

18 Leading Parenting Experts Reveal Their Best
Secrets For Getting Kids To Cooperate

HOW TO GET YOUR Kids TO LISTEN



FEATURING:
✓ JULIE KING
✓ DR ROSS GREENE
✓ DR HEATHER WITTENBERG
AND 15 MORE INTERNATIONAL
PARENTING EXPERTS...

Copyright notices

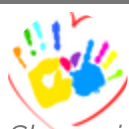
Copyright © 2024 by Sue Meintjes (ExpertParentingAdvice.com)

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical or electronic, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. Requests for permission or further information should be addressed to contact@ExpertParentingAdvice.com.

Published by Mattsum Limited

Mattsum LTD
Suite 14192, 17B Farnham Street
Parnell
Auckland, 1052
New Zealand
+6421 082-13156



Expert Parenting Advice

Share via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

Legal notices

While all attempts have been made to verify information provided in this publication, neither the author nor the Publisher assumes any responsibility for errors, omissions, or contrary interpretation of the subject matter.

The purchaser or reader of this publication assumes responsibility for the use of these materials and information. The author and Publisher assume no responsibility or liability whatsoever on the behalf of any purchaser or reader of these materials. Any perceived slights of specific people or organizations are unintentional.

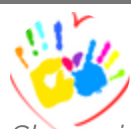
The inclusion of a hypertext link to an external website is not intended as an endorsement of any product or service. All product and company names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective holders. Use of them does not imply any affiliation with or endorsement by them. Information provided by external parties remains the property of those parties and does not imply any affiliation with or endorsement by them.

Privacy policy: ExpertParentingAdvice.com/privacy-terms



Contents

Copyright notices	2
Legal notices	3
Introduction	6
Dr. Rosina McAlpine: The “two-step process” for teaching kids to manage their emotions and solve problems	9
Julie King – How to use playfulness to get your child to cooperate (even when you aren't feeling playful)	23
Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta: How to use “Recasting” to correct your child's behavior in a positive way	37
Dr. Ross Greene – How to solve problems with kids instead of trying to fix their behavior	48
Dr. Heather Wittenberg: How to understand your child, using the “5 personalities of young children”	59
Heather Lindsay - Understand your child's communication style	74
Tia Slightham: How to parent smarter, not harder	87
Karen Thurm Safran: How to use the “Playfulness Mindset” to help your children enjoy cooperating	102
Dr. Paul Jenkins: How “detaching yourself from the outcome” helps your children respond more positively	114
Jennifer Kolari: How use the “C.A.L.M. Technique” to turn your language and words into “medicine” that calms your child and helps them cooperate	125
Sarah Rosensweet: How to create “win-win solutions” when dealing with your children	139
Lisa Smith: The four steps to getting your kids to listen without yelling	152



Judy Arnall: How to calm down your child's brain so that they can listen to what you are saying	165
Anna Seewald - Why listening to your children helps them listen to you	177
Jessie Buttons – How to honor your child's nature	192
Rebecca Rolland - How to use “Curious Waiting” to connect with your child	205
Nathan Wallis - Why kids will listen to you if you listen to them	217
Dr. Beth Trammell - How to use “Pairing” to intentionally reconnect with your child	231
Dr. Jean Clinton - How to understand what it really means when your child is not cooperating	240
Dr. Hilary Mandzik - Why connection leads to cooperation	250
Sandi and Melissa Schwartz: The "One Minute Miracle" technique to get kids excited about cooperation	267
Elisabeth Stitt - How to use anticipation to get your kids to cooperate	281
Shirley Pastiroff - How to cultivate mindfulness for effective parenting	294
Dr. Jenny Michaelson - How to connect with your child when you're looking for cooperation	306
Naama Cameron - Why clear expectations and boundaries helps you be a more flexible parent	319
Conclusion	330
What to do next	332



Introduction

Do you ever wonder how some parents seem to be able to quiet their kids with a word, while your kids scream and fight over each request you make?

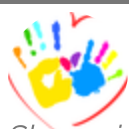
I'm a mom of two kids, and getting them to cooperate has always been a challenge. Just getting them ready in the morning for school and kindergarten was a constant struggle.

One morning, after yet another struggle to get my son to turn off the TV and my daughter to put on her clothes, I sat down on my bed and just cried. I couldn't do this anymore. I dreaded each morning. I hated shouting at my kids. I hated having to conjure up threats or having to promise even more outlandish rewards...just to get them to do what they needed to do.

All I wanted was for my kids to cooperate without me having to resort to yelling or threats. But I realized that I was missing something. I was missing some tools, some information, some mindset, something, which was preventing me from connecting with my children.

That's when I decided I needed help. So, for the next few months, I cajoled, coaxed, and begged the world's leading parenting experts to answer one simple question for me: "What is your best strategy or technique for getting kids to listen?"

The parenting secrets these experts shared with me changed my life. Since starting this project, both my and my husband's



approach to parenting has dramatically changed.

I now know how to speak my child's "language" using playfulness, to make them want to cooperate (see [Julie King](#) and [Karen Thurm Safran](#)).

I now proactively build connection and trust with my children, so that they are much more likely to cooperate with me when I need it most (see [Anna Seewald](#), [Rebecca Rolland](#), [Nathan Wallis](#), and [Dr. Beth Trammell](#)).

I now know how to proactively fill my children's needs for attention and power (see [Tia Slightham](#)), how to use my words and language as "medicine" to calm down my children (see [Jennifer Kolari](#)), and how to help my child feel heard, seen and understood (see [Dr. Heather Wittenberg](#))

I've also become much calmer in my parenting because I now know how to detach myself from the outcome (see [Dr. Paul Jenkins](#)), and how to manage my emotions (see [Dr. Rosina McAlpine](#)).

Now, when I need my children to listen to me, I know that getting their attention first is critical (see [Sarah Rosensweet](#)), and the best ways to get their attention (see [Lisa Smith](#)).

My mindset has also completely changed, as I understand that instead of just getting my kids to blindly cooperate, I need to focus on building their emotional competence and capacity (see

[Dr. Jean Clinton](#)) and help them calm down before trying to ask them to do something (see [Judy Arnall](#)).

Finally, when my children display concerning behavior, I now have tools I can use to correct their behavior without yelling or threatening (see [Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta](#)), and I know how to sit with them and solve their problem, instead of trying to change their behavior (see [Dr. Ross Greene](#)).

I'm sure that you will get as much value out of these interviews as me and my husband have gotten. The advice these world-leading parenting experts shared is based on years of experience, combined with some of the latest advances in neuroscience.

I'd love your feedback. Contact me on Sue@ExpertParentingAdvice.com and let me know of your experiences.

Yours for a better parenting experience

Sue Meintjes

ExpertParentingAdvice.com

P.S. Share this ebook with your friends by sending them this link: www.ExpertParentingAdvice.com/listen-book or share via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: The “two-step process” for teaching kids to manage their emotions and solve problems

In this interview with Dr. Rosina McAlpine, author, family wellbeing expert, and multi-award-winning educator, we talk about her favorite method for helping kids to listen.

What I like most about Dr. Rosina's “two-step process” is that it teaches my kids a skill they can use to resolve difficult situations now, and for the rest of their lives.



“ Parenting is a joyful, loving, wonderful, but hard gig.



Expert Parenting Advice

Share via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

In this interview

- About Dr. Rosina McAlpine
- The two critical steps of Dr. Rosina's "two-step process"
- How to teach your child to acknowledge and manage their emotions
- Emotion managing strategies you can teach your kids
- How to help your children solve their own problems
- How to deal with children not following agreed-upon house rules
- How to use your own commitments to help children keep to their commitments
- Why "natural consequences" work better than punishment at helping your children to self-regulate their behavior
- Why the notion that "self-care is selfish" is harmful, and why taking good care of yourself first helps your entire family
- How to use the "two-step process" to manage your own emotions
- Action steps

About Dr. Rosina McAlpine

Dr. Rosina McAlpine is an author, family wellbeing expert, multi-award-winning educator, and CEO of Win Win Parenting. Win Win Parenting programs support working parents to navigate the work-family interface successfully.

Parents learn practical strategies to manage day-to-day parenting challenges like struggles with technology, emotional outbursts, and keeping calm even in the most volatile situations. Managing



work and home life more confidently means less stress and better performance at work.

Dr. Rosina appears regularly in the media and her innovative evidence-based parenting programs support parents working across a variety of corporations, universities, and government organizations locally and internationally.

Dr. Rosina's facilitation style is positive and passionate with step-by-step practical solutions to support working parents to be their best at home and at work.

You can learn more about Dr. Rosina McAlpine's work at her website, [Win Win Parenting](#)

The two critical steps of Dr. Rosina's "two-step process"

Dr. Rosina's favorite method for helping kids to listen and increase cooperation is a strategy she calls the "two-step process". Using this method means that you first help your child acknowledge and manage their emotions, and then help and guide them to solve the current problem driving their behavior.

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working well for you or your clients right now to get kids to listen and increase cooperation?

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: The one that I really like I call the "two-step process," and I love it because you can use it with a toddler, or you can use it with a teenager. So, it's one technique that you learn, and you teach the kids for life. You don't have to change it.

Step one is managing emotions, and step two is solving the problem.

Let's say the children are fighting over one toy, or if a teenager comes home and starts yelling or slamming doors.

Obviously, we've got a problem, right? And if you've already taught the "two-step process" when a child is little, you can go, "Okay, what's step one?" And we know that step one is managing our emotions.



How to teach your child to acknowledge and manage their emotions

Dr. Rosina says that to help your child manage their emotions, the first step is to acknowledge the emotion and show empathy, and then teach them strategies that they can use to manage their own emotions.

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: Now, when children are little, parents need to support them. So, the first thing is to acknowledge the emotion.

If it's a younger child, you could say "I can see you two are upset with each other. You're fighting over the toy," or "you are angry" or "you've hit your sister or brother."

And if it's an older child or teenager, you go, "I get the feeling," or "Am I right that you're feeling frustrated or angry or upset right now?" And "I'm sorry for that. I get it. It's not nice to feel upset."

That acknowledgement and that empathy is so important.

But then after that, we know that with the "two-step process", step one is "Manage your emotion". So, we need a strategy to calm down.

The younger the child, the more help they need with managing their emotions. And teenagers, of course we know go through hormonal brain changes, so they can be very erratic with their emotions.

So, it's a matter of giving strategies in advance for what to do to manage emotions.

Emotion managing strategies you can teach your kids

Dr. Rosina shares two simple strategies you can teach to your children to help them calm down and manage their emotions.

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: One of my favorite emotion managing strategies for little kids is to imagine that you have a rose in one hand, and then a candle in the other hand. So, you smell the rose, you breathe in deeply, and then you blow out the candle.

And with young children, it works very well because it's distracting them from what's going on. They're smelling the rose; they're blowing out the candle. And little by little, that fight-or-flight system is coming down.

With older children you might say, "You know what? What do you want to do? What could you do right now?" Asking the question, "What could you do right now to feel better?"

And you can suggest strategies like have a glass of water, lie on your bed, listen to music, go for a walk around the block, take a few deep breaths. Whatever doesn't trigger the child.

So, step one is to calm down and manage your emotions. And once you've got that, then we're in a fantastic position to problem

solve. That's when we can look at the issue more objectively and more clearly.

How to help your children solve their own problems

Once you have helped your child calm down, Dr. Rosina says that you should help them think of ideas to solve the problem. Use questions that lead them to solving their own problem.

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: This is where I'd make the distinction between talking about a problem and looking for a solution. Big difference. If you keep talking about "I'm being bullied at school and I don't really like it" and "I'm getting bullied by this person," and we just keep talking about the same problem we're never going to find the solution.

So, start by understanding the issue.

"Okay, so what's exactly happening?" "Alright, I'm being called names." "Okay. And how is that making you feel? And what would you like to do about that?"

We've got some ideas that we can put down on paper. Maybe, "Would you like us to go up to the school and talk?" If that's an option, then maybe we can do that, if that's not an option, all right, "What would you do inside yourself? How could you manage this if someone's being negative to you?" or "Do you have allies at school where you could go and together you could say

something to the person who's bullying you? What are the strategies that we can put into place?"

I really love this technique because it's a never-ending source of ways in which a young child, primary school, high school, or beyond can overcome issues.

How to deal with children not following agreed-upon house rules

Dr. Rosina shares how to use the "two-step process" to help your children keep to agreements and house rules.

Sue Meintjes: This will work great for "in-the-moment" cooperation. But will this technique work for house rules, for example when children need to stay out of the kitchen, or do housework?

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: We had this conversation yesterday with our son about his agreement about doing his work.

Now, some days they are just not going to feel like it. And that's okay. If there's an exception, we have to all understand that at times it's just going to be not that day, right?

But if that happens two days in a row, let's say, I will sit down and go, "Okay, we're at the problem solve stage again."

So, "We've made an agreement. You said, yes, you're going to empty the garbage, and you said, yes, you're going to do your homework." Whatever the commitment was. "And right now, you

are not doing it. What do we need to change here? What do we need to do to get that happening again? Do we need a check list? Do you want to swap this job?"

So, it's about problem solving.

How to use your own commitments to help children keep to their commitments

Dr. Rosina shares how she demonstrates to her children how keeping to her own commitments helps the family, and how to use that to encourage children to keep to their commitments.

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: How do we go forward now? Oftentimes what will really help with our son and other parents that I work with is reminding the children that you've made lots of commitments to them that you are keeping as well.

Let's say for example, you agree to take your children to the zoo, or you agree to take them for a driving lesson, and then you say to them, "Now I've made this commitment to you. How would you feel now if I went, 'Yeah, I don't feel like it, I don't want to do that now'?" You might go, "It's fine if I do it once, but what if I did it day in, day out? Well, you never got to drive, or you never got to go to the zoo. How would you feel about that?"

It's about showing that you've made a commitment and that commitment is an important part of collaborating with the family. Just like I've made a commitment to you and if I change that, it

hurts you. You don't like it. And it's the same for me. If you change that, it hurts me, and it hurts our family.

And oftentimes I'll also put in, "And if you don't do it, who do you think needs to do it then? Who's going to do it?" Right? So, it's about really helping them understand the implications or consequences of actions. Problem-solve it together.

Why "natural consequences" work better than punishment at helping your children to self-regulate their behavior

Why Dr. Rosina prefers natural consequences instead of punishment, and why consequences that follow naturally from the bad behavior work better than unrelated consequences or punishment.

Sue Meintjes: Do you ever recommend consequences to help kids to listen? Do you think consequences are important?

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: That's a tricky one. I don't recommend anything to any parent. And I know you'll say, "But you are a parenting expert. You're a parenting educator. What does that even mean?" But that's how I start every session: I'm here to give you ideas, strategies, and research information. Then you have to put that into practice in your home.

Now, personally, I love natural consequences. Natural consequences would be like, for example, many people have a rule that you don't eat in the bedroom, or you don't drink in the

bedroom. Because if you drop that food or drop that drink, you then have a big mess in the bedroom, not in the lounge room or the kitchen area where you are eating, right? And so, the natural consequence is that you've got to go clean that up. Like you broke the rule, you've made a mess, and now you need to clean that up.

So that's a natural kind of consequence, right? And I like those. I like ones that follow naturally.

Personally, and this is a personal opinion, not a recommendation, I don't like consequences that have nothing to do with what is going on. So, for example, if a child didn't take the garbage bin out and then you said, "Okay, I'm not going to give you technology for a month because you are not doing your jobs."

For me that feels like a punishment, rather than a consequence. So, I prefer things that follow naturally. For example, something that would follow naturally is, "Until your homework is completed, or the garbage is taken out, other activities are off the table."

That's like a natural consequence of, "We do this, then we do this, and then we do that."

I'm not crazy about punishment, but I like natural consequences that flow naturally so that children don't feel like they're being punished and they're learning self-regulation. They're learning the natural consequences of actions and why we make those decisions. I think that's important.

Why the notion that “self-care is selfish” is harmful, and why taking good care of yourself first helps your entire family

Dr. Rosina shares why your own self-care is critical to the happiness of your entire family, and how you can use self-care to become a kinder and empathic parent.

Sue Meintjes: Is there anything else that you think parents need to know about this “two-step process”? Is there anything else you want them to know or to keep in mind?

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: One of the things that I think is the most important for parents is self-care. And the reason why I say that is, the more joy, the more happiness, the more health a parent has, the kinder, more empathic, the more loving, the more patient the parent is.

We've got to get rid of this notion that self-care is selfish. Because in fact, when I take care of myself, I am the best version of myself, for me, for my family, for my community, for my partner, if I have one, for my workplace.

So, the two-step process only works if the parent is in a good way and managing emotions as well.

I would say, take care of yourself, so that you can be at your best and regulating your emotions, because we know that when we lose it, when we're angry, when we're frustrated, when we're



unkind, when we're not empathic, that's when everything goes pear shaped.

How to use the “two-step process” to manage your own emotions

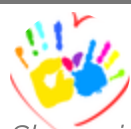
Dr. Rosina's “two-step process” is not just for helping children manage their emotions...you can also use it for your own self-care.

Sue Meintjes: It seems that we can also use the “two-step process” ourselves to feel better? How do you recommend using this method to manage our own emotions?

Dr. Rosina McAlpine: You acknowledge the emotions. “Yes. This is hard. Toddlers are still fighting. My child will not do their homework.” We have to acknowledge this is hard. Yep. It's hard.

But what am I going to do about it? Well, I'm going to go have a glass of water. I'm going to go for a walk. I'm going to lie in my bed. I'm going to scream into my pillow. I'm going to do whatever I need to do to get myself on an even keel so that we can resolve this and solve this problem.

But is it easy? No. I'd say to any parent on the planet, being a parent myself and working with thousands and thousands and thousands of parents over many years, “Parenting is a joyful, loving, wonderful, but hard gig.”



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Next time your kids are upset or misbehaving, first acknowledge their emotion, then help them solve the problem
- Teach your children the "Rose and Candle" breathing technique and remind them to use it to calm down
- Instead of solving your child's problem for them, try to ask them questions that lead them to solving their own problem
- Think of at least one way that you can take care of yourself by putting your needs first
- Next time you are upset, first acknowledge and accept your own emotions, then use the "Rose and Candle" technique
- Learn more about Dr. Rosina McAlpine's work at her website, [Win Win Parenting](#)



Julie King – How to use playfulness to get your child to cooperate (even when you aren't feeling playful)

In this interview with Julie King, co-author of two best-selling books: "How To Talk So LITTLE Kids Will Listen" and "How To Talk When Kids Won't Listen", she shares how to use playfulness to get your kids to cooperate.

Julie also shares how to use playfulness even when you aren't feeling playful, and how to manage your own negative emotions.



“ I don't know a single parent who doesn't at some point get very frustrated and angry with their children. It's just normal. The question is, 'What do we do with that feeling?' ”



In this interview

- About Julie King
- Why telling your kids what they need to do creates resistance (and what to do instead)
- A simple technique to use “playfulness” to get your kids to cooperate
- Why “playfulness” is such a powerful technique to increase cooperation
- The most helpful thing to do when your child is heading towards a tantrum
- How to manage your own negative emotions when your children start behaving badly
- Why you should avoid the word “you” when expressing your feelings...and what to say instead
- Where to find more strategies to get your child to cooperate without having to order them around
- Action steps

About Julie King

Julie King is the author, with Joanna Faber, of two best-selling books: *How To Talk So LITTLE Kids Will Listen: A Survival Guide to Life with Children Ages 2-7*, which has been translated into 28 languages world-wide, and their new book, *How To Talk When Kids Won't Listen: Whining, Fighting, Meltdowns, Defiance, and Other Challenges of Childhood*, currently being translated into 17 languages.



Julie and Joanna also collaborated on the companion app *HOW TO TALK: Parenting Tips in Your Pocket*, and the app *Parenting Hero*.

Julie leads workshops online, consults with parents of children ages two to teens by phone and video, and speaks publicly to schools, businesses, and parent groups across the United States and internationally. She received her AB from Princeton University and a JD from Yale Law School.

Julie and her husband live in the San Francisco Bay Area in California, where they are visited now and then by their three grown children. Visit her at JulieKing.org, on [Facebook: faberandking](#), and on Instagram: [@howtotalk.forparents](#).

Special offer: Use code **NewZ10** to save USD\$10 off your first private consultation or any 4-week workshop offered by Julie King.

Why telling your kids what they need to do creates resistance (and what to do instead)

Julie King shares why directly telling your children what to do can often make getting cooperation more difficult.

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working well for you or your clients, for getting kids to listen, or increasing the chances of them cooperating?

Julie King: Let me start by saying that it often seems like the most efficient way to get a child to do something is to tell them directly, "Put your shoes on," "Get in the car," "Leave the cat alone." But the problem is that when we tell them something to do directly, we're working against ourselves, because we create resistance.

Kids don't like to be told what to do. In fact, people don't like to be told what to do.

If you think about your own life, and if you have a partner who, when you come home, says to you, "Oh, good, your home, hang up your coat, put away your things, I need you to set the table. Did I say to read the newspaper? Uh-uh, don't check your email right now. Put that phone down!" You would immediately feel resistance, right? Like, "Wait a second, why is this person talking to me this way?" And our kids have the very same reaction.



So, the challenge for us as parents is to figure out how we can make it more likely that our kids will want to do what we want them to do, without creating more resistance.

A simple technique to use “playfulness” to get your kids to cooperate

Julie shares her favorite technique to get kids to cooperate, and an easy technique to be playful even when you feel you aren't “the playful type”.

Julie King: So, you asked me for one of my top favorite strategies for little kids. My favorite strategy is to be playful.

Often when I say that people think, “Ugh, I'm not really the playful type. It takes so much energy; I don't even know what to do.” So, in our books, we have a lot of ideas for how to be playful, but I'm going to share with you one of my favorites, which is to make an inanimate object talk.

So, let's say you're trying to get your child to put her shoes on.

Instead of doing the nagging, “Honey, don't you run away from me! Come back here! We have to get your shoes on right now!” You can instead pick up the shoes and make them talk. “I feel so empty and lonely. I need a foot in me.”

