involved but it turns out that the daughters didn't think that the situation was that big of a deal.

If we give kids the opportunity to work things out, they can do it!

Danee gives some good ideas about what tools can help kids know how to handle the problem:

- Stay calm
- Talk about it
- Don't jump to conclusions

Danee shares a story about her 17 year old daughter and an adult who confronted her about unsafe driving. Danee monitored the situation from the sidelines, but did not insert herself into the situation, and the two resolved the issue and repaired the relationship.

April shares a story about how this didn't work out well. Her daughter had an issue at school with a friend so April just sent the friend's mom a text about the issue. The other mom didn't get back to April, but her daughter did get back to April's daughter about the issue. April feels so awkward even now, and doesn't even know what she is going to say to that mom when she sees her next. April thinks maybe her efforts would have been better served if she were coaching her daughter in how to communicate resolve issues with friends instead of getting in the middle.

We want our children to know that they can come to us as a protector and advocate, but the biggest value is in teaching children how to be their own advocates. They can know that we are there for them if they need us, but that we are not going to march into the principal's office for them every time. It also gives your kids a vote of confidence when you stand back and allow them to resolve their own issues.

More tools:

- **EMPATHY:** Try to understand where the other person is coming from. Maybe something is going on at home, in their personal life, or maybe today is just a really bad day. April's mom used to

teach her, “People who love themselves don’t say things like that”, which encouraged empathy towards the offender.

April had an experience with this when she was in high school. There was a girl that was saying really mean things about April. This other girl came and told April these things. April responded by saying, “Well, can you just tell her that she is a really nice person, and that I am so sorry if I have offended her. So could you just go and tell her that for me?”

April continues the story by saying, “This girl was really nice to me, and never said anything else unkind about me. I made a friend through that—because my mom gave me a tool.”

- **AGREE WITH THE OFFENDER:** April’s mom used to teach some lessons on self-esteem to grade school classrooms. She taught the students that when they were caught in a nasty situation to use the following technique:
 1. If someone says something mean about you, and it is true, agree with them.
 2. If someone says something mean about you and it is not true, give them the possibility that it is true. Respond with, “Maybe you are right.”

This way the confrontation is over: Win-win scenario for everyone.

April’s mom taught a church class in which one little girl said to another very poor little girl, “You are a dog.” The other little girl responded, “I know I am! Arf, Arf!” And the whole class laughed, and moved on. April’s mom stayed out of the middle of the rude interaction, and let the kids figure it out. Oftentimes, kids will come up with much better resolutions than we as adults do.

- **WORST CASE SCENARIO:** This technique uses brainstorming with the kids about how to handle the very worst things that could come from this bad interaction. Examples could be: “What if you did say something totally mean about another person, and now they won’t talk to you?” This helps kids see realistically what the repercussions could be, which are a lot less scary than the things they imagine in their heads. This also gives the kids tools and ideas to be able to fix the situation.
- **BBFs:** It is also important to remember that not everyone is going to be your best friend. There are good relationships, and there are some relationships that no matter what you put into it, it may not be the best or healthiest thing for you to be able to be in. Be okay with saying a kind goodbye to certain relationships if they prove to be damaging.

Resolving differences and navigating relationships is a needed skill no matter the age. We as adults often find ourselves in difficult situations with friends, family, etc. Teaching our children, and allowing them to stand on their own in relationships is only going to help them in the long run.

Transcribed by Jessee Stewart