Suddenly, your little child who had no interest in shoes a minute ago, will be coming over and sticking her feet in the shoes and probably talking to them as well. “Oh, here shoes. Here we go. I'll

warm you up. Here's my foot." So that's one of my favorite strategies for getting little kids to cooperate.

And when we say we want kids to listen, what we really mean is we want them to do what we need them to do. To behave. So that is my favorite strategy.

Why “playfulness” is such a powerful technique to increase cooperation

Here's how being playful allows you to avoid creating resistance and tantrums, making it much easier for your children to cooperate.

Sue Meintjes: That sounds very useful, I love simple ways to make things more playful. Do you think this works because it calms down your child? Why is this so useful?

Julie King: It can calm their nervous system. It doesn't create the resistance that ordering them around can create. Kids love to play. That's sort of their language, right? That's what they want to do and that's how they learn.

If you have a child who's engaged in some activity and you need them to stop, and to do what you need them to do, you have to understand that they don't have a lot of motivation and they don't yet have a lot of inner control.

They don't have a lot of self-discipline to say, “Well, I really want to be playing, but I really should stop because it's time for us to go and my mother is telling me I need to get my shoes on. I really

should do that." They're focused on what they're interested in and what they're doing.

If we can get them focused on another activity that to them feels like play, then we don't develop that resistance where they start to dysregulate and cry and scream and say, "No, and you can't make me!" We're trying to avoid that altogether.

If we can catch them before they're resistant, then we just have a lot less work to do to get them to do what we need them to do.

The most helpful thing to do when your child is heading towards a tantrum

Here Julie shares why reassurance, logic, and explanation won't help prevent a tantrum, and what to do instead. She also shares a simple trick to help children transition from what they are currently doing, to what you want them to do.

Sue Meintjes: That makes sense. How do we use this attitude of playfulness when our child is starting to move into negative emotions, like heading towards a tantrum?

Julie King: Well, it might seem counterintuitive. Let's say they're tantruming because they say, "No, I want to finish making my block tower." Again, it might seem that the easiest way to calm them is to say, "It's okay. It's okay. Don't worry. You're going to get to play later."



Instead, rather than trying to get them to not feel what they feel, the most helpful thing we can do is to acknowledge how they do feel. "Oh, it's so frustrating when you're in the middle of making a tower and it's time to leave. I wish we could stop time so you could finish."

So, what am I doing there? I'm putting into words how she's feeling. I'm saying, "You wish that we could stay." Then I'm putting wishes into fantasy, because of course I can't actually stop time, but "I wish I could, and then you could finish what you wanted to do."

So that's the strategy that I would use if I saw a child heading into a tantrum, because that can settle them before they get into a rage, before they get into that tantruming state. Once they're in it, it's very hard to connect with them because then they can't hear a thing that you say. They're screaming, they're loud, they're kicking.

It's like they're heading towards the cliff of a tantrum. And if you notice it's happening, rather than trying to reassure them, which is sometimes our natural inclination, rather than saying, "It's okay. It's okay. It's not such a big deal. You can play with it later." All this reassurance and logic and explanation just goes over their head. They don't want to hear it. They don't hear it, they don't listen. It doesn't help them calm down. They keep heading towards that tantrum cliff. Whereas if you say, "Ugh, you're in the middle of it. You don't want to hear *it's time to go*. This is so hard" it can help them calm down, rather than escalating into a tantrum.

Now, some kids, after we say that, will need some help transitioning into the “moving-on” stage. So, after we have acknowledged that they wish they could continue to build this block tower, we might say, “Let me write it down in the calendar so I remember when we come back that that’s what you wanted to do.”

How to manage your own negative emotions when your children start behaving badly

Julie talks about what to do to manage your own negative emotions and how to let them out in a positive manner that not only calms you down, but also models to your children how to manage their own emotions positively.

Sue Meintjes: That makes sense! How would you deal with your own negative emotions? For example, when my daughter starts going into a tantrum state, I also start getting emotional and having strong feelings.

Julie King: The hardest part is to notice that we’re going to that place. I’ll speak for myself. When my kids were younger, I would notice I was going to that place where I felt like I wanted to yell... let’s just say...very unhelpful things.

I wanted to say some loud, hurtful things to my kids when I was really frustrated. One of the things that helped me was to say, “I am so frustrated! I need a break,” and I would go into the bathroom, or sometimes I would go into my closet, which I share

with my husband. I would step into the closet and close the door so the kids couldn't get in, and then I could say some of the nasty things that I wanted to say to them so they wouldn't actually hear it.

So, the first step is to notice that you're going to that rageful place. Sometimes you feel it in your stomach. Sometimes I just felt like my body was tense and I felt like I had this volcano inside me that wanted to erupt.

And I knew when that happened, that saying the things that I felt like saying was going to feel good in the moment, but it was not going to feel good in the long run. So, I could catch myself when I had that feeling and do something for myself.

At times I couldn't even go into another space. Sometimes I couldn't go step into the bathroom or step into the closet because of circumstances or the ages of the kids. And sometimes for me it was helpful for me to just say out loud, "I AM SO FRUSTRATED!"

What was I doing there?

I was talking about my own feelings, which is also what we do for our kids when they're having strong feelings. We put into words how they're feeling.

Sometimes I needed to do it for myself. "I am so frustrated! I hate it when we're late! I had everything together, and then nobody's putting their shoes on, and I'm worried about missing the appointment and I just can't stand this. I get so frustrated. I don't

know what to do with myself." Maybe I'd stomp my feet a bit. Talking about my feelings, doing something physical... That often helped me so that I didn't say something hurtful.

And, it has the side benefit of modeling for our children what they can do when they're feeling very angry and frustrated. Because those feelings don't just go away. If we say to ourselves, "Well, I'm going to white knuckle it and not say anything" the feelings still brew inside us. We are better off figuring out a way to let it out without doing any harm.

Why you should avoid the word "you" when expressing your feelings...and what to say instead

How to express your frustrations and feelings, without putting your kids on the defensive.

Sue Meintjes: I love the idea of expressing how your child is making you feel, instead of lashing out at your children. It is a useful concept and tool.

Julie King: Yeah. And the more that you can avoid saying that word "you", the less likely they will feel defensive. Because if I say to you, "I feel frustrated when you don't cooperate..." Well, you're going to tell me why you can't do what I want you to do. But if I just express my feelings and they're my feelings, well nobody can argue with my feelings.

When I say, "I just get so frustrated when I say it's time to go and I don't see it happen," I'm avoiding the whole, "You don't do this, and

how many times do I have to tell you.”

But I also can't just pretend that I'm feeling calm when I'm not. I can pretend a little, if I'm just mildly irritated, but when I'm feeling in a rage, when I'm just feeling so super frustrated, I need to be able to express it or take care of myself somehow.

I don't know a single parent who doesn't at some point get very frustrated and angry with their children. It's just normal. The question is, “What do we do with that feeling? How do we manage it ourselves?” We don't want our children to start attacking other kids when they get angry, either physically or verbally.

Using I-statements, starting with the word “I”, like “I'm feeling so frustrated,” is much more helpful than attacking a child, because they are watching and learning from us all the time.

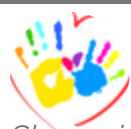
Where to find more strategies to get your child to cooperate without having to order them around

Sue Meintjes: That's helpful. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Julie King: I just want to say that I've given you a few strategies, but I have so many more in our books. I talked about being playful, but there are so many other ways to make it more likely that a child will choose to do what you want them to do without ordering them around.

Here's a challenge for your readers: think about how often you tell a child directly what you need them to do and try being playful, or one of the other eight strategies we have in our book for not telling them directly and see what happens.

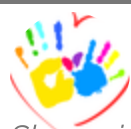
Test it out and then contact me. Write to me! I love getting emails from parents who tell me what they've tried and what worked or what didn't work.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Next time you want your kid to do something you think they won't want to do, instead of asking them directly, try making an inanimate object talk
- Think of some more ideas how you can incorporate playfulness into your interaction with your kids
- When you are angry or frustrated with your kids, try to tell them how you feel, using "I-statements", without using the word "you"
- When you notice your child heading into a tantrum, try helping them identify their feelings and granting them their wish in fantasy
- Identify a "special place" where you can go to get away from your children when you become upset or frustrated with them
- Visit Julie's website at JulieKing.org, or follow her on [Facebook: faberandking](https://www.facebook.com/faberandking), and on Instagram: [@howtotalkforparents](https://www.instagram.com/howtotalkforparents).



Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta: How to use “Recasting” to correct your child’s behavior in a positive way

In this interview with Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta, we talk about a method she calls “Re-casting” that you can use to correct your child’s behavior, without resorting to threats, consequences, or punishment.

I have found this “Re-casting” technique extremely useful in helping my kids to stop shouting commands at me over dinner (“Water!”, “Thirsty!”).



“It’s usually more about the parent than it is about the child.”



In this interview

- About Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta
- How to use “re-casting” to correct your child's behavior in a positive way
- How to deal with bad behavior without making your child feel bad
- How “re-casting” allows you to move away from nagging, and helps improve your relationship with your child
- How to use the “Five P's” method to convince your child to cooperate
- How to use “re-casting” to remind your child to do what they are supposed to do
- What to do instead of threats or consequences to get your child to cooperate
- Why your tone of voice can make a big difference in your child's behavior...and how to get the correct tone of voice to get them to cooperate
- Action steps

About Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta

Dr. Chelsey's expertise lies in educational neuroscience, social emotional learning, educational equity, and building calm, cooperative family relationships.

She has taught and researched at The University of British Columbia, Stanford University, and Mills College.

Dr. Chelsey's sensitivity to child development, deep knowledge in the brain and nervous system and sensitivity to empathic



relationships enable her to work with families to support cooperation - no matter the challenge.

A mother to three children, she brings both deep professional expertise and compassion from her own parenting journey to bear in her work with families.

You can [find more about Dr. Chelsey's courses or coaching at her website here.](#)



How to use “re-casting” to correct your child's behavior in a positive way

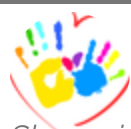
Dr. Chelsey shares a method she calls “re-casting”, which is a way to correct your child in a positive manner. I've started using this technique with my children when they yell out “Water!” at the dinner table, instead of asking nicely. It allows me to correct them without having to nag or scold.

Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta: The one that I want to talk to you about today is called Recasting.

Recasting is to restate for your child what they could have said that would've been correct. With the intention that they repeat it back to you.

So, say you are having dinner, and you're maybe having milk, and your child says, “Give me some milk.” Like kind of in a yucky and inappropriate way.

Instead of saying “That's not how we talk in our family”, or “You need to ask nicely” or anything like that, I'm just going to say to that child, “Milk, please.” And my intention is that the child repeats back “Milk, please.” And they might not get it a hundred percent, but I'm just looking for a little bit of improvement.



How to deal with bad behavior without making your child feel bad

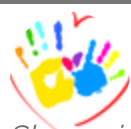
Dr. Chelsey shares how using the “re-casting” technique allows you to correct your child's behavior without paying negative attention to it, and without making your child feel bad.

Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta: What I'm doing is I'm giving them the “pro-social behavior”. Pro-social just means what they should do instead of what they shouldn't do. I'm giving them the pro-social and it's such a vote of confidence. It's to say, “I assume that if you knew what to say correctly, you would do it. So, I'm just going to give it to you. I'm not paying any attention to the yucky thing that has just happened.”

What happens for a lot of us is our kids do something that's rude, or frustrating, or said in the wrong way, and we pay a lot of negative attention to it. And it feels bad for the parent, and it feels bad for the child, and it doesn't teach the child what they are supposed to do.

It's the same thing if I've got two kids fighting over a toy, and one of them says something nasty to the other one about the toy.

I'm going to recast that. “I'd like to be next.” And then I'm going to help that child wait.



How “re-casting” allows you to move away from nagging, and helps improve your relationship with your child

If you are like me, then you are probably tired of constantly nagging your kids. And your kids are also probably tired of it! Dr. Chelsey shares how “re-casting” is an alternative to nagging that does not break down your relationship with your child.

Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta: So recasting is a strategy that works for little ones and works for our big kids. It works because it helps us stay away from nagging, or from overcorrection. And nagging just breaks the relationship between the parent and the child, which I am just so careful about.

And it also gives us the immediate opportunity for praise. As soon as I say, “Oh, I can be next,” and then my child says, “I’ll be next,” then I get to praise them for waiting. Or I say, “Milk please,” and the kid says, “Milk, please,” then I’m going to go, “Wow, you did it. You got it.”

So, it just feels like: “Here’s the thing, and I know that you can do it. And so, I’m just going to give it to you, because you’re a good kid, and you’re going to figure this out, and we’re going to help each other do it.”



How to use the “Five P’s” method to convince your child to cooperate

Dr. Chelsey recommends checking the “Five P’s” when children are not cooperating, to ensure that your message has the best chance of being accepted by your kids. The Five P’s are: Praise, Positive language, Position, Pacing, and Planning.

Sue Meintjes: How can you use “recasting” when your child does not want to cooperate? For example, my child keeps delaying getting ready for school.

Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta: If I have a child who is delaying leaving for school, I can use recasting if they’re not doing the right thing yet. And I’m also going to make sure that I check my five P’s. So, the five P’s are: praise and presence, positive language and framing, position, pacing, and planning.

And so, if my kid is not getting out the door, I’m going to make sure that I’m not giving directions from across the room. I’m getting into close physical proximity. So, within an arms distance before I give a direction.

I’m going to ensure that my language is positive. That is what recasting will give you: a positive pro-social language.

I’m also going to ensure that I’m breaking things down, so I’m using pacing to move slowly through whatever we’re moving through.



And then I'm making a plan with my child to move a little bit more easily in the future. Oftentimes what happens with our kids in those moments is that there's some resistance, the child says, "I don't want to do that." And those are the kinds of moments that I also use recasting.

How to use "re-casting" to remind your child to do what they are supposed to do

"Re-casting" is not just useful for correcting what your child says, but also for correcting their behavior. Here Dr. Chelsey shares how you can use it to help your child get ready for school.

Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta: So, if we're getting ready for school, and I've told my child, "I need you to fill your water bottle up," and they have not done it, or not responded. I'm going to go over to them. I'm going to put my hand on that kid's shoulder, and I'm going to hand them the water bottle, and I'm going to say, "Oh, I'll get it." And my intention is that my child says, "Okay, I'll go do it," and then I'm going to walk with them over to the fridge to get the water.

So, we want to think about some sort of global supports for our kids, especially in these moments of transition where you're trying to get out the door, or trying to go somewhere, and your child is getting locked in the hubbub of the mornings. We've all been there; those mornings are tough.



What to do instead of threats or consequences to get your child to cooperate

I hate threatening my kids or having to come up with consequences for bad behavior. Dr. Chelsey shares how you can change your thinking to understand why your child is not behaving, and how you can help change their environment to make cooperation easier.

Sue Meintjes: It sounds like this is about keeping in a positive state, just guiding your child while staying positive.

Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta: It is to be positive, and you can hold just as firm of a boundary with positive language as you can with threats, or with consequences, or anything like that.

So, I want to make sure that I'm always asking "What does this child need in order to move more easily through the morning? What kinds of experiences do they need?"

Not, "What kinds of consequences do they need to get out the door?" I'm just asking myself "Why this?", and "Why right now?", and "What do they actually need?" Do they need the home to be quieter? Do they need me to be closer? Do they need to do some of the getting ready in the evening? Do they need a picture board?

I just want to flip the frame, so it's not like "They're not listening." It's like, "Oh, we're going to figure this out, but we might need to

switch things up a little bit." It's usually more about the parent than it is about the child.

Why your tone of voice can make a big difference in your child's behavior...and how to get the correct tone of voice to get them to cooperate

It is easy to forget that is not just what you say but also how you say it that determines how your child will react. So, this reminder from Dr. Chelsey about how your tone of voice can affect your child is critical to remember if you want your kids to cooperate and listen.

Sue Meintjes: That's extremely helpful, thanks. Is there anything else that parents need to know about this approach?

Dr. Chelsey Hauge-Zavaleta: There are so many things that are important here. I think the biggest one is that our kids are co-regulating with us. And so, a good state of regulation is flexibility with stability. That is a child who can manage getting out in the morning, even if it's kind of bumpy. A child who becomes dysregulated can't manage that.

And all our kids are hardwired to listen to and respond to parent tone. And so, I always want to encourage parents to really consider the way their tone affects a child's ability to cooperate. And when you say something to a child with a lot of negative tone they're not going to cooperate.

Whether you're thinking about recasting, or you're thinking about priming your child, or you're thinking about offering high quality

praise to your child, if you have negative tone in your voice, you can break the connection. And most of us have a lot of harsh tone in our voices in the morning.

Taking a minute to take care of ourselves, so that we can meet our children with a super warm, engaged tone is going to help them cooperate. It's going to help them listen to us. They don't want to listen to a parent who's angry and frustrated and drilling out consequences or demands.

Action steps

- Next time your child yells out a command in a rude way, “re-cast” it into a polite request and wait for them to say it again
- Instead of scolding your child for bad behavior, try “re-casting” the behavior by showing them how to behave instead
- When you catch yourself thinking about punishment or consequences, instead try thinking of what experiences your child needs to do what you want them to do (e.g., do they need less distractions, or more reminders)
- Record yourself when talking to your kids, then review and make note of your tone of voice
- [Find more about Dr. Chelsey's courses or coaching at her website here](#)



Dr. Ross Greene – How to solve problems with kids instead of trying to fix their behavior

*In this interview with Dr. Ross Greene, clinical psychologist and best-selling author of *Raising Human Beings* and *The Explosive Child*, Dr. Greene introduces his Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) model that he developed to help children with concerning behaviors.*

Dr. Greene's CPS system is different because it focuses on solving problems with kids rather than modifying their behavior.



“ I find that if I'm interested in having kids listen to where I'm coming from, I need to listen to where they're coming from first.



In this interview

- About Dr. Ross Greene
- Why you need to listen to your child's concerns instead of asking them about their behavior
- What to do when your young child is having trouble meeting your expectations
- The best time to discuss unmet expectations with your child (and when not to have these conversations)
- Why punishment or "consequences" don't work
- How lagging skills can explain bad behavior, and how to teach your child these skills
- The most important parenting mentality
- Action steps

About Dr. Ross Greene

Ross W. Greene, Ph.D., is the New York Times bestselling author of the influential books *The Explosive Child*, *Lost at School*, *Lost and Found*, and *Raising Human Beings*.

He is the originator of the model of care described in those books, now called *Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS)*.

Dr. Greene was on the faculty at Harvard Medical School for over 20 years and is now founding director of the non-profit Lives in the Balance, which provides a vast array of free, web-based resources on the CPS model.

He has appeared in a wide range of media, including The Oprah Show, Good Morning America, The Morning Show, National Public



Radio, Mother Jones magazine, The Atlantic, The Washington Post, The Chicago Tribune, and the Boston Globe. Dr. Greene lectures and consults widely throughout the world and lives in Portland, Maine.

You can [find more about Dr. Ross Greene at his website](#).



Why you need to listen to your child's concerns instead of asking them about their behavior

Dr. Greene explains why he focuses on solving problems with kids, rather than trying to modify their behavior using threats or rewards.

Sue Meintjes: Thanks for joining me today. Can you please tell us about yourself?

Dr. Ross Greene: Well, I'm a clinical psychologist. I was trained as a behaviorist, but don't really do much of what I was trained to do as a behaviorist anymore.

And I developed a model of care called Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) that is quite different than the way I was trained.

It focuses on solving problems with kids rather than modifying their behavior. It doesn't focus on compliance, it doesn't focus on coercion, it doesn't really focus on the behavior at all. Even though the research tells us that when you're solving problems collaboratively with kids, their behavior improves every bit as much as it would have if all you were focused on was their behavior.

So that's what I've been working on for the last 35 years.

Sue Meintjes: I've been reading your books and love that approach. So, what is your favorite technique or strategy for getting kids to listen and cooperate?

Dr. Ross Greene: Ah, my goal is not to get them to listen or to increase cooperation.

I find that if I'm interested in having kids listen to where I'm coming from, I need to listen to where they're coming from first. So, the person doing the listening initially is me, and what I'm listening to is their concerns about what's making it hard for them to meet a particular expectation.

Notice I'm not asking them why they're exhibiting a particular behavior. That is a completely different question that I don't ask. It's what's making it hard for them to meet a particular expectation. And then I'm listening and I'm asking good questions.

Then kids are more likely to hear my concerns about why it's important that that expectation be met, and then we can work together on solving the problem in a way that addresses the concerns of both parties.

And that is my favorite thing to do with kids with whom I'm working.

What to do when your young child is having trouble meeting your expectations

Dr. Greene shares how to talk to your child when they are having a recurring problem meeting one of your expectations (like sitting at table during dinner).



Sue Meintjes: What are the practical steps that we can take to help our kids meet these expectations? How can we as parents help our kids meet these unmet expectations?

Dr. Ross Greene: Well, we can ask them what's hard about meeting the expectation, and then we often hear things we didn't know anything about. Then it also becomes clear why these solutions we've been imposing wouldn't address what's really getting in the kids' way.

Sue Meintjes: That makes sense. We have this situation with our 4-year-old daughter, who doesn't want to sit down for dinner. Last night she ended up not eating her dinner because she didn't want to sit down, and it turned into a big emotional conflict between us and her.

Dr. Ross Greene: Quite simply, the first thing I would think about is "Do you think she's capable of sitting on her chair during dinner?"

If your answer is no, then my next question would be "Then why do you have that expectation?"

If your answer is yes, then I would find a time for you and your daughter to sit down and for you to talk with her and learn about what's hard for her about meeting a particular expectation, namely sitting at the table during dinner.

That's what you do.

The best time to discuss unmet expectations with your child (and when not to have these conversations)

If you think about it, many of the problems our children have are recurring and predictable. Here Dr. Greene shares why these problems should be identified and solved proactively.

Sue Meintjes: And this discussion has to happen when she is calm, not while the problem is occurring?

Dr. Ross Greene: Absolutely. Otherwise, you're in the heat of the moment and that's not going to go as well.

Sue Meintjes: Ok. So, it is all about looking at why our children are having difficulty meeting the expectations, and then how we can collaboratively solve these problems along with our children?

Dr. Ross Greene: You got it.

Sue Meintjes: Do you have tips for what parents can do to make this easier, especially in the heat of the moment when emotions are running high?

Dr. Ross Greene: Well, the best thing you can do is not have these conversations in the heat of the moment. That's when emotions are running high.

One of the things we're doing in this model is we're having parents make a list of every expectation a child is having difficulty reliably meeting. And that makes those problems predictable. And that means that those problems can be solved proactively. And that

means that we're very good at helping parents get out of the heat of the moment.

If it does happen, we might say something like "Oops. Looks like there's something going on that I didn't know about. Tell me what's going on."

You can do it in the heat of the moment, it's just not ideal. Our goal is to get people out of the heat of the moment.

Why punishment or "consequences" don't work

Sue Meintjes: What do you think about consequences? For example, part of our problem last night was that we have a rule that if you don't sit in your chair, you don't get dessert. But it feels like that is making the situation worse instead of better.

Dr. Ross Greene: Well, that that's because consequences don't solve problems. They only modify behavior, and you've just heard what I would suggest instead of doing that.

How lagging skills can explain bad behavior, and how to teach your child these skills

Why collaboratively and proactively solving problems with your child naturally teaches them the skills that they are lacking (which are often the ones causing the concerning behavior in the first place).



Sue Meintjes: I really like that, and think it is a very important message. In your books, you talk about why it is important to identify lagging skills in your children. Can you share how that is important in terms of what we have spoken about?

Dr. Ross Greene: Lagging skills explain why a kid is responding so poorly to problems and frustrations. So, it's important to identify a kid's lagging skills too.

The general, global skills that these kids are lacking are in the realms of flexibility/adaptability, frustration tolerance, problem solving, and emotion regulation.

Sue Meintjes: Can children learn those skills, or is it rather a matter of brain development and maturity?

Dr. Ross Greene: I think that those skills can be improved, yes. Things can always be better.

But when you are solving problems collaboratively and proactively with kids, those skills are being practiced, modeled, and enhanced. So, you may actually not need to do any additional skills training beyond solving problems collaboratively and proactively.

All of that is in the context of solving problems collaboratively and proactively.

The most important parenting mentality

Sue Meintjes: Before we wrap-up, is there anything else that you want to share with parents?

Dr. Ross Greene: Sure. The mentality of the CPS model is “kids do well if they can.” That is very different than “kids do well if they want to.”

If this kid could do well, this kid would do well. And that's the most important mentality for parents and other caregivers to have.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Try identifying one recurring concern you have with your child, then re-frame that as a problem that your child needs help solving.
- Talk to your child about the problem and ask them about their concerns regarding the situation. Then share your concerns and ask them how they think you can solve the problem.
- Make a list of the expectations you have that your child is struggling to meet, then repeat the problem-solving process for each one that you deem important.
- When your child misbehaves, try thinking “they are doing the best they can”, instead of taking offence.
- [Find more about Dr. Ross Greene's CPS model at his website.](#)



Dr. Heather Wittenberg: How to understand your child, using the “5 personalities of young children”

In this interview with Dr. Heather Wittenberg, a practicing psychologist, specializing in the development of babies, toddlers, and preschoolers, and a nationally known parenting writer, speaker, and television guest expert, we talk about how to really understand why your children act the way they do.

Dr. Heather also teaches a model of five different personalities that you can use to understand your child's behavior.



“ When children feel that they're heard, seen, and appreciated, they're much more likely to go along with you, even if they don't really want to.



In this interview

- About Dr. Heather Wittenberg
- Where to start to help your child feel heard, seen and understood
- Why there is no “one-size-fits-all” parenting magic trick that works for all children
- How to fit your parenting approach to your child's unique temperament
- The five most common Personalities of Young Children: which of these fit your child?
- How to better understand your strong-willed child
- Why your young children just won't stay out of the kitchen...and what to do instead of yelling or threatening
- Why you need to be knowledgeable about what you can expect from your child at their current age
- Action steps

About Dr. Heather Wittenberg

Dr. Heather Wittenberg is a working mom of four amazing kids. She is a practicing psychologist, specializing in the development of babies, toddlers, and preschoolers, and is a nationally known parenting writer, speaker, television guest expert, and social media presence.

Through clients and partners such as Pull-Ups, Huggies, The University of Hawaii, and Parents.com, Dr. Heather's advice – based in neuroscience, road-tested in the real world, and



translated into the grab-and-go terms that busy parents need - has reached hundreds of thousands of families.

Dr. Heather is also the force behind BabyShrink.com, an online resource for parents to help troubleshoot the challenges (and celebrate the awesomeness) of raising young children. Over the years, Dr. Heather has helped readers solve their most difficult sleeping, pooping, crying, and eating challenges. Whatever parenting curveballs you can throw at her, you'll find Dr. Heather a sympathetic listener, a practical advice-giver, and darned good company.

Dr. Heather is releasing a new online potty training course, titled "Let's Get This Potty Started! - The Babyshrink's Online Course for Potty Training Your Toddler".

Follow her on Instagram to find out when this course will be released. Her Instagram handle is [@DrHeatherBabyShrink](https://www.instagram.com/DrHeatherBabyShrink)

Where to start to help your child feel heard, seen and understood

Dr. Heather says that to get your child to listen and cooperate, you need to start by trying to understand where they are coming from.

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite strategy or technique for getting kids to listen and cooperate?

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: Well, I would say, understanding where the child is coming from. First and foremost, what their goal is. Expressing to them that you understand what their goal is, and you sympathize with it. But you need them to do it your way for now. Really expressing that you understand where they're coming from.

That doesn't mean you don't hold the limit. That doesn't mean you don't have them do what you ultimately need them to do. But when children feel that they're heard, seen, and appreciated, they're much more likely to go along with you, even if they don't really want to.

Sue Meintjes: Can you please give an example of how to understand a child's goals in the moment and how a parent should respond to understand the child better and to help with cooperation?

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: Let's consider the example of the child not following "House Rules", by not staying out of the kitchen.

Start by determining why the child is breaking the rules. Perhaps they are hungry and want a snack? Perhaps they are lonely and want to be near you? Perhaps they are bored and would love to help you cook? Ask them what it is they want, to help you understand their motivation.

Then, show you get their perspective. "I can see you missed me all day when I was at work. I want to spend time with you, too. I cannot allow you in the kitchen while I cook because you could get hurt. Perhaps come sit just outside the gate, and we will talk about your day as I cook. Here is a snack, as well. As soon as dinner is done, we will sit together. And when you get old enough, you will always remember to stay out of the kitchen while I cook. But for now, I am here to help you remember by putting up the gate." This approach takes your child into account and allows you to follow important home safety rules.

Sue Meintjes: I struggle to get my kids to listen when they are busy with something, or they want to do it their way. So just like getting on their level can really make a difference, and that is sort of what you are saying.

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: Yes, exactly.

Why there is no "one-size-fits-all" parenting magic trick that works for all children

Have you ever read about a new parenting technique, only for it to completely fail when you try it with your child? Dr. Heather shares the



reason why this often happens.

Sue Meintjes: Do you have any tips for how to practically do this? Are there any methods we can use to make it easier to show them that we are on their level and that we understand.

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: Well, what's so interesting, and what I'm always reminding parents about is, this isn't a one size fits all situation. You know, because humans aren't one size fits all, and so if you have multiple children, or you see other kids, you realize, "Oh, this technique works really well with this particular child. It doesn't work at all with mine. How come?"

And that's because my child has a completely different personality than the other child. And just like with adults, for some people, certain things work, and other things don't, because it has to do with their personality and what works with their personality first.

How to fit your parenting approach to your child's unique temperament

How you approach your active, high-spirited child is very different to how you would approach a cautious, observant child. Here's how Dr. Heather recommends you vary your approach.

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: So, for instance, for a child who's very active and has a lot of energy, they're not going to want to sit still and listen and do a boring task. Whereas a child who is more

observant and quieter, you're going to have an easier time getting them to sit and do something with you.

Customize your approach to the temperament and personality of your child. So, if you have a very active, high-spirited child, if you do something that's like, "Let's have a race and go see how quickly you can get ready for bed," is much more likely to be successful.

And if you have a child that's much more observant and cautious. Instead, you might say, "Oh, I'm noticing it's almost time for bed. I want to give you a warning. I want to give you a reminder. And soon it's going to be time for us to go get your teeth brushed, get dressed for bed". Let them know in advance and walk them through it so they're not startled, surprised, and upset with abrupt change.

So, you're going to take a very different approach, depending on the personality of your child.

Sue Meintjes: So, it's about understanding the personality of your child, to work from where the child is at. And you will do things differently for different children. Maybe like one child may be an active child, one child may be a cautious child, and you approach them differently.

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: That's right. And, the thing is, they have their personality evident from birth. It's not fully formed from birth, but they have little hints that they give us from the beginning if

they're going to be, for instance, very active or very cautious. And that stays true, with some modifications, over time.

So, you start to understand, "Oh, I've got a very cautious child on my hand here. I'm going to adjust my approach accordingly." And then similarly for the personalities of your other children. In the same family you may have quite different approaches that work with your different children.

It's not a one size fits all situation. That's why these sorts of one size fits all recommendations are always only sort of halfway successful. Because they work for some children. But then don't work for others. And the parents of the other kids say, "Well, what's wrong with me? Or what's wrong with my kid? Because it doesn't work?" And it's like, "No, no, no." That's a misunderstanding of human nature and of child development.

Sue Meintjes: That's why it sometimes feels like parenting advice doesn't work, because your child is an individual with his own personality.

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: That's right. Yes.

The five most common Personalities of Young Children: which of these fit your child?

Dr. Heather has identified 5 common personalities that you can use to better understand your child and fit your parenting approach.



Take some time and think about which of these personalities fit your child best.

Sue Meintjes: So, what type of personalities have you seen in your practice? What type of personalities do children embody, that you can look out for, to get to know your child's personality?

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: There's definitely types. It's not an exhaustive list but based on what we know from child development and child temperament research, children are born hardwired to have a particular set of temperaments. And once they interact with the environment, it creates their personality.

There are five types that I identify in my upcoming potty-training course, which is called "Let's Get This Potty Started". I call these Potty Personalities, but they're the personalities of young children, broadly speaking.

So, there's an energetic, highly active type that I call "Tornado".

There's the easy temperament type, like some children are just straightforward and easy, and they're called the "Eager Beaver".

There's the kind of child that just wants to play and hang around and doesn't mind if they're a mess and they take their time and I call that style the "Hippie Child".

There's the cautious one we were talking about before. The little worried, a little slow to warm, and sometimes a little stubborn, cautious, and slow to warm. I call this style the "Mule".

The last one is “The Accountant”. The accountant is the child who’s a real rule follower and really clings to structure and rules and wants to know how they’re supposed to do things and is upset when everyone doesn’t follow the rules.

How to better understand your strong-willed child

I have a very strong-willed child, so I’m always trying to understand him better. Here’s what Dr. Heather shared about which of these personalities he likely falls under.

Sue Meintjes: In which category does a strong-willed child fall? Or is it not specifically in one category?

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: There’s a lot of different varieties of strong-willed, right? So sometimes a strong-willed child is highly active. A sort of tornado that has endless amounts of energy and is bouncing off the walls.

A lot of times a strong-willed child is the Mule personality, which just doesn’t like change and doesn’t want to jump right in and wants to hold back. And they’re more resistant to trying new things.

And so, you can’t get them to sort of go along with the program. It depends. Strong-willed children have their own sort of subcategories, don’t they?



Why your young children just won't stay out of the kitchen...and what to do instead of yelling or threatening

I love this idea of understanding what your child is capable of understanding because it allowed me to get less frustrated and have more empathy with my children. Here's what Dr. Heather recommends you do if you have young children that just don't seem to follow your rules.

Sue Meintjes: Is there anything we can do with regards to house rules? Like one of these rules we are struggling with is keeping the kids out of the kitchen, because we've taken away the baby gate. Are there any specific tips you can give with regards to house rules?

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: House rules. I learned a lot about that from preschool teachers that I've interacted with over the years, and what preschool teachers understand is the combination of what the children are capable of understanding and modifying the environment accordingly.

So, is it time to remove the baby gates yet?

Maybe, but maybe not. If you're using your best explanations and best guidance. "Guys, when I'm cooking, it's dangerous for you to be in here. You need to be out in the living room," and it is not working, then they're perhaps too young to hold onto that.



Then you say you remind them, but you keep the baby gates up and you say, "Guys, when you're old enough, you'll remember. But right now, I have to help you remember." You're going to keep reminding them about what the rule is. But because of safety, you really have to be extra cautious.

In the olden days, what our parents and grandparents would do would just be to punish. "If you come in, I'm going to give you a smack or I'm going to yell at you." Well, that works, but it's not good. That's right. It works. But for a bad reason.

Instead, we get in the perspective of where they are mentally. And a young child, especially up until about the age of seven, cannot consistently remember something like "Don't come in the kitchen when I'm cooking," because we know that their prefrontal lobes are not developed enough to hang on to that rule. They need reminders. They need that physical gate. They need more than we can give them if we have our back to them at the stove.

Sue Meintjes: That sounds great, I think it's practical tips that I can immediately use in my own life.

It looks like it all comes back to an element of being mindful with your children. Just being mindful, seeing in the present moment what's going on with them. What do they need, where are they coming from?

Why you need to be knowledgeable about what you can expect from your child at their current age

Understanding where your child is coming from, what their goals are, and what they are capable of, helps you be less frustrated when they don't listen. Here Dr. Heather shares why consistency pays off in the end, even though the journey might be frustrating.

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: It's very important to be mindful, and it's also very important to be knowledgeable about what we can reasonably expect from a child at a particular age.

If we understand that for a five-year-old or a six-year-old, in their brain they really haven't progressed yet to the point where they can consistently remember enough.

If we know that, then we understand where they're coming from. They want to be with us in the kitchen, or they're hungry or whatever it is, and we say, "You know what? I'm going to put the gate up because I want you to be safe, but here's a snack. And then when you get older, you'll remember, but now I want to keep you safe."

Sue Meintjes: Yeah, I think sometimes parents expect too much from their children. They expect them to remember the house rules and follow them, but like you say, children are not developmentally there yet, and parents need to understand that and be patient with their children.



Dr. Heather Wittenberg: Yes, they will learn if we are consistent and remind and just remember, it might take a hundred more times for me to remind them, but they will eventually remember, especially if we're consistent.

Sue Meintjes: I think it's a bit frustrating for parents to consistently remind them.

Dr. Heather Wittenberg: Oh yeah. It's very frustrating. Very frustrating. No doubt about it.

Sue Meintjes: Thank you for your great advice.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Next time your child is misbehaving, first try understanding them and their situation, and why they are upset – help them feel heard, seen and understood
- Think about your child's personality, and then see which of the 5 Personalities of Young Children they fit into
- Think about what you expect from your child, and then think about whether they are developmentally ready to do what you expect
- Do some more research about what you can realistically expect from your child at their age (for example, how much can you expect them to remember, and which of your commands can they really understand?)
- Follow Dr. Heather on Instagram here: @DrHeatherBabyShrink or find out more about Dr. Heather at her website, BabyShrink.com



Heather Lindsay - Understand your child's communication style

In this interview with Heather Lindsay, a parenting coach and author of My Big Emotions, we talk about how to understand your child's preferred communication style, and how to talk to them in a way that makes it much more likely that they will hear you.

“Let's work with them rather than against them. That is what stops parents arguing with their kids, stops kids feeling like the parents are constantly attacking them, and gets us back to that family cooperation we want.



In this interview

- About Heather Lindsay
- Understand your child's communication style
- The three main communication styles
- What happens if you don't talk to your child using their preferred communication style
- How to talk to your child using their communication style
- How to ensure kids listen the first time
- How to help children deal with fear

About Heather Lindsay

Sue Meintjes: Can you tell us about yourself, and your work with caregivers and parents?

Heather Lindsay: I work primarily with parents online. I started up my business back in 2014 after I used coaching to help get myself out of a quite bad postnatal depression with my second daughter. I had a relationship end while I was pregnant with her, and it was quite a really dark time in my own life.

And feeling pretty bad about being a mom, and the counsellors and everyone who was supporting me were only taking me so far. So, I turned to the more practical side of coaching to really help lift me out of what was a dark time. And it was just an amazing change that occurred in my life. But I found it hard to access services that I needed at that time, so I was like "Okay, I'm going to create one myself."



And so, I did my training as a life coach, and an NLP practitioner. I'm also a registered nurse. I've been working with parents ever since, to really help balance and bring them a whole range of really practical strategies that they can use to help themselves feel better as parents, help them with their kids, with behaviour, with connecting with kids, all so that family can work well together. Because that's really what I think we all want: to have a happy family and kids who want to be with us.

And there can be some little things, or there can be some big things, that we can change that can really make that difference. I work with parents in various different ways, I've had an online group program over the years, but at the moment I'm primarily working with parents one-on-one.



Understand your child's communication style

Sue Meintjes: That's a really inspiring story, and congratulations for all that you've done in the last few years. So I'm going to jump right in with the question of the day. What is your favourite technique or strategy for getting kids to listen and increase cooperation?

Heather Lindsay: My real big top tip is to make sure that we as parents are working with their children's individual communication style.

But what does that really mean?

Well, we all process information differently. At any one point in time, millions of bits of information are bombarding our brain. And if we just think about the room that we're in now, you or me, there are things that we can hear, we can smell, touch, taste, all around us.

Our senses help us make sense of the world around us.

Even when we're not focusing on them, our brain is still taking that information in. But of course, it can't process all of that information at once, so it kind of chunks it into different groups. And those chunks can sometimes be ignored by our brains, because it's like "that's not important." It can also be distorted or it can be generalized.

And then our brain will actually code that information into different systems.

The three main communication styles

Some people prefer being visual and taking information visually, some people prefer taking in information kinaesthetically, really tuned in how it feels around them. And some people are really focusing on what they're hearing. So in the general population, we've got about 40% of us of visual communicators, 40% of us are kinaesthetic (the doers, who they really love moving), and the rest are auditory communicators.

So, when we talk about kids, most of them are actually kinaesthetic or visual communicators. That doesn't mean that they can't process information when they hear it. It just means they don't have a preference for it.

What does this have to do with getting our kids to listen to us?

What happens if you don't talk to your child using their preferred communication style

Lots of parents I've found have made the mistake of trying to talk to their kids without making sure that they are one of those bits of information that the child is processing and focusing on.

If we try and talk to our child when they're a visual communicator, and they're watching TV or they're reading a book or looking at

something on the ground, or they're a kinaesthetic communicator and they're doing something like they're playing with the toy or they're jumping on the trampoline or playing a video game, then their brain is focused on all that information that they're processing. So it will either ignore what we say, or it will distort it, or it will just generalize it into the background noise.

And this is a classic example that we've all had with our kids: we talk to them and it seems to go in one ear and out the other, or they just simply don't hear us. It's not that their brain hasn't heard us, it's just that it hasn't processed what we've said because it's in the middle of focusing on other bits of information.

How to talk to your child using their communication style

I had a perfect example of this with my son this morning. He's six, and he was playing with his Rubik's Cube and I was just standing next to him and I asked him how he's slept.

Now there's no other noise in the background, it was a pretty dark room, and there were no other distractions. But he was so focused visually on looking at the cube, and moving his hands with the size of the cube, that his brain couldn't actually focus on what I said.

So it appeared like he had completely ignored me. Now, once I did get his attention, and I'll talk about how we do that in a minute,

he said to me "Oh, I just didn't hear you." So his brain might have heard me, but he hadn't actually processed that information.

So this is why we need to know how our child processes information, because once we as parents work that out, we can then make sure that when we talk to our child, and ask them to do something, that we're actually part of their communications style and how they're processing information.

Now, it's quite a process to kind of work out how your child is communicating, and how they process information from the world around them, and I'm in the process of putting up some great resources on my website to do that. The parents will be able to work that out.

But ultimately, for the majority of the kids, when we go back to that 80% to either the visual or kinaesthetic communicators, you really need to build a physical and visual connection with your child before you talk.

And it goes beyond simply getting down on their level and talking to them face to face. That might work for a visual communicator, but if your child processes information through movement, and they're moving their body or they're feeling the wind on their skin, or a shirt is even just itching them, then they're still not going to process that even if you're there.

So you might need to start doing something with that child. You might need to start moving your body with them, or touching them, or giving them a hug and connecting in that way, so that

you're part of their feeling, their kinaesthetic communication, in that moment.

How to ensure kids listen the first time

And so, this is when we as parents need to kind of reflect on our behaviour, and the way that we talk to our children, so that we connect with them and help them process the words that we say *the first time*. Because this is what helps reduce that stress and frustration from parents that I hear all the time: "He just doesn't listen to me," and I'm like "Yes, because his brain hasn't actually processed what you've said."

So what we need to do is go back and think "Well, how are we speaking to our child to make sure that they're actually hearing what we're saying? So they're taking in what we're saying, and their brain is processing it, and then reflecting back to us that they've understood it."

So just because we say "It's time to leave and we're going to go and pick up your toys," it doesn't mean that they actually understand what that means. That's often influenced by developmental hearing. It's very different to ask a two-year-old something than it is a nine-year-old or a 12-year-old.

So if we think about that example I gave earlier of my son, what should I have done? So my son, I know is a kinaesthetic communicator. He loves to move his body; he feels things very big. Feels emotions quite a lot, doesn't sit still, he's always on the

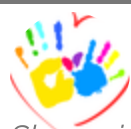
go. So he really needs me to be doing something with him, before his brain is ready to process what I'm saying.

So I could have sat down with him and watched him do the Rubik's Cube before starting to speak to him, because often he'll pass it over to me and say "Hey mum, do you want to have a go?" Or I could have got him just sat on my lap and connected with him, by giving him a hug and having our bodies connect first thing in the morning, before asking him about how he's slept and eventually, what I wanted to get him for breakfast.

But ultimately, the best option was to realize that my questions in that moment were really not essential and to simply let him finish what he was doing. So let his brain finish processing the world out by what he was doing with the Rubik's Cube, and then once he stops that, then I can just go "Hey, good morning, how'd you sleep and what would you like for breakfast?"

It might have taken a bit longer, but certainly, would have gotten rid of any frustrating thoughts that could possibly pop in. All those ones that we've thought "Oh, why doesn't he just listen?" Or "why is he being rude and ignoring me?" Or "why do all my kids always ignore me?" All of that stuff that we say and think as parents.

So if I found and with my own kids, I've got three of them, they're twelve, nine and six. And with every client that I've helped with their kids listening to them, that is always easier to work with them than against them.



So my top tip for parents is to work out how your child processes information that they receive in the world, and then make sure that when we're talking to them and asking them to do something or wanting some information back, that we're part of that primary communication style for them.

Sue Meintjes: That makes a lot of sense. I often feel like my son doesn't listen to me, and what I'm realizing is now that he often literally doesn't hear me because he is too busy with something else. So thank you for that, it's been really insightful.

Heather Lindsay: Oh, thank you, no problem. It's just something we often don't think about.

I'm fascinated with how the brain works in general, and how our kids have underdeveloped brains.

So let's work with them rather than against them. That is what stops parents arguing with their kids, stops kids feeling like the parents are constantly attacking them, and gets us back to that family cooperation we want.

Everyone's working together, because we are working with our kids.

How to help children deal with fear

Sue Meintjes: And I just have to ask you one more. I had a look on your website, and I saw your book “My Big Emotions” book. Can you tell us a bit about how to help kids with big emotions?

Like for example, my son is very afraid of medical appointments, and he's got a flu vaccine on Tuesday. So how can we help kids with big emotions and fear especially.

Heather Lindsay: Yes. Look, it's understandable, I mean vaccinations and flu jabs and regular vaccinations or COVID boosters or whatever it is, it's scary for kids.

So if we go back to that underdeveloped brain, we as adults understand we need a vaccination because it's going to help us keep us safe, stop us getting sick, stop us ending up a hospital.

And so, we can rationalize the discomfort of going to the doctor and getting a needle, and the pain, and the uncertainty of any side effects and everything. So we go and we bear with it and we get the flu jab and we have the sore arm, and we might feel a little bit off for a couple of days, but we know we did the right thing.

But a child doesn't understand all of that. And so, there's a lot of fear that can come up. Then parents go “But this is the right thing to do, we need to do it to keep you safe.” Well, kids don't understand what that means.

It's really a process of helping our kids organize what their thoughts are, and really listening to them about what's happening.

For example, "You've got your flu jab next week; do you want to talk about any of your fears or anything like this? Do you understand what this means? And do you know what it does?"

I've always been pretty open and honest with the process of vaccination with my kids, and how it helps, and how it keeps us safe. And sometimes, it can be great just to normalize it for kids as well. Mum gets really scared of needles too, or dad doesn't like going to the dentist or the doctor or whatever it might be.

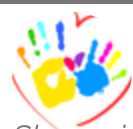
And then you can suggest something special for the kids after, we can go out and have a lunch or you can have a lollipop if that's what the doctor does, or a Jelly Bean or whatever.

But it's really a process of kind of normalizing that information for them, so they don't feel that we're just trying to talk them out of how they're feeling. Because it is a scary thing, I mean, if you think about the COVID vaccinations that happened over the last couple years, there were lots of adults who were scared about it. So if adults will be scared, kids will be scared too.

So it's normal to be scared, and if we just make it okay for them as much as we can and give them lots of positive reassurance. Don't try and talk them out of their fear. Don't say, "Oh, it's fine, it'll be over and done within two minutes and it won't hurt," because it does hurt. Rather say, "Yes, it will hurt, but it'll be there for a minute, and it'll be over and done with."

That's the best way and the way I handle it with my kids.

Sue Meintjes: Okay, thank you so much for the advice. It was lovely talking to you today.



Tia Slightham: How to parent smarter, not harder

In this interview with Tia Slightham, best-selling author, and founder of “Tia Slightham - Parenting Solutions”, we talk about how to use Golden Time to proactively fill your children’s needs for power and attention.

I love this technique, as it is a simple way to increase the quality of the time you already spend with your children...a way to parent smarter, not harder.



“ There’s so much we can do as parents to make our days really easy and enjoyable.



In this interview

- About Tia Slightham
- How to encourage listening and cooperation without force or threats
- How to use Golden Time to proactively fill your children's need for attention and power
- How to parent smarter, not harder: the five ingredients of Golden Time
- How to manage multiple children wanting your attention at the same time
- How to get the most value out of the Golden Time you spend with your children
- How to "keep it simple" and reduce the amount of parenting work you need to do
- What to do if your partner is not onboard with trying new parenting techniques or strategies
- What NOT to do when you start doing "Golden Time" with your kids
- Action steps

About Tia Slightham

Tia is a parenting coach, teacher, business owner, best-selling author and most importantly a MOM. She is the founder of ["Tia Slightham - Parenting Solutions"](#) and her coaching program, [The Parenting with Purpose Method](#), where she works with parents to teach them positive ways to decrease the daily struggles we all encounter as parents.



Tia has a Masters degree in Early Childhood Ed., certified in Positive Discipline and has worked with kids and families for over 17 years. She will work alongside you to tailor a plan to solve all your parenting struggles.

Work with Tia to transform your parenting and learn more at [her website, TiaSlightham.com](http://herwebsite.TiaSlightham.com).

You can also [download Tia's free "Golden Time" guide here](#).



How to encourage listening and cooperation without force or threats

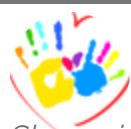
How you can make small changes in the way you do things but get big improvements in your child's behavior. Also, how, by identifying and meeting your child's needs proactively, you can stop many behavioral problems before they happen.

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy for increasing cooperation and getting kids to listen?

Tia Slightham: There's so many things we already do, and we really want to think about small little changes and tools adding up to those really big results that we're looking for. And ultimately the place that we're working to help parents get to and achieve is a place where we really encourage listening and cooperation without force.

Trying to force our kids to cooperate, with yelling and timeouts and empty threats, often ends up backfiring, and we don't really get the results we want. But when we start using tools, for example, like "Golden Time", that I'm going to share with you, we start to see that we meet our children's needs proactively.

And that helps to encourage without force. And so, we really want to get to that place, where we're bonded and connected with our kids. Kids are going to do much better when they feel better. And that's where we really want to implement these positive tools. So, we're going to talk about "Golden Time" today.



Sue Meintjes: It's like yesterday, my kids didn't listen to me, and I was getting stressed because we had to leave for school and I had to go to work and just, like, they didn't listen. So, I ended up crying in my son's bedroom.

Tia Slightham: And you felt like you didn't have the tools to really get him to school on time without the battle. And that can feel very frustrating for parents, for sure.

How to use Golden Time to proactively fill your children's need for attention and power

How you can proactively ensure your child feels that they are getting enough attention and control in their life and prevent your child from feeling they need to act out or fight to fill these important emotional needs.

Sue Meintjes: So, what are the type of tools parents can use?

Tia Slightham: "Golden Time" is one of our most important tools that we use in our family, and also in the thousands of clients that I've worked with. Because what we need to do proactively in advance is make sure that our children's entire roadmap for their needs is met in advance.

And part of that roadmap includes their power and attention buckets, which are really important emotional needs that our kids

have. And Golden Time is one of those things that help fill those buckets.

If we fill our kids' buckets first, they don't have to fight to fill them. So, our kids who don't want to get ready in the morning, if their emotional needs buckets are on low, by not getting ready, by not listening, by pushing those boundaries, you end up reminding, and nagging, or yelling, or getting frustrated with them.

And our kids learn. "Ooh, amazing. When I don't get ready and I don't listen, I actually get attention and power." Although it's negative, our kids are going to take whatever they can get. And so, what we want to do is we really want to start filling those buckets in advance, ahead of this, to help our kids do better and feel better.

And really with Golden Time, it's super simple. It really takes 10 minutes a day. That's it.

How to parent smarter, not harder: the five ingredients of Golden Time

The five steps to increase the value of the time you are already spending with your child, to get them to listen better and cooperate more.

Tia Slightham: Our job is to "parent smarter, not harder." And once you have the skills, it all gets so much easier. You don't have to second guess or doubt yourself.

The 5 ingredients for Golden Time to be effective and successful are:

1. Name It (It must have a name so your child knows when they're getting their time and filling those buckets)
2. Twice a Day (10 minutes)
3. Child's Choice (let them pick something they enjoy doing - this gives them more power!)
4. Unplugged (put those phones away and focus on your child)
5. One on one

My son named it "Golden Time" when he was four and we've called it that ever since. Our clients have named it bazillions of other things. You can pick the name, but one of the key ingredients is that it has a name, so we want to make sure that you name it.

It works best if you can do it twice a day for 10 minutes.

Do something your child loves. Give them the choice to choose something they love.

Unplug. I want you to unplug and put your phone away. Role model that you are going to actively listen to them and connect with them and really make sure that you're focused on that one-on-one time with them.

I'm going to tell you, after the first day you're going to see changes. Your kids are going to love it if you set it up properly. But in one week, with consistency, you're going to see a major return in terms of better listening and cooperation.

And so really making sure that you include those five ingredients and giving it a name is where your kids start to say, "Oh. We're doing Golden Time now. This is my time. This is where my mom or dad focuses on me. I don't have to fight for attention because I'm already getting what I need."

That allows you then, as busy parents, to move on with your day, go to work, do the things you need to do, without the guilt. You've bonded, you've connected, your kids are happy, and so are you.

How to manage multiple children wanting your attention at the same time

How you can implement Golden Time when you have more than one child demanding your attention, and one technique Tia uses with her clients to set your child's expectations and proactively set the stage for success.

Sue Meintjes: Sounds really good. And I think that is something that's definitely missing in my parenting. I've got two children, and they are very much "If I do something with the one, the other one wants to do it too". So, do you have any tips for getting around multiple children wanting to spend all the time together with you?



Tia Slightham: That's a very common thing. I've had clients with seven kids before, and so it's really about time management, and proactively setting the stage for success.

Our kids really are born with two predetermined jobs. They need to please you, but they also need to know what your boundaries are.

So, we don't just all of a sudden say, "I'm doing Golden Time with one child. You go over there." No, that won't work. We really need to set our boundaries, set our expectations.

When is each child going to have it? We use an accountability calendar with my clients that help show each child which parent is doing it in the morning, which parent is doing it at night.

Your bedtime "Golden Time" is easy. It's just tucking your kid in. You just need to name it. Do your books, do your stories, have that special bonding time. Don't create more work for yourself. Make it more bang for your buck by labeling it.

So set that stage in advance. Let your kids know that we're going to be doing this really cool thing called "Golden Time" so we can spend more time together. Say "Because I know I'm busy, I want to spend time with you."

How to get the most value out of the Golden Time you spend with your children

How to get more value out of the time you spend with your kids, and a simple way to help your child feel more in control.

Tia Slightham: Sit down and make some lists with your kids about what they enjoy doing. Then you have an easy access list when it's time for them to choose something that they enjoy.

And then talk about when you're going to do that in your day. Maybe you have a calendar that shows them. Set a timer that shows them, when the timer goes off, it's your siblings turn, and when the timer goes off, you are finished until your next "Golden Time". So set those boundaries, use age-appropriate tools.

We have lots of tips and strategies to help parents be successful in this as well as a free guide that we can offer for parents to download if it's something that would be helpful.

How to "keep it simple" and reduce the amount of parenting work you need to do

Why you don't have to overcomplicate your "Golden Time", and how you can minimize your parenting work by getting better results with the same time you spend with your children.

Sue Meintjes: I think parents, when they think about "Golden Time", want to complicate it. They want to take the kids outside of the house. But it sounds like it should be really simple, like



making bedtime routine into “Golden Time”. So, is that one of the keys to making it work, to keep it simple?

Tia Slightham: Yeah, exactly. So, we’re not going to make more work for ourselves. We’re trying to actually minimize our work. And so, your “Golden Time” list, your kids might put that they enjoy going to the park, or they enjoy baking a cake. But, most likely, you won’t be able to bake a cake or go to the park before school.

But go ahead and add that to the list and make them feel seen, heard, and understood. And maybe you have a weekend “Golden Time” list where those are longer activities that you do go out of the house and go for a walk, or a bike ride to the park, and bake together.

Maybe you have shorter “Golden Time” lists for the day.

In the morning, when you’re trying to start your day, the idea is to do “Golden Time” early on so that we get that cooperation to get ready for school. If your son feels like his emotional needs’ buckets are filling up and he’s feeling like his needs have been met, he doesn’t need to fight back on those morning routines.

And so, we want to do it first thing if we can. Just do something simple. My boys used to like to pretend shave with my husband. They would get their pretend razors, their pretend shaving cream. And they would just shave together in the bathroom.



They would help me make smoothies for the day. They loved to use the blender.

If they enjoy it, it's "Golden Time". Make sure you label it and let them know. It doesn't have to be overthought. You don't have to complicate things.

What to do if your partner is not onboard with trying new parenting techniques or strategies

Why it is not a showstopper if your partner doesn't want to change the way they parent, and how you can still get the benefits from trying new parenting approaches even if your partner is not interested in changing.

Sue Meintjes: And then does your partner need to be on board? Does he or she need to do "Golden Time" too, or is okay if only one parent does it?

Tia Slightham: I always say to parents when they're like, "My partner's not on board. I have to do this alone." Or "My kids go to their father's house on the weekend and they're at my house during the week, and is this going to work if we're not consistent?"

So, consistency is the key in everything we do, but we're not going to control our kids and we're not going to control our partners.

If people are not on board, that's okay. That's their choice. But what I say is: if one parent makes changes, and one parent does

“Golden Time”, and all the other learning and tools, you're going to have results.

But if both parents say, “Oh, okay, we're not going to do it then because we're both not on the same page,” well then you have zero results.

What I suggest is that it doesn't have to be a perfect rotation of parent one in the morning and parent two at night.

If you can do that, great. You get a great rotation out of it. If you can't, and you have a similar situation to what mine was like as my kids were growing up, two boys, two years apart. My husband was never home in the evening for bedtime.

He was only home for about an hour in the morning, from six to seven in the morning, and they saw him for an hour, and they didn't see him again till the next day. So, a lot of my kids' “Golden Times” during the week were with me. But on the weekend, he would spend some extra time and re-bond and kindle their connection.

And so, there's no right or wrong way to do it. The idea is just do it in whatever fashion works for you and your family.

What NOT to do when you start doing “Golden Time” with your kids

One important mistake parents often make when they implement



"Golden Time", and how you can avoid making this mistake.

Sue Meintjes: I'm excited to try it today. So, is there anything else that parents need to know about Golden Time?

Tia Slightham: Just to set it up in advance, to be consistent with it, and to not use it as a threat or punishment. You know, "If you don't get ready for school, then there's no "Golden Time"," "If you're not ready for bed, then I'm not tucking you in, no "Golden Time"."

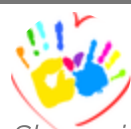
If we take "Golden Time" away, our kids are going to feel worse once again, and they're going to do worse.

We want our kids to feel better, to do better. "Golden Time" is the way that you do that.

If parents implement this and they're seeing success and they want to learn more, then definitely don't hesitate to reach out. There's so much we can do as parents to make our days really easy and enjoyable.

Sue Meintjes: So, the key to Golden Time is to fill your kids' emotional buckets, so that they don't end up with power struggles with you.

Tia Slightham: We're proactively filling emotional needs buckets to help our kids avoid having to fight to fill those up.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Identify a time that you are already spending with your child daily, then give it a name (like Golden Time) and tell your child that it is now their special time with you
- Create a calendar with your kids, where you schedule their Golden Time, so that they know you see them as important
- Sit with your kids and make a list of things that they want to do with you during Golden Time
- [Download Tia's free "Golden Time" guide here.](#)

Karen Thurm Safran: How to use the “Playfulness Mindset” to help your children enjoy cooperating

In this interview with Karen Thurm Safran, she shares her philosophy of playfulness, and how she used it to teach her children the habit of turning boring chores into fun games.

Every time I use this playfulness mindset, I am amazed about how easy it is to get my children to do things that I previously had to threaten or beg them to do.



“ *When you are stressed out, you don't think properly. Whereas if you're playful, you can think more rationally, and then you find things, and things get done.*



In this interview

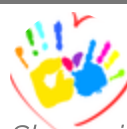
- About Karen Thurm Safran
- How to use playfulness to get your children to enjoy cooperating
- How the playfulness habit empowers your children
- How to remember to be playful when you are stressed
- How to turn boring activities into a game
- The “Mary Poppins technique” for finding the fun in every chore
- How the playfulness mindset empowers your children...and when NOT to be playful
- How the playfulness mindset helps you get more done
- Action steps

About Karen Thurm Safran

Karen Thurm Safran is a mom with two grown children. For over twenty years, she's worked in K-12 Education Technology, making learning fun for kids. She has a BA degree in psychology from Mount Holyoke College and an MBA from Santa Clara University.

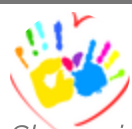
Karen was a stressed-out mom, but parenting became easier (and more fun!) when she used her parents' playful technique. What's her secret? Turn parenting challenges into a game. Karen wrote “Parenting—Let's Make a Game of It” to help others because if this playful approach helped her, it could help you too.

“Parenting—Let's Make a Game of It” is an Amazon #1 New Release in 7 parenting categories and perfect for busy parents.



This easy-to-read, entertaining book shows playful ways to stop struggling with toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children. Through light-hearted, 5-minute stories, you'll learn playful parenting—playfully.

Visit [her website, ParentingLetsMakeAGameOfIt.com](http://ParentingLetsMakeAGameOfIt.com), and get a FREE printable of quick playful parenting tips.



How to use playfulness to get your children to enjoy cooperating

Karen explains how to work with children, instead of against them, by learning to speak the “language of playfulness.”

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy for increasing cooperation and getting kids to listen?

Karen Thurm Safran: It's so easy to scream at kids, right? And to just have an objective that you want kids to do. It's like tunnel vision, where all you care about is the end-result.

But kids are different. They like to play.

The trick is that when you're playful with your children, you're working with them, instead of against them, because you're speaking their language. They like to play.

So, if you want your kids to get ready for bed, then just saying, “Go to the bathroom and start brushing your teeth,” that's not fun for them.

They're going to resist. I'm talking about little kids at first, but this works for older kids also.

But, if you're like Mary Poppins, and you make a game of it, then all of a sudden, you're speaking their language. It's kind of like going to Italy and trying to talk to someone when you don't know Italian. If you learn the language, then you can communicate. It's



the same with kids: you want to speak their language, and their language is play.

So, if you instead go, "Let's march to the bathroom," "Let's march like soldiers," or you know, "How should we go to the bathroom today? Should we pretend we're dancers?"

How the playfulness habit empowers your children

Playfulness not only makes it easier to get your kids to cooperate, but it also teaches them a valuable skill that they'll be able to use for the rest of their lives.

Karen Thurm Safran: It makes it more fun for them. It makes it more fun for you. Nobody wants to be screamed at, nobody wants to scream. And it also empowers your children because they learn how to find "the fun" in doing things.

Even now, my 27-year-old had to do something and it was just a boring task. So, I was like, "Well, what are you doing?" He goes, "Well, I'm just making a game of it."

Adults have to do things. We have to clean the house, we've got to take care of things, we've got to go shopping. But if you look at life differently, and you look at it like, "Let's make a game of it," then it makes life even more interesting, so it's not just for kids.



How to remember to be playful when you are stressed

Karen shares how to be playful even when you don't feel playful, and why being playful gets easier the more you do it.

Sue Meintjes: It sounds like this technique would help reduce stress as well. Because it is difficult to feel stressed while you are being playful. Do you have any tips for remembering to be playful in the moment?

Karen Thurm Safran: Yeah, and it's hard to do. Now, I was brought up this way, so I had my parents as an example. The most important thing is just to breathe.

It's so easy to react, but instead stop, take a breath, count in your head, and calm yourself down. And then you think outside the box. You just think, "Okay, well how can I make this fun? How can I speak their language?"

And once you do this, you kind of build a repertoire. It gets to be much easier.

Depending upon your child's age, you could be like, "They're little, how can I get them to clean their room?" You must think from their perspective. What do they like? "Oh, my daughter likes dance, or Disney stuff. And my son likes superheroes.

Then it's like, "Let's be superheroes and clean up our room. Who do you want to be? Superman. Okay, let's be Superman" and you

may even put a cape on the kid. It takes a little time, but in the end it's worth it because then you'll get cooperation.

Or if they're older, you may be like, "Okay, let's do a race," because everyone likes to race." So, then it's like, "Let's race and see how many things you can pick up in one minute or five minutes."

Or, what we used to do in my house, is we would put the music on, and we would clean up and we'd say, "Guess how many songs it's going to take."

Well, each song is like three minutes, so it doesn't seem as long. Let's say it's going to take 15 minutes, then that's five songs. Whereas if you said 15 minutes, that seems like a long time.

So, I would say, "All right, guess how many songs it's going to take to clean up the living room?" And then everyone guessed, and then it's like, "What music should we play?" And then you turn the music on and everyone's racing around and all of a sudden, it's fun and it's not just doing a boring task.

So as far as the stress part goes, you are changing a stressful situation into a fun situation and making it more enjoyable for everybody.

How to turn boring activities into a game

The most difficult part of being playful is coming up with ideas on how to be playful in the moment. Here Karen shares some more



simple ideas to turn boring activities into a game.

Sue Meintjes: That sounds like a great idea. Do you have any more examples of how you made tasks fun in your house?

Karen Thurm Safran: The racing was really good, especially since there were two and it was a fun thing. We would turn music on. Or even doing something fun with your body.

So, if I wanted them to put the dishes away, they would march to the kitchen or to the sink. We would sing a lot, so we would make up songs like, "Let's go to the kitchen."

One time they had dirty hands. I didn't want them to touch anything because we were eating pizza and their hands were filthy. So instead of screaming, "Don't touch anything," I just said, "Let's march to the kitchen and hands up." And I went "Hands up, hands up, let's march to the kitchen, hands up, hands up, let's march to the kitchen."

And suddenly it was fun. My kids had their hands up in the air because I wanted them to wash their hands. But it wasn't like screaming, "Don't touch anything. I need to wash your hands." It was a game, and they came to the sink, and I washed their hands. I incorporated a lot of singing and movement with my kids when they were little.

When they were little, they didn't want to have to wait in line. Nobody wants to wait in line, like in the bathroom, but I would just be like, "Okay, let's guess how long the line's going to take." I would



teach them, "How many bathroom stalls are there? How many people? Let's divide. Let's figure out what the average wait time is." Even if you don't know how to do this, you just guess. It makes waiting a lot more fun. It just changed it to a playful activity and something that was more tolerable and less stressful.

The "Mary Poppins technique" for finding the fun in every chore

A great example of the playfulness habit is found in the movie "Mary Poppins". Here Karen shares how to use Mary Poppins as a way to "find the fun".

Sue Meintjes: Thanks, I loved those examples. It sounds like it is about having a playful attitude. Is there anything else you think parents should know about what we talked about today?

Karen Thurm Safran: It's hard to do, right? If it doesn't come to you easily then ask your child what would be fun. "Would it be fun to turn music on?"

It may take more time in the beginning, but then once you decide that they want to dance to the bathroom and then they want to turn music on while they're getting ready, then you have your formula. And then every night you just say, "Okay, it's time to get ready for bed. How should we dance? What song should we sing?"

Think of Mary Poppins. Mary Poppins has a great quote and it's "In every job that must be done, there's an element of fun." You find

the fun and, snap, the job's a game. And if you think of what Mary Poppins did, she made everything fun.

That's the idea. And if people go to my website, I have a free printable of quick playful parenting tips that shows them how to make parenting easier and more fun.

Visit www.ParentingLetsMakeAGameOfIt.com and get a FREE printable of quick playful parenting tips.

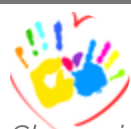
How the playfulness mindset empowers your children... and when NOT to be playful

Being playful is one way to treat your kids with respect, because you show them that you value their viewpoint high enough that you are willing to speak their language.

Karen Thurm Safran: And again, this is just another tool in the parenting toolbox. There's a whole lot of things to do. But it's parenting. It's really stressful...and it's the most rewarding thing.

If your kid's running across the street and there's a car, well then you would scream, right? Then it's like, STOP.

But, for the most part, you want to treat your kids with respect. Trust me, when they get older, they're happier, they're empowered, because they realize they've got to do certain things. They've got to clean their room, they've got to help with dinner, they have chores to do, they have to do homework.



It just changes their attitude in life. It makes them less stressful kids because they approach the mundane tasks differently. It empowers them. And not only that, but they also don't think of it as such a horrible task to do, because they approach it differently.

How the playfulness mindset helps you get more done

Sue Meintjes: Thanks, it has been great talking to you this morning. I'm going to take what I've learned and try to make our difficult morning routine more playful.

Karen Thurm Safran: And tell me what you did. I'm curious. There's an example on my website. The kid, I guess a two-year-old, couldn't find her favorite dress and she was hysterical, and the mom was going crazy and the grandmother was going crazy and then the grandmother had read my book and she just thought, "Oh, let's play a scavenger hunt." So, it's like, "Is it here? No. Is it there? Is it there?" And it was fun. So, the little kid's having fun, and they ended up finding the dress. It was in the dryer.

When you are stressed out, you don't think properly. Whereas if you're playful, you can think more rationally, and then you find things and things get done.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Make a list of the things your child enjoys, and then try to incorporate one of those things next time you ask them to do something
- Make a list of the difficult transition times (e.g., getting ready for school, going to bed) and then think about how you can add more playfulness to these occasions
- Make a playlist of songs that your children enjoy on your phone, and then use those to make boring activities more fun
- Visit [her website, ParentingLetsMakeAGameOfIt.com](http://ParentingLetsMakeAGameOfIt.com), and get a free printable of more quick playful parenting tips



Dr. Paul Jenkins: How “detaching yourself from the outcome” helps your children respond more positively

In this interview with Dr. Paul Jenkins, he shares how the ability to “detach yourself from the outcome” helps your child to start thinking, instead of reacting.

His “No Problem” technique is useful to help kids become more responsible for themselves.



“Parents need to take care of themselves, or else they'll find themselves getting tipped over, or upset, or frustrated.”



In this interview

- About Dr. Paul Jenkins
- How “detaching yourself from the outcome” helps your children respond more positively
- Why having control over your own emotions increases the chances that your kids will cooperate
- How to use the “No Problem” technique to stay calm and encourage your children to think, instead of fight
- What to do when you feel like you cannot detach yourself from the outcome of a situation
- The “Three Stage Model” you can use to understand your child’s maturity, and make the right parenting decisions
- Dr. Paul’s “Four Rules of Parenting” to help you stay calm, stay supported, and discipline appropriately
- Action steps

About Dr. Paul Jenkins

Dr. Paul Jenkins is a child and family psychologist, coach, speaker, and author.

With over two decades of experience as a professional psychologist, Dr. Paul Jenkins guides individuals, executives, leaders, couples, and families through a positive psychology process which empowers relationships and increases happiness and satisfaction.

As a psychologist, Dr. Paul specializes in the science and practice of positivity, and focuses on empowering individuals, families, and influencers to go far beyond traditional therapy or positive

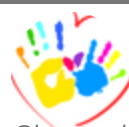
thinking programs to create and live the life they love through powerful positive psychology processes.

Dr. Paul is also the author of [Pathological Positivity \(The Proven Positivity Formula for Personal Development, Parenting, and Relationships\)](#) which sold over 15,000 copies the first year after its launch.

He is the host of the popular [Live On Purpose Radio podcast](#) and [Live On Purpose TV Youtube channel](#).

You can find out more about [Dr. Paul at his website, here](#).

Dr. Paul has provided [a free guide on how to measure the maturity of your child here](#).



How “detaching yourself from the outcome” helps your children respond more positively

Dr. Paul shares why, when you are able to remain calm, it forces your child to listen and think about the situation.

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working well for you or your clients, to help kids to better listen and cooperate?

Dr. Paul Jenkins: My favorite strategy or technique currently is to “detach from the outcomes.”

What that means is that the parent takes a very calm approach. This is very strategic, because someone has to be attached to the outcome, and if it's you, it's not your child.

When parents are very calm, and keep smiling, it puts kids in a position where they have to listen and think. This is a little different from the way a lot of parents approach it.

We find as parents, a lot of times, we'll get frustrated, and we'll end up yelling. Well, our kids are not listening when we're yelling. But if we're smiling, and if we're detached from the outcomes, then they listen more carefully, and they respond in more positive ways.

Why having control over your own emotions increases the chances that your kids will cooperate

Dr. Paul shares why getting frustrated or upset puts you in a disempowered position, which makes it less likely that your kids will listen.

Sue Meintjes: Do you have any advice on how to do that? How do you stay calm and detached from the outcomes, for example when you are running late in the morning, and feeling stressed?

Dr. Paul Jenkins: Well, take good care of yourself. That's one of the things. I do a lot of parent coaching in my business and a big part of parent coaching is helping the parents to have more control over their own emotional experience, so they're not getting tipped over by their kids.

And see, you just gave a really good example of a time when it's hard because if we're pressed for time, we're attached to the outcome, and our kids don't have to be at that point.

So, if we're all uptight and upset about something, that puts us in a disempowered position. But if we're okay, then our kids have to listen and think. That's the whole key there.

How to use the “No Problem” technique to stay calm and encourage your children to think, instead of fight

Dr. Paul shares a simple phrase that you can use to remind yourself to detach from the outcome, while also telling your kids that they



will need to take responsibility.

Dr. Paul Jenkins: You asked about a trick, or a strategy, that we can apply. One of the things I encourage the parents I'm coaching to try is the phrase, "No problem."

You have to say it with a little lilt to your voice, and with a smile. Raise your eyebrows just a little bit as you say, "No problem." And this is a reminder for you, and for your child, to think, not fight.

Every interaction we have with our children is going to invite them to do one or the other, to think, or to fight. If we are smiling, our kids are thinking. If we're feeling all pressured and upset, if we start yelling, then our kids are just going to fight with us.

So that's really the key. When you try this, when you say, "No problem," what that means is, "No problem for me, possible problems coming up for you, but I'll let you do your own thinking about that."

So that's how we can communicate detaching from the outcome. And it helps us as parents to remember, "Wait a minute, this doesn't have to be a problem for me." Or, "What can I do so that this isn't a problem for me?"

What to do when you feel like you cannot detach yourself from the outcome of a situation

Staying calm is difficult, especially in situations where you are attached to the outcome. Here Dr. Paul gives some advice on how



you can stay calm when your children don't want to get ready for school.

Sue Meintjes: What if it is a problem where I am attached to the outcome? For example, if I have to get to work, but my child doesn't want to get ready for school?

Dr. Paul Jenkins: Well, if it's a consistent problem, we can do some planning ahead of time to address the problem in a way that it's not a problem for us.

For example, you might have a friend who could help. And if the child is dragging their feet, making you late, and you're getting upset and frustrated, and they don't seem to be cooperating or listening, you can make prior arrangements with this friend to be available so that you can still leave on time, and then the friend comes over and helps to get the child off to school.

Now, that takes a lot of planning and that's not easy, so you might think of other ways to do it.

For example, you tell your child, "Hey buddy, the car is leaving at eight o'clock and there's two ways to go. You can go ready for school, or you can go however you are." Now, some kids wouldn't care about that, but there's other kids who, if they're not already dressed in their school clothes or have their shoes on, that would be more upsetting for them to have to go without being fully ready.



The “Three Stage Model” you can use to understand your child's maturity, and make the right parenting decisions

Instead of focusing on your child's age, Dr. Paul recommends understanding their maturity level. Here he explains the three stage model he developed to help understand your child's maturity.

Dr. Paul Jenkins: But it depends on the child. And one of the things that we teach in our parent coaching is that it's about stage, not age.

We've developed a model, where you just have to understand what stage your kids are on. There's three of them.

Stage one is where they're refusing to cooperate. They won't listen to you. They're fighting and yelling and screaming and throwing tantrums and just being very difficult. That's stage one.

Stage two is where they'll cooperate with you. They don't want any problems. They'll try to work it out with you, and they'll be reasonably cooperative and compliant.

Stage three is the most mature of the three stages. That's where they take responsibility, and they take initiative, and they're doing what they are supposed to do, and they don't even need to be asked. They are taking care of business.

So, you can see these are very distinct stages, and what we do as a parent is determined by what stage our kids are on.

And understanding what stage our kids are on will help us to make the right decisions as a parent about how we can detach from the outcomes and put the right consequences into place that will help our kids to eventually become more cooperative and listen.

Sue Meintjes: So, the stage your kids are in is not necessarily how old they are, but how developed they are?

Dr. Paul Jenkins: It's not about how old they are, it's about how mature they are. And kids of different ages might be at different stages of maturity. In fact, I'd be happy to provide a little one-page summary of those stages for you and for the people who are reading the book.

You can go to DrPaulJenkins.com/listen and get a free copy of this stages model that I'm talking about. That really helps parents to understand what they need to do if their kids are cooperating or if they're not cooperating. And how we can move them toward listening and being more cooperative.

Dr. Paul's "Four Rules of Parenting" to help you stay calm, stay supported, and discipline appropriately

Sue Meintjes: That sounds amazing, thanks for that! Is there anything else that parents need to know about detaching, or what we talked about today?



Dr. Paul Jenkins: Well, I've got four rules for parents. And rule number one, I already mentioned it, "take care of yourself." Parents need to take care of themselves, or else they'll find themselves getting tipped over, or upset, or frustrated. So that's rule number one.

Rule number two, "take care of the team." Whatever your parenting team is. If you're married, then it's your spouse, or your partner. If you are a single parent, then it's the team that you assemble. Your advisors, or your coaches, or teachers at the school, or people in your neighborhood, or babysitters and caretakers. So that's rule number two: "Take care of your team."

Rule number three is to "love your children." And most parents love their kids, but it's important to remember that that's our main job as a parent. And I talk about this on my YouTube channel all the time. Your job is to love them, no matter what. That's rule number three.

And then rule number four is, "Do appropriate discipline, based on the stages that I just shared with you. Because you discipline a stage one child very differently than you discipline a stage two child." And that takes a little bit of practice. And that's what we base all of our coaching programs around. But like I said, I'll provide a free copy of that stages model for anybody who wants it at DrPauJenkins.com/listen.

Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Next time your child demands something from you, try saying “No problem” to yourself and to your child, and then leave it up to them to sort it out
- Identify the times that you are hard-pressed for time (like getting ready in the morning), and then think of strategies that will allow you to detach emotionally from the outcome
- Download Dr Paul's Three Stage Model (DrPaulJenkins.com/listen) and determine where your children are currently
- Listen to Dr Paul's popular podcast [Live On Purpose Radio podcast](#) and [Live On Purpose TV Youtube channel](#)



Jennifer Kolari: How use the “C.A.L.M. Technique” to turn your language and words into “medicine” that calms your child and helps them cooperate

In this interview with Jennifer Kolari, she shares the 4 steps you need to remember to calm your child and help them cooperate. I have found this technique extremely powerful, because it is simple to remember, easy to use, and not only helps me with my interactions with my kids, but also with other adults.



“ Behavior is never the problem. Behavior is a symptom of the problem.



Expert Parenting Advice

Share via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

In this interview

- About Jennifer Kolari
- How to use the “C.A.L.M. Technique” to turn your language and words into “medicine” to calm your child
- Why Connecting with your child is critical to understanding them and their behavior
- How to use “Affect Matching” to release powerful beneficial chemicals in your child's brain
- The “3 Listening Techniques” that makes it clear to your child that you consider their viewpoint important
- Why Mirroring is a parenting superpower
- Why connecting with your child will save you time and end up being less stressful
- How to use “Front Loading” when you suspect your child is going to be uncooperative
- When, and how, to use the “Stay in Motion” technique for resolving situations when your child just does not want to cooperate
- Mistakes you need to avoid when using the C.A.L.M. Technique
- Action steps

About Jennifer Kolari

One of the US's leading parenting experts, Jennifer Kolari is a highly sought-after international speaker and the founder of Connected Parenting.

A child and family therapist with a busy practice based in Toronto and San Diego, Kolari is also the author of [Connected Parenting](#):



Expert Parenting Advice

Share via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

[How To Raise A Great Kid](#) (Penguin Group USA and Penguin Canada, 2009) and [You're Ruining My Life! \(But Not Really\) Surviving the Teenage Years with Connected Parenting](#) (Penguin Canada, 2011).

Kolari is a frequent guest on many national morning shows and her advice can be found in many Canadian and U.S. magazines.

For more information, please visit her website:

[ConnectedParenting.com](#) or call 416 781 4700

Jennifer offers [a free one-hour parenting webinar on how to be a Connected Parent here](#).

How to use the “C.A.L.M. Technique” to turn your language and words into “medicine” to calm your child

Jennifer explains her C.A.L.M technique for connecting with your child and biochemically calming them down with your words.

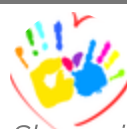
Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working really well for you or your clients to get kids to listen and to cooperate?

Jennifer Kolari: I think the number one thing would be our pillar technique at Connected Parenting, which is the C.A.L.M. Technique. This is the ability to mirror, to deeply attune to what your child is feeling, and to work very hard to understand what they're saying and what they're feeling, instead of trying to convince them that you're right.

So, it's basically using language and words as medicine. And then when you're able to do that, what happens is oxytocin and opiates and natural endorphins flood the brain, biochemically calming your child down, and moving them towards healthy compliance.

Sue Meintjes: Can you tell me more about using language and words as medicine?

Jennifer Kolari: So, I break it down, because it sounds easy, but this is actually a really tricky thing to do. And by the way, this not only works with children, it works on husbands and wives and mother-in-laws and colleagues and bosses. It works on everyone.



So, there's four things that you're going to do when you're using this technique properly.

I call it the C.A.L.M. Technique.

Why Connecting with your child is critical to understanding them and their behavior

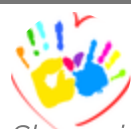
Connecting is the first step of the C.A.L.M technique, and it is the way that you show to your child that you care about what they are going through and that you want to understand them.

Jennifer Kolari: The first thing is the letter C, and this is where you Connect.

You're really using your body, your facial expressions, everything in you to demonstrate to that little person that you really want to understand what they're feeling. "What is their message? What are they trying to tell you?"

Behavior is never the problem. Behavior is a symptom of the problem. When you're really trying to understand what the behavior's telling you, or what their words are telling you, what's underneath it, you're going to get somewhere.

You're going to take your agenda, which is whatever you want them to do or learn from that moment, "don't talk to me that way", "hurry up, do your homework," "don't hit your brother." And you're going to put it aside until you've finished the mirroring technique.



It's actually very important for children to have loving limits. That's what helps children to feel safe and more emotionally organized.

And I always say to parents that they're not actually parents. They're substitute frontal lobes. Their job is to regulate, organize, prioritize, and do everything that the frontal lobe can do, because their kids don't have a frontal lobe yet.

How to use "Affect Matching" to release powerful beneficial chemicals in your child's brain

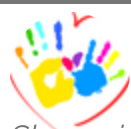
Affect Matching is the second part of the C.A.L.M technique, and it means that you should try to mirror your child's facial expression and body language, in order to release calming oxytocin hormones.

Jennifer Kolari: The next thing you're going to do is the A, so that's Affect Matching. So that's where the look on your face really has to similarly match the look on the child's face.

Like if they're angry, look urgent and intense, like, "Okay, tell me what's going on." And on my face is a very similar look.

If they're sad, you're like, "Oh, tell me what's going on." I'm going to have a very similar look on my face.

And that's where the mirroring happens. That's where the mirror neuron cells in the brain get stimulated. And that's how oxytocin is released. And oxytocin is a hormone that actually blocks cortisol,



strengthens the immune system, speeds up neuroplasticity, actually makes kids smarter.

And you get the bounce back too. So, it's kind of like a double medicine.

The “3 Listening Techniques” that makes it clear to your child that you consider their viewpoint important

Listen is the third part of the C.A.L.M technique, and here Jennifer shares three important listening techniques you can use.

Jennifer Kolari: The third part is the Listening part. So, this is where you use your words. You can summarize or paraphrase, you can clarify, or you can wonder out loud.

Let's say you have a situation where your little one doesn't want to wear their raincoat. The way that we normally do it is:

“Honey, put your rain coat on now.”

“No, I don't want to do that!”

“Honey, put your rain coat on please. I know you don't want to wear it, but you have to wear it!”

“No! No!”

“Mommy's going to start counting, one, two,” and off you go. Right?



But you're going to apply the technique to this, and you're going to say,

"You know what? I know you don't always like to wear your raincoat, but you're going to get wet. And we're going in the grocery store, and you might get cold, so I'm going to give you a minute to think about it."

"No, no, I don't want to wear my raincoat!"

And you say, "You know what? I get it. It's bunchy and it's kind of hot and you don't like wearing it. You told me last week you didn't want to wear it." So that's the summary.

Or I can clarify. "Okay. Tell me why this raincoat drives you so crazy. What part of wearing a raincoat is so terrible? Tell me. Help me understand." No sarcasm. Just real.

You can wonder out loud. "You know what I'm wondering? This isn't so much about the raincoat, but it's more about where we're going. Like you really don't want to go to whatever, right?"

So, you can summarize or paraphrase, you can clarify, and you can wonder out loud.

Why Mirroring is a parenting superpower

Jennifer Kolari: And then the M stands for mirroring. When you've pulled all those things together, you've had a really powerful



mirroring moment, and most of the time the child is biochemically de-escalated, and they're going to put the rain coat on.

They might be pouting about it, they might kind of stomp out the door, but they'll probably put it on. Like 95% of the time, they'll put it on.

It's like a superpower. It's a parenting superpower.

Why connecting with your child will save you time and end up being less stressful

Jennifer shares why using the C.A.L.M method makes your life easier and saves you time.

Sue Meintjes: In the moment it is stressful. You need to get somewhere, and your child is emotional. You are emotional. What are practical ways that parents can do that?

Jennifer Kolari: There's a couple of things. First of all, parents sometimes say to me, "I don't have time to do that." But the truth is, you don't have time not to do that, because if you don't do that, your kid's going to run around and not put their raincoat on, or refuse to get in the car, or whatever it is.

If you just take that second, and invest in that moment, most of the time, your child will then do what they need to do in that moment. So, your brain will tell you, "You don't have time. You



have to just tell them, 'Hurry up, let's go.'" But that's just going to make your child push back and double down.

How to use "Front Loading" when you suspect your child is going to be uncooperative

Jennifer Kolari: So, there's a couple things you can do to make using the C.A.L.M technique easier.

One is to make sure that you're front loading. So don't just say to your kids. "Come on, let's go." Give them a nice window, five, ten minutes and say "Hey, in a few minutes. We're going to need to go."

You can even do some pre-mirroring: "I know you're comfortable and you don't want to go where we're going," or whatever it is. So that when it's actually time to flow through the morning, that will work.

When, and how, to use the "Stay in Motion" technique for resolving situations when your child just does not want to cooperate

Jennifer Kolari: Another technique that I think works really well after (mirroring is always first) is to just act like you're going. If you start arguing with them, you're going to get into a whole thing.



Just say, "Oh yeah, we're going," and act like you're moving and get your coat on and actually start to move through what you're asking them to do.

If they're old enough, you can just start walking to the car and they'll usually follow you.

I call it "Stay in Motion."

Because if you stand there pulling your child towards you, they'll dig down and say no. But if you're like, "Hey, I know you can do it, I believe in you. I'm going to give you a minute, I'm going to walk away and I'm pretty sure you're going to be following me." Most of the time they're following you.

Sue Meintjes: Yeah, I find that definitely too, if you start walking, they see you mean business and they walk with you.

Jennifer Kolari: Exactly.

Mistakes you need to avoid when using the C.A.L.M. Technique

Jennifer shares some common mistakes that parents make when starting to use the C.A.L.M technique, and how to avoid them.

Sue Meintjes: Is there anything else parents need to know or be mindful of when trying to use this method?



Jennifer Kolari: There's another technique that's very similar, called active listening. It's a technique where people say, "I understand you must be very frustrated. I know you don't want to wear that raincoat." But can you hear the lilt in my voice? That's going to feel a little bit like a technique.

And a lot of people and children will just double down. "Don't say everything that I'm saying!"

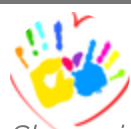
It won't work the same way. There's a difference between saying, "I know you don't want to wear that ring. I understand that you don't want to wear it," but you can hear where the sing song in my voice is going. It's leading to, "but you're going to wear it anyway."

So, with mirroring it must be quite pure. There are no observational statements. No, "it sounds like," "it must be," "I'm hearing that," "you're feeling."

It's just like, "Oh, I get it. You don't want to wear it. It's bunchy and it's hot. And you told me yesterday how much you don't want to wear it. And here I am again telling you to wear it."

And then the kid calms down because you've heard their message, and then you get to say why they need to wear it. So maybe "You're going to get all wet and you're going to the grocery store and they're going to be cold."

A whole other element is sometimes you don't make them wear it. Let them figure out what happens once they don't wear it. You can pick your battles. So, either way, you can mirror and say, "Well,



why don't you not wear it? And then you'll figure it out. You're very smart. Next time you'll figure out what you need to do. I'm happy to let you figure that out."

So that's fine too, right?

But when it's something that they really have to do, mirroring will come in very handy.

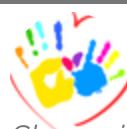
You really should mirror as much as possible for your children because it builds emotional literacy and emotional resilience.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Next time your child is upset, instead of trying to calm them down, try to first connect with them, by trying to understand why they are acting that way
- When you child shows strong emotions, try to activate their mirror neurons by matching their facial expression and body language
- Practice the three listening techniques with your child, or with another person: summarize & paraphrase, clarify, wonder out loud
- When you know that you are going to have to ask your child to do something they likely won't want to do, try the "Front Loading" technique
- Try the "Stay in Motion" technique next time your child does not want to cooperate
- Watch Jennifer's [free one-hour parenting webinar on how to be a Connected Parent here](#)



Sarah Rosensweet: How to create “win-win solutions” when dealing with your children

In this interview with Sarah Rosensweet, a peaceful parenting coach, speaker, and educator, we talk about several Peaceful Parenting tools that you can use to get your child to cooperate without yelling.

The strategies that Sarah shares will help calm you down, and calm your children down.



“Take those few seconds to connect and delight in our child.



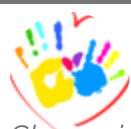
In this interview

- About Sarah Rosensweet
- Why getting your child's attention is the first step to getting cooperation
- How to create a "win-win solution", so that you get what you want while your children get what they want
- How to stay playful and calm when interacting with your child
- How to use the "Stop, Drop and Breathe" technique to calm down when you feel stressed or annoyed with your children
- How to remind yourself to keep calm, even when you are feeling stressed or upset
- Why sometimes "giving up" is the best parenting strategy
- How to use the "Delighting in Your Child" technique to build connection and goodwill with your child throughout the day
- How to improve your relationship with your child in just 15 minutes a day
- How to stay calm and in control of yourself when dealing with your children
- Action steps

About Sarah Rosensweet

Sarah Rosensweet is a certified peaceful parenting coach, speaker, and educator. She lives in Toronto with her husband and three big kids (ages 15, 18, and 21).

Peaceful parenting is a non-punitive, connection-based approach that uses firm limits with lots of empathy.



Sarah works one-on-one virtually with parents all over the world to help them go from frustrated and overwhelmed to, "We've got this!"

Read more at her website, SarahRosensweet.com, or listen to her top-rated parenting podcast, The Peaceful Parenting Podcast, wherever you get your podcasts!

Sarah offers [a free short parenting consultation here](#).

You can also [download a free 21 Day "How to Stop Yelling At Your Kids" e-course that Sarah created here](#).



Why getting your child's attention is the first step to getting cooperation

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working well for you or your clients, for getting kids to listen, or increasing the chances of them cooperating?

Sarah Rosensweet: The first problem we have as parents is that we start off by not getting their attention in an effective way.

They might be engrossed in what they're doing, and so they don't actually hear us. They might be too busy playing, and we're not going over and getting in their face (in a friendly way) and letting them know what our request is.

We want to make sure that we're going over and getting their attention in a friendly way, and not just calling out from downstairs, or from across the room.

So, it starts with that.

Sometimes they might hear us, but they might ignore us because they want to keep playing. They don't want to come and get ready for a bath, or they don't want to come and get ready for school.

Either way we want to start out by making sure that we're getting their attention in an effective way.



How to create a “win-win solution”, so that you get what you want while your children get what they want

Sarah shares why it is important to understand that your agenda is different from your child's agenda, and how understanding what you child wants can help getting them to cooperate.

Sarah Rosensweet: What I say to people in my community, or my clients, is that it's helpful to recognize that your agenda is different from your child's agenda. Like your agenda is for them to get ready for school or get ready for bed. Their agenda is to keep playing.

And so, what I find works really well in terms of getting kids to listen and cooperate, is to find some way to make it fun or make it a game, or to bring play into the request. In Peaceful Parenting we call that a “win-win solution.” So, you get some of what you want, and they get some of what they want.

For example, when one of my sons was little, he loved monkeys. So, I would pretend he was a baby monkey, and climb on mama monkey's back, and we're going to go into the bathroom, or we're going to go up to the monkey house or whatever. Anytime I could engage monkeys into play, because that's what he loved, he would be much more cooperative.

Or, my other son, he loved this show that was popular when he was little, called Blues Clues. And in the show, they ran around looking for clues on things. So, you could say to him like, “Look for a clue over on the garbage can and go put this in the garbage.”



And he would run over because there was a pretend clue on the garbage can.

So, think about what your child's interests are and try to engage them in play. So that they can keep doing what they love, which is playing, while they're doing what you want them to do, which is come and get ready for bed, or take a bath, or whatever.

How to stay playful and calm when interacting with your child

Why understanding that your child is doing the best they can and is not trying to give you a hard time can help you feel better and be more compassionate towards your children.

Sue Meintjes: That makes so much sense, thanks. What can we do from a Peaceful Parenting perspective when we are stressed, and it feels like it is difficult to be playful?

Sarah Rosensweet: I think the first thing that you want to do is remind yourself that you know your child is doing the best they can. That they're not giving you a hard time, they're having a hard time. They just really want to keep playing, and that they don't share your same perspective that it's important to get to bed, or it's important to get ready for school. And that they do want to be good.

And so, I think it can really help us when we can shift our perspective to not feeling like a victim, or that they're giving us a hard time, when we can just remind ourselves that they're acting

like children because they are children. The important thing to them is to play. That helps us to shift to be much more compassionate and patient.

How to use the “Stop, Drop and Breathe” technique to calm down when you feel stressed or annoyed with your children

And then, even before that, once you feel that you're starting to feel annoyed, you might want to just do what we call a “Stop, Drop and Breathe.”

You stop what you're doing. Drop your agenda. Your agenda might be to try and get them to come to the table for dinner. Put your hand to your heart and breathe, and then maybe you introduce the mindset shift at that point.

“They're not giving me a hard time; they're having a hard time. They want to keep playing, and that's normal.” And then you can introduce the win-win solution.

How to remind yourself to keep calm, even when you are feeling stressed or upset

Sue Meintjes: That sounds good. Part of the difficulty I've found is just reminding yourself to do this. I imagine it is just practice - the more you practice the easier it gets.

Sarah Rosensweet: Yeah, it is helpful to practice. And it's helpful to even put up some signs around your house. Put up some cards or

post-it notes or something, just with some of those mantras to remind yourself.

Why sometimes “giving up” is the best parenting strategy

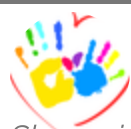
Sarah shares why getting into the habit of asking yourself “How can I say yes to this?” can help your child trust you more, and make them more likely to listen to you when you really need to say no.

Sue Meintjes: I love the idea of Peaceful Parenting. Do you have any more tips for peacefully getting your kids to cooperate and listen?

Sarah Rosensweet: When there is that agenda that you're trying to get your kids to come along to, or when you're trying to set a limit, stop and ask yourself, “Is this really necessary? Is this just because I think it's a good idea?” Or does my child really have to wear their coat even though they said they're not hot? Really just be mindful of not getting into those power struggles.

Say Stop and train yourself to Stop. And if your child asks you something, “Can we do this?” or “Can I do this?” train yourself to stop and think, “Can I say yes to this?” And sometimes the answer will be no. But it should be a thoughtful no. Because a lot of times we say like a knee-jerk no, without even thinking about it.

The more we can let our child know that we are on their side, that we're trying to be flexible, that we're not being arbitrary or power tripping, the more trust they will have in us and the better our



relationship will be. And then when there are those times when we just need to say, “You know what, I’m really sorry, but it has to be X, Y, Z,” they will have that trust in us.

It’s kind of like all the times when you’re saying yes when you can, not getting into power struggles, it’s like you’re putting goodwill into a bank account. And when that bank account is nice and juicy and full, you can make withdrawals from it.

Because they haven’t experienced you as arbitrary power tripping, and controlling, when you do have to sort of put your foot down and set a limit about something, they trust you, and they know, even if they don’t agree, that you have their best interests at heart.

How to use the “Delighting in Your Child” technique to build connection and goodwill with your child throughout the day

I have started doing this technique every day with each of my children, and it is so helpful in creating a positive connection between me and my children.

Sue Meintjes: That sounds good, thanks. Do you have any other tips for “putting goodwill into their bank account”, to help build trust for when you need it?

Sarah Rosensweet: Yeah, for sure. I can give you something really simple, and I can give you something more high-level. The easy version and the advanced version.

So, the easy version is what we call “delighting in your child.” And it’s when you look for these micro moments of connection. Just meeting your child’s eye across the room and giving them a warm smile, or an unexpected squeeze, or a hug when you walk by, or a compliment, or just something very small. Something that just takes one second. But it’s just something you keep in your consciousness.

Tony Morrison, a late American author, says, “Let the love that you feel in your heart show on your face.” And that’s how I think of delighting in your child.

Because a lot of times we’re so busy, and we’re just kind of moving through the schedule and we’re thinking about 25 different things at once and sometimes that can kind of look like our angry face or stressed face, and it really has nothing to do with the kids. And maybe we’re not even angry or stressed. We just have a lot on our plates.

So, if we can just take those few seconds to connect and delight in our child, and just remind ourselves of that throughout the day, that’s sort of the easy low hanging fruit.

How to improve your relationship with your child in just 15 minutes a day

Sarah Rosensweet: And then the gold standard of peaceful parenting, which is harder. Take 15 minutes a day of what we call



special time, and you say, "I'm all yours for the next 15 minutes, what would you like to play. Or what would you like to do?"

Ideally you do this every day, but it's not possible for everyone in every schedule.

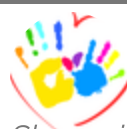
It's not screens and it's not anything too structured, but it's just play. My older son who loved Blue's Clues, maybe we play Blue's Clues or something like that. Just playing for 10, 15 minutes a day.

How to stay calm and in control of yourself when dealing with your children

Sue Meintjes: Thanks for that, it is something that I am working on with my children. Do you have any tips for staying calm and in control when dealing with your children?

Sarah Rosensweet: Figure out your recipe for self-care or your recipe for calm. Figuring out what you need to show up as your best self. When my kids were little, it was making sure that I got enough sleep and exercise and time alone. I couldn't always get all those things, but I would always try. But figuring out for you what you need for your recipe for calm and trying to make it happen.

Doing a trade with another parent, or asking for help, or accepting help when it's offered. Maybe for another person, instead of time alone, it might be social time with a friend, to have a coffee with a

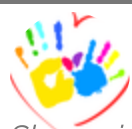


girlfriend or something. But whatever it is that you need to do to take care of yourself.

I think that's one tip for staying calm. It's hard to stay calm when our resources are low. So just, "What do you need to keep your resources up?"

One thing that I was reading about recently was when self-care is destructive. So, one example that I see with parents is parents who stay up too late because they want that me-time, because they feel like, "Oh, you know, I've been doing things for the kids all day. I just need that me-time." But then they don't get enough sleep. And so, it's sometimes the things that you do that feel like self-care that can actually get in the way of staying calm.

So even if it feels like a little bit of a sacrifice, maybe try to at least go to bed early every other night when the kids go to bed.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Next time you want to ask your child to do something, first double-check that you have their attention
- Make a list of the things your child enjoys, and then try to incorporate that next time you ask them to do something
- Practice the “Stop, Drop, and Breathe” technique next time your child annoys you
- Try to “Delight in your Child” at least once a day
- Download a [free 21 Day “How to Stop Yelling at Your Kids” e-course that Sarah created, here.](#)



Lisa Smith: The four steps to getting your kids to listen without yelling

In this interview with Lisa Smith, a parenting coach, speaker, best-selling author, and podcast host, we talk about the real reason kids don't listen, and Lisa shares her 4-step system to get kids to listen and cooperate without threatening.

Lisa also explains how to understand what your child is actually capable of doing, which helps you have more empathy and understanding for your kids.



“ No matter what you're doing, and no matter where you're at, you are not alone.



Expert Parenting Advice

Share via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

In this interview

- About Lisa Smith
- The real reason it feels like your child often isn't listening to you
- What to do after you have gained the attention of your child, to ensure they understand what you then to do
- How to use "Pattern Interrupters" to gain your children's attention, no yelling required
- How to leverage your child's teacher to easily get your child's attention without yelling
- Why children often seem like they are not listening
- Why it is critical that you understand what your child is actually capable of doing and understanding
- Why it is never too late to get started on the path to peaceful parenting (and how to get started)
- The first step to becoming a more peaceful parent
- Action steps

About Lisa Smith

Lisa Smith, The Peaceful Parent, transforms frustrated parents -- who regularly default to yelling, threatening, and punishing -- into peaceful leaders within their households.

She is a parent coach, speaker, author, and host of the weekly podcast, [Real World Peaceful Parenting](#).



Lisa is an international best-selling author of ["The Angry Parent: How to Find Peace in Your Parenting Through the Message of Anger."](#)

Her [signature parenting program \(Peaceful Parenting\)](#) helps parents stop the struggle, calm the chaos, and "create the connection."

As a former dominant parent, Lisa knows the transformative power of Peaceful Parenting firsthand, and is committed to helping families worldwide.

You can find out more about Lisa at her website, [The Peaceful Parent.](#)

Lisa also offers a Peaceful Parenting coaching and parenting community called [The Hive](#), which you can join here.



The real reason it feels like your child often isn't listening to you

Step one of Lisa's four step system is to get your child's attention. Here Lisa shares why the first step is so critical.

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working well for you or your clients, for getting kids to listen, or increasing the chances of them cooperating?

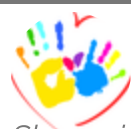
Lisa Smith: The best technique I know is really this four-step process that I've developed.

Step one is to make sure that you gain your kids' attention before you make the request.

So often, we're just making the request, we're just calling it out, "Sue, put your shoes on." And what we don't realize is that kids are not multitaskers. They're not scanning the universe for your command while they're doing something else.

What happens to parents is that we're often assuming. For example, because I've called out, "Sue, put your shoes on," I'm assuming that you've heard me and that you're going to do it. Meanwhile, you haven't heard me. And this is where the conflict comes in.

And so, I love to remind parents that step one always has to be to gain the kid's attention before making the request.



Sue Meintjes: That's so true. I work with moms, and I often see them speaking to their kids while they are far away, and it is obvious that their kids aren't paying attention.

What to do after you have gained the attention of your child, to ensure they understand what you them to do

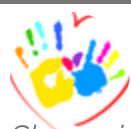
After getting your child's attention, Lisa recommends you then make your request, confirm that they heard you, and then gain commitment from them.

Lisa Smith: The next step, step two, after you've gained their attention by saying their name and they've responded, is you make the request. "Can you go put your shoes on?"

And then step three is you confirm that they heard you. "What did I just say?" Sometimes they'll say, "Uh, I have no idea. I wasn't really paying attention." You can say, "Great, let me say it again. While you are paying attention, please go put your shoes on."

And then step four is you gain the commitment from them. "Can you do that?" And that creates a habit process for you that we're going to go through every time that increases the probability of success.

And that also makes it clear what I'm asking you to do. And I'm confirming that I've heard you say you're going to do it.



Sue Meintjes: I heard about this on one of your podcasts, and I've tried it with my kids. It is very effective.

How to use “Pattern Interrupters” to gain your children's attention, no yelling required

Lisa shares several techniques that you can use to gain your child's attention instead of yelling.

Lisa Smith: Yeah. Because what you're doing, Sue, is when I say your name, I'm doing what's called a pattern interrupter. I'm gaining your attention, and what most parents do is they're using yelling as their pattern interrupter, right? So, I yell out, “Put your shoes on. Put your shoes on. Put your shoes on.”

Then I come in the living room and I'm like, “Sue, put your shoes on right now!” and you look up at me and you're like, “Geez, mom, you don't have to yell.” “Well, apparently I do because the only time you listen to me is when I yell.” But the truth is, the yelling was the pattern interrupter. And I listen to you when you interrupt my pattern.

And so, my suggestion to parents is just that they use a different pattern interrupter. Rather than yelling, use calling their name. Come out of the kitchen and into the living room and make the request rather than yelling. It makes sense when you hear it. Most people, I explain this to them, and they go, “Oh, yeah, I get it.”



But we get caught up in thinking our kids can multitask and as you and I both know, they can't.

Sue Meintjes: I love the idea of pattern interrupters and having alternatives to yelling. Do you have any more examples of pattern interrupters?

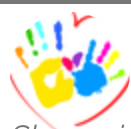
How to leverage your child's teacher to easily get your child's attention without yelling

Lisa Smith: So, another one is look at whatever your child's teacher is using. Pattern interrupters are very popular in schools and daycares. Because if you have 20 kids in your class, you can't just call out, "Hey, line up for lunch." You must get everybody's attention before you make the request.

So, teachers will say, "1, 2, 3," and the kids will say, "Eyes on me." Or, another one many teachers use is crisscross. The teacher will say, "Crisscross," and then the kids will say "Apple sauce."

So, I always recommend, especially with little kids, finding out whatever your kid's teacher is using, and then it's a great idea to use that because your kid's teacher is already conditioning them all day with that pattern interrupter. So that's a good one.

Another one could be having a code word or a hand clapping or a nickname. You can whistle. When I was little, I remember dad would go out on the porch and have some kind of dog whistle



and the kids would hear it and then they would come running home.

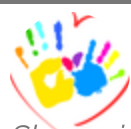
What is that? That's a pattern interrupter. We're all in the street playing kickball, and little Joey hears his dad have that specific whistle. He knows that means "I need to come home." So, a whistle's a good idea. Maybe an alarm on a phone.

Why children often seem like they are not listening

Lisa says that when your child seems to be ignoring you, it is often simply that they don't register what you are saying, because they are not capable of concentrating on multiple things at once.

Lisa Smith: There are all kinds of different ways to gain your kids' attention, but I think what's also important to remember here is, because kids have underdeveloped brains, they are not scanning the universe waiting for your next command. We wish they were; we'd like them to, but developmentally that's just not where they're at.

So that is an unrealistic expectation. That I'm going to be in the kitchen, cleaning up the breakfast dishes, and I'm going to call out, "Get your shoes on." And little Sue who's reading a book in the living room, or watching TV, or watching her iPad, or staring out the window, is scanning the universe for my command, and that you're going to hear me and go do exactly what I requested. It's completely unrealistic.



Why it is critical that you understand what your child is actually capable of doing and understanding

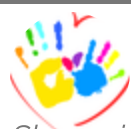
According to Lisa, parents often expect their children to do things that they are not developmentally capable of doing – we often overestimate what they are capable of.

Sue Meintjes: It sounds like it is also about being realistic about what your child is capable of. Having realistic expectations and knowing what you can realistically expect from your child based on their brain development. Is that also important?

Lisa Smith: Completely important. You can't expect something of me that I'm not capable of doing. Like, you know, I don't run regularly because I have a bad knee. And if you said to me tomorrow morning, "Go out and run 26 miles of a marathon and I'll give you a thousand dollars." I don't care how you incentivize me; I can't go do it. I'm not trained. I'm not developmentally ready to run 26 miles.

So, I spend a lot of time talking to parents about "What are kids capable of, in terms of brain development," and I really encourage parents not to ask more of their children than they're developmentally capable of. I mean, we would never ask a newborn to tie their shoes. It's silly to even say it.

Sue Meintjes: What are some of the roadblocks that you can run into when we follow this process? What are the difficulties that we can expect when using your four-step process?



Lisa Smith: Well, I think the other thing, Sue, is just accepting that most of this work honestly involves the parents, not the kids. We both know this. I think the other critical component here is dropping the expectation that your children are going to listen the first time, every time.

It's just not how humans work. I mean, I don't know anybody that listens to me the first time every time. Whether it's my son, my husband, my best friend, people that work for me, the person at Starbucks. Adult to adult, we don't go around expecting everyone to listen to us the first time, every time. And yet we have this expectation of our children, and it's unrealistic.

Why it is never too late to get started on the path to peaceful parenting (and how to get started)

Lisa shares an important lesson, that it is never too late to improve your parenting and build a better relationship with your child.

Sue Meintjes: I had a look at your website, and your story is really inspiring. You talked about the "step-by-step path to calmer, more joyful parenting", which I found very intriguing. Can you quickly share something about that?

Lisa Smith: Well, thank you. It is one of my missions in life to inspire parents and give them hope. I like to tell parents regularly, it's never too late to get started on the path to peaceful parenting.



A misconception I run into a lot is, parents are told, or they read, or they're under the impression, that there's like a cutoff. You know, "if I don't bring peaceful parenting tools into my family by the time my kid is 2, 3, 5, then it's too late," and that is not true.

It's never too late to get on the path to peaceful parenting. I've worked with parents of adult children all the way down to newborns. It's never too late, and you're not broken. Nothing's gone wrong. You just need some new tools.

I encourage every parent to realize that and find tools. There's lots of resources out there. And take the time. If you want connection and cooperation with your kids, you want to move away from yelling, you want to enjoy parenting, go find tools that help you, and there's plenty out there.

The first step to becoming a more peaceful parent

Sue Meintjes: That's definitely something that we have been realizing through doing this book and talking to all the parenting experts. Just by becoming aware of these parenting approaches, these parenting tools, we've realized how much easier and fun parenting can be. There is always room for growth and improvement.

What would you say is the first step to peaceful parenting?

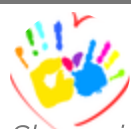
Lisa Smith: To have hope. To know that you're not alone. I know that before I got on my path to peaceful parenting, I felt very



alone. I felt like I was the only parent screwing up. I was the only parent yelling at my kid. I felt a lot of shame and guilt and when I went around and tried to ask other people in my circle, no one seemed to be struggling with the things I was struggling with. So that just intensified my shame and my guilt and gave me evidence that I was alone.

I work hard to build communities through my weekly podcast, through my membership, through working with parents, through working with other coaches like yourself. I work hard to get the word out that no matter what you're doing, and no matter where you're at, you are not alone.

And the first step is just to ask for help. Just have hope. Tell yourself "I'm not alone," and go find some resources to prove that, so that you can get away from the guilt and shame. I always say guilt is the enemy of the effective parent. It's hard to transform if you're marinating in guilt.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Identify one Pattern Interrupter you can use to get your child's attention (besides yelling)
- Practice Lisa's four step system next time you want to get your child to do something: (1) Attention; (2) Request; (3) Confirm; (4) Commitment
- Research what your child is actually capable of doing and understanding based on their current brain development (instead of assuming that they should be capable of more than they are)
- Next time your child doesn't listen to you, remember that no-one can listen the first time, every time
- Find out more about Lisa at her website, [The Peaceful Parent](#), or join her online Peaceful Parenting community, [The Hive](#).

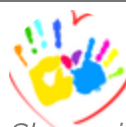


Judy Arnall: How to calm down your child's brain so that they can listen to what you are saying

In this interview with Judy Arnall, a best-selling author and a certified brain and child development specialist, we talk about what actually happens in your child's brain when they misbehave or become emotional, and why hugging works so well to calm them (and yourself) down.



“Kids don't wake up in the morning and say, “I'm gonna bug my parents today.” They don't. They are just natural emotion-letter-outers.



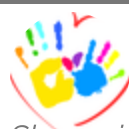
In this interview

- About Judy Arnall
- Why hugging your child when they misbehave is important if you want them to listen to you
- What happens inside your child's brain when they are misbehaving or throwing a tantrum
- How to stay calm when your child is upsetting you
- What to say and do after your child has calmed down
- Why you need to learn to "pick your battles" with strong-willed children
- Why you should rather give yourself a time-out than your child
- What happens in your brain (and your child's brain) when you give your child a hug to calm them down
- Why there is no such thing as "bad" emotions (and what you need to teach your kids about emotions)
- Action steps

About Judy Arnall

Judy Arnall, BA, CCFE, DTM is a certified brain and child development specialist and master of non-punitive parenting and education practices.

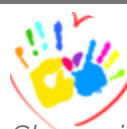
She is the founder of the [Attachment Parenting Canada](#) association and is the bestselling author of 5 print books translated into 5 languages, including "[Discipline Without Distress](#)" and "[Parenting with Patience](#)".



She has also compiled a handy tips book titled ["Attachment Parenting Tips: Raising Toddlers to Teens"](#).

Her latest book, ["Unschooling to University: Relationships matter most in a world crammed with content"](#), is becoming a bestseller in an age of parents seeking educational options. She is the parent of 5 self-directed educated, attachment-parented children.

Judy has attended four university convocations. She can be reached at [ProfessionalParenting.ca](#), or [JudyArnall.com](#), or at [UnschoolingToUniversity.com](#)



Why hugging your child when they misbehave is important if you want them to listen to you

Judy shares why, when your child is misbehaving, giving them a hug is not “rewarding them”, but instead calms them down, and allows them to listen and problem solve with you.

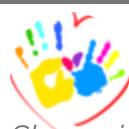
Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working well for you or your clients, for getting kids to listen, or increasing the chances of them cooperating?

Judy Arnall: I would say my best strategy is giving the child a hug. Because it connects you to the child, and everybody listens better after they feel validated. Now, I get lots of pushback from parents on this because they say, “If you give a hug to a misbehaving child, you’re rewarding them.”

Most misbehaving children do it because they’re expressing strong emotions. They’re not calculating that they should misbehave. So, what you’re doing in giving them a hug is calming them down. When you’re both in a space where you’re really calm, then you can talk to them, and problem solve what to do instead.

What happens inside your child's brain when they are misbehaving or throwing a tantrum

Judy is a certified brain and child development specialist, and here she shares what happens in your child's brain when they throw a



tantrum, and how giving them a hug physically calms down their nervous system.

Sue Meintjes: So, you don't punish them when they are misbehaving, but instead try to see what they need to be better. I know you are an expert at childhood brain development, so can you tell me more about what happens inside your child's brain when they are throwing a tantrum or behaving badly?

Judy Arnall: When a child is throwing a tantrum, or upset, or screaming, or crying, they're under stress. So, their body is releasing cortisol and adrenaline. Their body is on high alert and by not even just saying anything, just calming them down, putting them in your lap, picking them up, giving them a hug, you're calming physically the sympathetic nervous system. So, you're calming them down.

You know, nothing gets solved when everybody's upset. We're mad. We issue consequences. The child's mad. They may be hitting and pushing. Just physically calming down is the first step, before you get to the rest of the steps. It's good for everybody. It calms the stress response.

How to stay calm when your child is upsetting you

Staying calm when my children are upset is very difficult for me. Here Judy gives some practical tips to follow when your child starts throwing a tantrum, to help you stay calm and help them calm down.

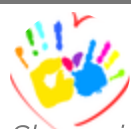


Sue Meintjes: Yes, nobody can listen when they are agitated or stressed. How do you stay calm when your child is behaving badly and making you feel stressed? Like, when my daughter starts throwing a tantrum, it makes me upset, and I struggle to remain calm.

Judy Arnall: Oh, I've had lots of experience with that. Five kids. If you're out in public, getting them back to the car, where you're in a quiet place and nobody's watching, really helps parents too.

What I used to do is put my kids in their car seat, and then I just stand by them and sort of pat their head a bit. Not say anything and just wait. Just wait. So, they can feel you patting their head while they're still tantruming. And they're probably mad because they've been put in their car seat. But they do eventually calm down. They really do. Everybody does. And it helps you feel like you're doing something to help the situation by just stroking their head.

At home it's a little harder. I would make sure they're safe. If they're really little, you could put them back in their crib. They could finish their tantrum in there. Sometimes they don't want you to touch them or hug them. And then just let them be, just be around, but let them finish their tantrum. There's not much you can say or do if they don't want you to touch them. But again, every tantrum calms down at some point. And that's when you go in with a hug.



What to say and do after your child has calmed down

After your child has calmed down, the next step is to talk to them and teach them what is acceptable, and what is not acceptable. Judy shares what you need to talk about after an emotional outburst.

Sue Meintjes: So, the first step is to calm them down. What do you recommend we do after they are calmed down? What do we do after the hug?

Judy Arnall: After, you can talk about feelings. Acknowledge that they really had big, strong emotions and it's okay to have big, strong emotions, but it's not okay to kick your brother. Because after, then they can start hearing what you're teaching them because they're calm. So, don't forget the teaching part.

Sue Meintjes: I'm really interested in learning more about this non-punitive parenting approach. Is there anything else you want to add?

Judy Arnall: There's always a few tools to use. It depends on your child's age though.

I always say under age four you can use more physical tools like childproofing, substitution, prevention, things like that. You could always pick them up and move them if they're not listening to you.

After age four, they're starting to become more talkative, then the number one tool is problem solving. Coming up with solutions that work for both you and the child to meet both needs. And that

really works as long as everyone's calm. That's been my number one tool all through the teen years too.

Kids learn to problem solve. They learn that relationships need to be worked out rather than punishing people in relationships. I go into it more in my books. But it depends on a child's ability to talk things out too.

Why you need to learn to “pick your battles” with strong-willed children

Judy shares some useful things to keep in mind if you have a strong-willed child.

Sue Meintjes: Can you give me an example of how you would problem solve with a 4-year-old? For example, she wants to wear a pink shirt, and doesn't want to wear any other shirt.

Judy Arnall: Well, with strong-willed children, they're born with, and they keep that temperament, through their whole life. It takes a little more working out things with strong-willed children and a lot more “yeses” on your part. So, you got to look at, “Is clothing really something I want to fight for?”

They exhibit very strong preferences. And that's a good thing. That's a trait that you want to protect. I always say that parenting strong-willed toddlers is like parenting a teenager. You're just getting practice a lot earlier. Now, safety for one is something you

do want to really, really get your needs met on, so you're going to push for that.

But things like what they wear, you got to put that in the "not going to battle that one" pocket. So really pick your battles when you have strong-willed children.

Why you should rather give yourself a time-out than your child

This advice from Judy is something that I have started doing more and more, and it definitely helps me keep in control. When my kids misbehave and upset me, I walk away to first calm down, before coming back to talk to them.

Sue Meintjes: So, try to be more flexible. I really like the idea of just first focusing on calming down everyone. One thing that I tend to struggle with is keeping calm myself.

Judy Arnall: Yeah. I always advocate that parents need to be calm first, because we have a lot more practice calming ourselves down and, someone needs to be in control.

I know time-out in North America is very popular and I always tell parents, you know, time-out is more for you to get yourself calm. So, rather than putting your child in time-out, you take a break. Whether it's taking deep breaths or just having a five-minute cup of tea, to get a grip on yourself. And you have to do that first before you can calm your child down. That's for sure.



What happens in your brain (and your child's brain) when you give your child a hug to calm them down

Sue Meintjes: Yeah. And just getting a hug yourself is also calming. What does the hug do to the brain?

Judy Arnall: Well, the stress response has calmed down. So, it lowers your cortisol, your adrenaline, which sends better signals to the brain. Your heart rate goes down. You just start thinking more clearly.

When we're angry, our brains don't think logically. We are just overloaded with emotions. We think more clearly when we're calmer, and then we're going to be more realistic. We're not going to ground our teenager for a month because logically we know that's impossible. We make better choices when our brain is not over-flooded with emotions.

Why there is no such thing as “bad” emotions (and what you need to teach your kids about emotions)

This is so important – teaching kids that they don't need to fear their emotions, and that all their emotions are ok.

Sue Meintjes: Yeah, that makes sense. Is there anything else that you think parents should know about calming down themselves or their children?

Judy Arnall: I think there's a lot of bad parenting advice out there and I think the more parents know about brain science, the better.



I think it's a good trend that we're recognizing children have big, strong emotions and it's okay to feel those emotions. It's not okay to behave certain ways because of those emotions, but all emotions are good, and kids learn how to handle them by watching us.

I think we're heading more in that direction, which is a good thing.

Sue Meintjes: I'm really enjoying your book, Discipline Without Distress. Before we end, can you share some of your favorite parts of your book?

Judy Arnall: I think the best part is 50 pages of common behaviors. It tells parents what the child might be feeling. Kids don't wake up in the morning and say, "I'm gonna bug my parents today." They don't. They are just natural "emotion-letter-outers".

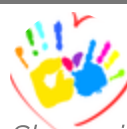
I think the charts kind of help you figure out what they're feeling and what to do about it.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Next time your child throws a tantrum or gets upset, instead of scolding them, first give them a hug
- After your child has calmed down, talk to them about their feelings and that it is ok to have those feelings
- Instead of thinking of punishments or consequences, try to sit with your child and problem solve together
- Instead of giving your child a time-out next time, rather see if you can give yourself a time-out to calm down
- Get Judy's book ["Discipline Without Distress"](#) for better understanding your child's behavior



Anna Seewald - Why listening to your children helps them listen to you

In this interview with Anna Seewald, author, and founder of [Authentic Parenting](#), we talk about why listening to your children is critical if you want them to listen to you.

Anna shares some great advice for becoming a better listener, and how to use listening to build a stronger connection and relationship with your child.



“ Listen to our children with curiosity, with presence, with openness, with no agenda.



Expert Parenting Advice

Share via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

In this interview

- About Anna Seewald
- Why listening to your children helps them listen to you
- What it really means when you feel like your children aren't listening to you
- How to build connection with your child (and why connecting with them helps them cooperate)
- How to become a better listener
- How to show your child that you are really listening to them... and what happens if you do this consistently
- What to do if you feel like your children are not listening to you
- A simple technique to prevent power struggles with older children
- Action steps

About Anna Seewald

Anna Seewald is an internationally recognized parenting expert, keynote speaker, parent educator, divorce mediator, and the host of the top-rated podcast Authentic Parenting.

With graduate degrees in psychology and education for more than 20 years she has helped children, families, teachers and thousands of parents from around the world through her private practice, group programs, workshops, online classes and courses.

She offers court-ordered parenting classes and provides co-parenting counseling.

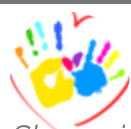


Anna talks about trauma-informed parenting and education, emotional regulation for caregivers and children, cultivating resilience, managing challenging behaviors, and raising emotionally healthy children. Her mission is to help children by helping parents.

Visit [Anna's website, AuthenticParenting.com, here](#).

You can find her podcast, Authentic Parenting, on [Apple Podcasts](#) or [Spotify](#).

Or follow [her on Instagram](#).



Why listening to your children helps them listen to you

Instead of focusing on changing your kids, Anna recommends focusing on improving your own listening skills.

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working well for you or your clients, for getting kids to listen, or increasing the chances of them cooperating?

Anna Seewald: Before using a specific strategy to get children to listen and cooperate, the first thing we need to do as parents is listen to our children. Listening is a super skill, and any parent can hone that skill, and we all need to get better at listening first.

Listen to our children with curiosity, with presence, with openness, with no agenda, with no, "Oh, I know why or what's going to happen," with no intention to interject or interfere or assert our own words.

Just listening with pure intention of receiving our child, getting information, hearing them out, trying to understand where they're at, what they're going through, I think is a fundamental skill and we need to get better at this skill in order for them to listen and cooperate with us.

If we don't take this first step, then we will not be so successful.



What it really means when you feel like your children aren't listening to you

Anna shares why often, when your kids don't listen to you, it is because you are stressed or overworked. So instead of focusing on getting them to listen, focus on calming down, letting go of your agenda, and connecting with your child.

Anna Seewald: Usually, I find that when parents say, "I want my child to listen and cooperate," what that means is, "I want to control the outcome. I want to be in charge, and I want things to go the way I want them to go." It sort of dismisses the child completely.

It becomes about the parent, but it tells us something about the parent. When I hear that complaint from a parent, that "my child is not listening, I want them to listen and cooperate. I say something a hundred times and then I have to yell and shout for them to listen or respond." That to me is a sign that the parent is stressed out, is burnt out, is overwhelmed.

Because if you are in that state of hectic frenzy parenting in this modern paced, fast-paced, go, go, go, do, do, do culture, you want your children to listen and cooperate the very first time. Because you have a to-do list, you have things to do, you have places to be.

But children are present, and they are doing their own thing. Somehow, we live in different worlds. Our time sensation is different.

Children learn to tune out quickly when we completely disregard their own reality. When we don't see them.

So, recognize that if I'm asking too much from my child, that's not a sign that my child doesn't respect me or doesn't listen to me. That's a signal to me that I need to pause, take a break, and re-evaluate my agenda. "Am I rushing? Am I frenzied?"

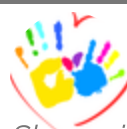
Because children sense that stress, and they learn to tune out because they don't want to be with the mommy who is in that stressed-out state.

The strategy would be to relinquish all our agenda for the moment, to be in the present moment and approach our children and see what they're engaged in and connect with them before asking for something.

How to build connection with your child (and why connecting with them helps them cooperate)

Anna explains the two different types of connection you have with your child, and how to first connect with your child in the moment before asking them to do something.

Anna Seewald: Connection comes in two flavors, so to speak.



There is the overall connection, the overall temperature if you will, of your relationship with your child.

And then there is the connection in the moment when you go down to your child's level, show interest in the activities that they are involved in and say, "Hey, wow, what are you building? I see. Oh, that's so cool. How did you do that?"

Once you connect with the child and you get a nod, a smile, or a response, then you can say that we must do X, Y, and Z.

So, first you show respect for the child's time and activity, and then you move on with your agenda.

You connect with your child, in a respectful and present manner. It takes only a few seconds. And then you state what we're going to do next.

Now, sometimes your child may still not like the idea of coming with you, but you need to set your limit. You have to say, "I get it buddy. I see that you want to play with your truck. Let's put this safely right here and no one is going to touch this. When we come back, you can play with this again. How about that?" Or try to give the child a choice about the situation.

How to become a better listener

Anna shares several useful techniques for practicing your listening skills, with friends, on your own, and with your kids.



Sue Meintjes: That's amazing, thanks. What are some things parents can do to listen better to their kids? To really listen and understand where your child is coming from?

Anna Seewald: The biggest one is to relinquish control of your agenda and purely practice listening. You can do it with your friend, you can do it with your partner, and you can do it with your child.

If listening is difficult for you with your child, I would encourage you to practice listening somewhere else, because you want to hone that skill.

You can practice it with another person. You can mindfully engage with another friend. You can say, "Hey, how about for four minutes each of us share and the other person listens for four minutes without interruption, without suggesting or saying anything, just receiving the other person. And then we take turns listening to one another."

Or you can listen to music for 15 minutes at a stretch. Put some music on and sit down and tell yourself, "I'm not going to do anything else right now except listen to this piece of music," and witness what's happening inside you. Do you have an urge to get up and engage in something else besides listening? Do you criticize yourself for wasting time? Do you say to yourself, "this is stupid, this is nonsense?"



That's another way of practicing listening.

You can also listen to yourself in a form of mindful meditation early in the morning or before bedtime. Or you can go for a walk and just listen to the sounds of nature for five minutes straight without the phone, or without listening to any books or podcasts.

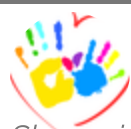
So, start slow if listening is difficult for you.

Here's another idea. Our smartphones come with a recording option. Put your smartphone in your pocket, press record, and record one or multiple interactions with your child or children. Then, a few days later, revisit that recording. Listen to yourself.

How do you talk? What tone do you use? What words do you use with your children? How do your children respond to you? What do they say? What words do they use? What patterns do you see?

It takes a bit of courage to do this exercise, but you need to self-reflect and self-examine your communication in order to transform it. I think it will give you a good clue.

You can also practice your listening with presence, with no agenda, with beginner's mind, and with curiosity to learn something. Imagine that you don't know anything about your child, that maybe your child is not even your child. Maybe this is someone else's child that you are mentoring, or maybe you are just a friend to this child. How would you listen to that child?



Because we are intimately connected with our children, we assume that we know what they know, what they like, and what they don't like. But when we truly drop into the present moment, open our heart, our minds, and our eyes, and truly listen with no agenda but to listen, then amazing, magical things happen in that relationship.

How to show your child that you are really listening to them...and what happens if you do this consistently

Part of listening to your children is showing them that you are listening to them. Here Anna shares how you can ensure that your children feel listened to.

Anna Seewald: When you do this regularly, your child feels seen, heard, understood, and visible. Your child basks in your attention because you're listening with your whole self. Your eyes are showing interest and curiosity. Your body posture is relaxed, and it says, "I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to sit here and listen to you speak because I value what you have to say, and I care about it. And I have all the time in the world."

That has to come through your facial expression and through your body language. Because if you are just sitting there, but in your mind, you are somewhere else, this will not work.

And the more we can show up like this in our parenting relationship, the more our children will listen to us. It's not that



they're not listening to us. They are ignoring us. They are tuning us out because what we say is nagging.

What we say is not in their best interest. What we say is masked control. That's why they learn to tune us out. They hear us and they say, "Oh, that's mom. Oh, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." So, it's not about them not being able to hear us, it's a completely different phenomenon.

What to do if you feel like your children are not listening to you

Instead of telling your kids "You're not listening", Anna shares how to first examine your own feelings about the situation.

Sue Meintjes: That's good, thank you. I often say to my children "You're not listening", so I can definitely relate to this.

Anna Seewald: When you find yourself saying to your children, "You are not listening to me," pause for a moment and translate that same sentence as "I am losing control. I feel helpless. I feel powerless," because that is exactly what it is.

It's cold language for "I'm losing control. And I want you to cooperate so that I can feel in control. In charge. Good about myself." And that usually stems from being over busy, overstretched, stressed out, burned out, and overwhelmed.

Therefore, in order not to say that to our children, we want to examine again our own patterns and take time to rest, de-stress,



and engage in activities that nourish us, because we want to show up for our children in a mindful, present, loving, caring, and curious way. But if you are too busy thinking about a million things and you're stressed out, you cannot give the gift of yourself to your children.

And instead, when you find saying, "You're not listening to me, I want you to listen to me." Instead of that, say to yourself in your mind, "Why is this situation so triggering? Why is this situation so hard for me? Why am I losing control?" And be with that feeling, with that sensation. Don't be afraid. You will learn something about yourself, and you won't be hard on your children.

A simple technique to prevent power struggles with older children

All kids need a sense of control, and if they don't get that control they start fighting you for it. Here Anna shares a simple technique to help get kids to listen, while giving them a sense of autonomy and control.

Sue Meintjes: Thanks for this. Before we wrap up, is there anything you think parents should know about this topic?

Anna Seewald: Well, I could give you one strategy that works with older children. Oftentimes we want our children to cooperate. Meaning we want them to do the things we want them to do in that very moment we ask them to do.



But children are different human beings. They have their own life, they have their own moods, they have their own stressors. We want to consider that they are a person, and we want to respect that. Maybe they're not in the mood to clean their room that day at that very moment.

So, we don't want to turn situations like that into a power struggle. You want to give them more autonomy. Autonomy is one of the crucial emotional needs of children. Let's say you asked your child to clean their toy room, but your child hasn't done that task yet, and you asked a few times, well, here is a strategy to use.

You can say, "Honey, on a scale of one to 10, how ready do you feel to tackle this task?" Insert any task, and your child most likely will give you an answer three, because they're not in a mood to do that task, whatever that task is, because it's in your interest, not in your child's interest.

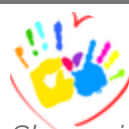
And the next question would be, "Oh, interesting. What would make you go from three to eight? You're not going to the maximum number 10, but you are still increasing the numbers. "What will make you jump to eight?" Again, you are honoring your child and giving your child autonomy and freedom to choose when and how to do the task. That's an important component because when the child feels controlled, they don't want to do anything.

But when they feel that they have control over their own situation, they become more eager to do it. And so, the child may say, "Well,



maybe if I finish playing this video game and get a snack, then that might make me get to eight.” And then in that moment the parent can say, “Great, can I count on you?”

And from there you want to leave the room and trust and have faith that your child will tackle the task. Relinquish control, honor the child's autonomy, and have faith that your child will do it.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Next time you feel like your children aren't listening, take a moment and check in with yourself – are you rushed or stressed?
- Practice your listening skills with a friend or partner
- Record some of your interactions with your child, and then review it and try to determine how you talk to your child, and how you can improve
- Next time your child doesn't want to do something, try asking them “On a scale of one to 10, how ready do you feel to tackle this task?” and then “What would make you go from three to eight?”, then leave and trust them to complete the task.
- When your child is speaking to you, focus your full attention on them, and show with both your facial expression and your body language that they have your full attention
- Visit [Anna's website](#), [AuthenticParenting.com](#), [here](#), or follow [her on Instagram](#).

Jessie Buttons – How to honor your child's nature

In this interview with Jessie Buttons, a parenting coach and international nanny, she shares the four Natures of children that she identified while working with children from around the world.

Jessie shares how understanding the nature of your child can help you to motivate them and prevent clashes and fights.



“ When children feel connected to you, they want to follow you. And they want to listen, and they will cooperate. And so, when a child gets the message, "I see you, I'm connected to you," then they will cooperate.



In this interview

- About Jessie Buttons
- How understanding your child's Nature can help them cooperate
- What happens if you don't honor your child's Nature
- The Strong nature
- The Social nature
- The Sensitive nature
- The Structured nature
- How to give your child a sense of control
- How to prevent clashing with your child's nature
- Actions steps

About Jessie Buttons

Jessie Buttons is the go-to parent coach for families across New Zealand and beyond. With years of experience in the field, she has gained a reputation for her practical and effective strategies for improving family life and managing challenging behaviors.

Jessie's approach is grounded in empathy and understanding, believing that every child is unique and deserves individualized guidance. Through a combination of one-on-one coaching, group workshops, and online tutorials, Jessie helps parents understand their children's needs, which is normally what is driving the unwanted behavior.

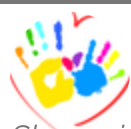
Beyond her expertise in parenting, Jessie also draws on her high profile Nanny experiences from around the world, and also on her



own experience as a mother of one and step mother to 3. She is dedicated to empowering parents with the knowledge and tools they need to confidently navigate the ups and downs of parenthood.

Whether you're struggling with a specific issue or seeking to enhance your parenting skills, Jessie Buttons is your trusted partner for achieving a happy and healthy family.

[Jessie runs a free Facebook community called The Village, which you can join here.](#)



How understanding your child's Nature can help them cooperate

Jessie Buttons: I am a preschool teacher by trade and an international nanny. I travelled overseas for many years and helped families with children. And I learned lots of different parenting strategies from living with those families. Some of those strategies were amazing and some of them were not so good. In fact, it made the behavior worse.

So, I came back home to New Zealand after 10 years being abroad and I started coaching parents using the strategies I had learned as a nanny.

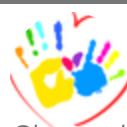
Before I came home. I was the director of a Montessori preschool.

Something a little bit different than nannying. And it was there where I observed children and I learned about different personality types. And I then published my own version of a book about the four different personality types of children. I call them "natures".

And that's what I'm going to talk to you about today: using children's personality type to have the sort of connection and influence you need to get them to listen and cooperate.

I call it "honoring their nature."

And I do believe that when children feel connected to you, they want to follow you. And they want to listen, and they will cooperate. And so, when a child gets the message, "I see you, I'm



connected to you," then they will cooperate. But when you know their personality, it's one level deeper. It's not just "I see you", it's, "I know you". And when you know the child and the child feels really known, then you have influence.

You have influence over their decisions, and you can influence them to listen and cooperate.

Sue Meintjes: That sounds very interesting. Can you explain the different personality types that you have identified?

Jessie Buttons: So, I'll explain them very quickly. There's four. And I call them social, strong, sensitive, and structured. And each nature is motivated by different things. And once you realize what they're motivated by, it can be really easy to get them to cooperate.

What happens if you don't honor your child's Nature

Sue Meintjes: So, the four personality types are social, strong, sensitive, and structured. What about when we see more than one personality type in our kids? Is there usually just one that stands out?

Jessie Buttons: Great question. There's always a dominant nature followed by a second nature. And this is really important to know because sometimes a child's dominant nature is not valued, and they don't feel that they're worthwhile being that nature.



For example, a strong natured child might get the message, "Can you just stop? You're too much, you're too pushy." They might get that message from parents, from friends, from teachers. We've all done it. We've all said, "Hey, you just can you stop?" And the child receives that message as, "Can you stop being who you are? Don't be who you are. We don't find that very valuable or worthwhile at all."

The child then taps into their second nature, and they think, "Well, if I can't be my dominant primary nature, my natural nature, I'll be the second nature." And that comes out dysfunctional. And that's where we see a lot of dysfunctional behavior is a child who is not living true to their nature.

That's where I help a lot of families with their at-home environment, to help the child to come back to their true nature and to feel safe being that person, being who they are. They don't need to try and be anyone else.

The Strong nature

Sue Meintjes: That sounds like a great way for parents to understand and connect with their kids. It makes me think of my daughter - she is very stubborn and wants to do things her way. She is very determined to get her way.



Jessie Buttons: Is she quite extroverted? Always moving forward? Always quite determined and pushy, quite physical. She sounds like a strong nature.

The Strong nature is motivated by action and challenges and results and being in charge. So, if you were trying to get her to listen and cooperate, you would challenge her.

You would say, "I bet you can't get dressed before me." Or you might say, "I'm gonna race you to the car." Or you might put her in charge of something. You might say, "Right, you are in charge of the clock today. Give us all a shout when it's five to eight, when it's time to leave, you are in charge." And they love that kind of leadership.

They love that challenge; it just engages them.

When I say you have to honor their nature, I mean that you speak to their nature. It's kind of like you're speaking their language. You're filling up their bucket in a way that they love.

So that's the Strong nature.

The Social nature

The Social nature. These are the other extroverted nature, along with strong, but their movement is more upward, bouncy, bubbly. They're quite distracted. They are motivated by fun and novelty and movement.



So, to get them out the door in the morning, you can say something like, "Hey, I've got something to show you." They like that kind of surprise or excitement. Or you could use a little rough and tumble. They love the kind of rough and tumble just to kind of move them along. That's the Social.

The Sensitive nature

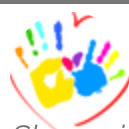
Now there's two other nature's: Sensitive and Structured. These two natures are more of the introverted, more of the quieter, slower moving natures.

The Sensitive nature is very intuitive, very slow moving, especially in the morning. They're slow to get out of bed. They're slow to eat their breakfast, they're slow to get dressed. They're motivated by comfort and predictability.

They need to know what's happening.

So, a visual plan of their day or their week is really helpful for these sort of children. To motivate a sensitive, you can say, "Here's the plan, here's what we're going to do." Or you can give them some comfort. They're motivated by feeling comfortable. You could say, "Let me hug you, and then we're gonna get dressed."

So that's Sensitive.



The Structured nature

And then the Structured. These are the more “stand back and observe” type kids. They're very analytical, very logical. They love order and routine, and they are motivated by feeling respected and having authority over themselves.

To get them out the door in the morning, you can say something like, “Would you like to make your own morning routine for yourself? You can decide how you're gonna get yourself ready, as long as you're ready by 8:00 PM. You are in charge of you.”

The Structured nature likes to feel respected and to be left alone to do their thing, how they want to do it. And of course, you can always be nearby to support. You can always say, “I'm here if you need some help.”

But that's how I would motivate them.

How to give your child a sense of control

Sue Meintjes: Thanks for that, that is very useful. Do you have any resources where parents can find out more about these natures of children?

Jessie Buttons: I have a book for sale on my website and also on Amazon, called The Nature of Children.

Sue Meintjes: Thanks, I think it is so important to better understand your child.



On your website you mentioned certain things that parents do that make children's behaviors worse. Can you explain a little bit about that?

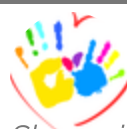
Jessie Buttons: I feel like micromanaging a child makes them feel like the parent has control. So, when parents are in a rush, and I find today's parents are in a rush all the time, they're micromanaging.

They're saying, "Okay, get your bag. Get your shoes quickly. Eat up. Eat up. Time for breakfast. We've got to go." Or it might be in the evening, "Eat your dinner. Sit down. Okay, bedtime, we're gonna have a bath. We've gotta read your book."

Children feel like they're being pushed along till the end of the day. What that feels like for a child is they have no authority over themselves. They have no control over themselves. And what they do is they decide, "You know what? I'm gonna have a little bit of control. I'm gonna dig my heels in and I'm gonna do the opposite. I'm going to cause some sort of trouble because I don't like being bossed around."

And so, what parents can do instead is to slow down, just slow everything down. Just take 30 seconds more. In the bath, 30 seconds more, at the dinner table. Just really trying to be conscious of how fast they're speeding their children along.

And they can also give their children two choices. Instead of telling them what to do, they can ask them, "Would you like a bath



or a shower tonight?"

And let the child decide what they would like to do. So, give them a little bit of authority over their own day and that sort of thing.

Sue Meintjes: That sounds exactly like my mornings. I get too rushed and too bossy.

Jessie Buttons: We all do it, don't we? Because it's just the nature of our lives. We're so busy.

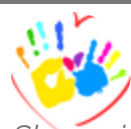
How to prevent clashing with your child's nature

There are also things that parents can do to make children's behavior worse depending on their nature. So, each nature has a couple of things that clash for that nature.

I elaborate a lot more in the book, but as an example, the Social nature, they like an environment that is really light and easy.

And so, if there is conflict in the home or there's too much tension or the routine is really structured, then that makes this child feel kind of boxed in. And then you will see worse behavior from this child.

And for the Strong nature, they like to be moving forward because they like results and getting things done. If they feel stopped in their tracks, they can tend to explode and have a tantrum and that makes their behavior worse.



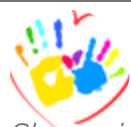
A Sensitive, they need to know what's happening. They like to know who's coming and what the routine is. They like comfort and sometimes parents forget to tell their sensitive natured kids what's happening, and they tend to rush them along and that can make these kids' behavior a lot worse. It can really clash with their nature if they're feeling rushed and pushed.

And the Structured nature, as I mentioned, they love to feel respected. And these are the kids that hate to feel micromanaged. They don't like to be bossed around and they like to be in charge and have authority over themselves. So, when they feel ordered around or disrespected, they can really act up and that can make their behavior worse.



Actions steps

- Think about your child's personality, then determine what your child's dominant Nature is – Strong, Social, Sensitive, or Structured
- Create a pro-active plan for how you can deal with the problem times – eg. getting them ready in the morning, getting them to bed, using your child's nature
- Identify any behaviors that you might be doing that clashes with your child's nature
- Think of ways in which you can give your child more control over their own decisions
- [Join Jessie's free Facebook community for parents here.](#)



Rebecca Rolland - How to use “Curious Waiting” to connect with your child

In this interview with Rebecca Rolland, author, Harvard Graduate School lecturer and speech pathologist, we talk about her technique called Curious Waiting for starting child-led conversations with your children.

Rebecca also shares how using “Curious Waiting” creates deeper connections and relationships with your children, making it easier for them to cooperate when you need them to.



“ The thing is really to realize that when a child feels as if you’re bonded, they want to help you meet your goals also.



In this interview

- About Rebecca Rolland
- How to use “Curious Waiting” to connect with your child
- How “Curious Waiting” helps you understand your child better and makes them more willing to cooperate
- How to avoid constant power struggles and give your child a sense of control
- Why you need to put your phone down when connecting with your child
- The “ABC principles” for communicating more effectively with your child
- How Curious Waiting helps you understand how to motivate your child to cooperate
- Action steps

About Rebecca Rolland

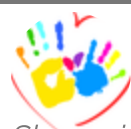
Rebecca Rolland is the author of [The Art of Talking with Children](#) (HarperOne, 2022).

She is a lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and serves on the faculty at Harvard Medical School. She also served for years as an oral and written language specialist in the Neurology Department of Boston Children’s Hospital and advises the World Bank on curriculum development and workplace learning.

You can visit Rebecca's [website \(RebeccaRolland.com\) here](#), or read her [blog on Psychology Today here](#).



You can also [connect with her on Facebook here](#).



How to use “Curious Waiting” to connect with your child

Rebecca shares a simple, 2 step technique that you can use to create a better connection with your child and jumpstart child-driven conversations.

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working well for you or your clients, for getting kids to listen, or increasing the chances of them cooperating?

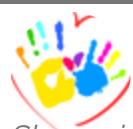
Rebecca Rolland: What I really like doing is something I call Curious Waiting, a technique that has two components.

The first part is about really sitting mindfully with the child. And this can be a child of any age, so anywhere from a very young child, an infant, or all the way through to young adults.

So, you really just sit quietly, stay silent, next to your child, and observe what they're doing. Notice not just the activity, but also what interests them about the activity. So, you start to follow their attention and notice what they're playing with, what they're working on, really even what they're looking at, and their expression.

You just take five or 10 minutes, and you can even do something quiet in the background like cooking or knitting or something like that.

So that's just the waiting part.



And then second is the curiosity part. Try wondering aloud about what a child is doing. You don't need a lot of language or a lot of questions, but really just simple invitations.

"So, what's that about?" or "Tell me more" or "Oh, what's interesting about that?" or "What are you trying to do?"

Things like that. Just allow the child to expand on their thoughts and to engage in a conversation with you about what's interesting to them in the moment about what they're doing.

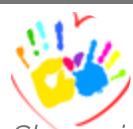
I've found that that's powerful just in allowing the child to start driving the conversation. Because we don't often focus on having a child really lead us in conversation. And just taking one of those moment-by-moment opportunities to start taking a child's lead and to show them that we really are engaged in what they're engaged in and interested in what they're interested in.

And so, I found that to be really helpful just as an open-ended prompt before having any kind of deeper conversation.

How "Curious Waiting" helps you understand your child better and makes them more willing to cooperate

Why understanding your child, and helping them feel bonded to you, sets up a foundation for cooperation going forward.

Sue Meintjes: I really like that. Do you think this type of strategy works for getting your children to cooperate in the moment, or is



it more for connecting with your child and making it easier to work with them?

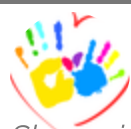
Rebecca Rolland: I think it works for any type of cooperation because what we want to consider is that really, cooperation comes out of a child feeling connected to you and feeling as if you're on their side and you're interested in helping them meet their goals also.

Now, it probably wouldn't work in-the-moment if you are actively trying to get a child to do something else. But even then, I've noticed really focusing on, "Well, what is it that my child is wanting to do," and sometimes helping them with that if it's something quick. So, say, "Oh, I just want to finish this part of my robot," or something like that.

Rather than saying, "Well, let's just shut that down and try to push forward with my objective," if you can take a few minutes to help your child with their objective, they're often much more willing to cooperate with you in whatever you want to do.

Sue Meintjes: So, it is about just taking the time to connect with your child, to understand the world from their point of view and what their objectives and goals are?

Rebecca Rolland: The thing is really to realize that when a child feels as if you're bonded, they want to help you meet your goals also. Set up a longer-term foundation now for more cooperation in the future too.



Sue Meintjes: It sounds like it is about recognizing that your child's objectives are also important and valid. And respecting their goals.

How to avoid constant power struggles and give your child a sense of control

Why allowing your child to drive conversations gives them a sense of control, which can help reduce power struggles that lead to less cooperation.

Rebecca Rolland: Yes. I think also recognizing that oftentimes children, especially younger children, feel kind of pushed from one place to the other. As if they don't have a lot of control or that "All of these grownups are trying to get me to do this thing and then that thing."

My own son is five years old, almost six, and he comes home sometimes and says, "Oh, at school, they tell me to do this, do that, do this, do that." While that's obviously necessary sometimes because we need kids to do things, I think that when kids feel like that a lot of the time, it can feel as if they want to push back just to gain some control.

And so rather than having them need to feel like that, really starting with that feeling of, "Okay, we want to open it up to your interest, to understanding kind of what's driving you." I think that can give them back that sense of control too.



Sue Meintjes: Yeah, I think it is important to give kids some control, otherwise you get these power struggles that lead to less cooperation.

Rebecca Rolland: Yes, yes. And I think that sometimes we have these power struggles about things that we later realize aren't very important. In-the-moment we think, "Oh, we need it to be done this way." But it doesn't always have to be done that way.

So, I think it's important that if we are going to have power struggles, that they are over things that really do matter, things which are really important to us as parents, rather than getting in lots and lots of little power struggles.

Why you need to put your phone down when connecting with your child

Sue Meintjes: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. Do you think there is anything else parents need to keep in mind about this technique of having conversations with your child?

Rebecca Rolland: I think a lot of parents, me included, struggle with technology and being on our phones as we're waiting with kids. While they're playing, we take that chance to check emails or something like that. And I think that's a tempting thing to do because we're all very busy.

But I think if we can just put the phone down for a few minutes it really does make a difference and helps the child feel like we



really are totally focused on them just for a few minutes. Then we can go back and do something else if we need to get something else done.

But I think that sort of full attention is so important.

The “ABC principles” for communicating more effectively with your child

Sue Meintjes: Yeah, I really like that. In your book you talk about “evidence-based tools and techniques to communicate more effectively with children.” Can you share some tips for talking with children more effectively?

Rebecca Rolland: In the book I talk about three things. And the three main principles are just A, which stands for being Adaptive. Which means to really go with the flow of a child's mood and temperament.

For example, if they're feeling very active in the morning, go with that and do more active things or talk then. Or if they talk much more in the evening when they're relaxing, notice this and go with their flow.

And B is for Back and Forth. That's just to notice what the balance is between our talking as adults, and then children's talking, and to make sure that we have a good balance. That it's not just one person doing most of the talking.



And C stands for Child Driven. That's the principle where we are trying to think about what is on a child's mind or what's sort of fascinating to them, or even what's worrying them in the moment, and starting conversations from there.

I think if we can keep those three principles in mind, we're much more likely to have a conversation that feels bonding to us.

How Curious Waiting helps you understand how to motivate your child to cooperate

Sue Meintjes: That sounds very good, thanks. Do you have any other ideas to use these methods and principles to encourage a child to cooperate?

Rebecca Rolland: You can apply this to a lot of other things. Especially if you can link something the child is interested in with something the child has to do.

For example, I have one child that really likes games and competing and trying to win things. So, I can turn things like say brushing your teeth into kind of a game, "Let's see who can get to the bathroom quicker," or "Let's see if you can really make two minutes of brushing your teeth."

That's one example of how you can tie a child's interest or motivation into a task that maybe isn't so interesting or fun. Now, that obviously wouldn't work for all kids. It really depends on what

a child's individual motivations are. But the Curious Waiting part really helps you notice what those motivations are.

Sue Meintjes: Thanks, this has been very insightful and helpful. Just before we finish up, is there anything else you wanted to add related to what you shared today?

Rebecca Rolland: The only thing is that I think these strategies are especially important now, post pandemic, when we're trying to think about how we help children build relationships and feel connected. Especially when many kids are feeling anxious or stressed.

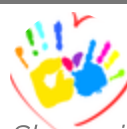
It doesn't have to be that we do these things all of the time and put even more stress on parents, but I think if we can think about these in kind of little micro doses or just doing a couple times a day for a few minutes a day, it can really help children feel more connected now.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Try to practice Curious Waiting with your child next time they are engaged in an activity
- Think of areas where you can give your child more control and power
- Think of some occasions where you enforced your way of doing things where it wasn't really necessary, and then set the intention to give your child more control next time
- Next time your child come talks to you, put your phone away and focus your full attention on your child
- Try to have a child-driven conversation with your child, without having any of your own agenda except listening to them and their interests
- Visit Rebecca's [website \(RebeccaRolland.com\) here](http://RebeccaRolland.com), read her [blog on Psychology Today here](#), or [connect with her on Facebook here](#).



Nathan Wallis - Why kids will listen to you if you listen to them

In this interview with Nathan Wallis, a neuroscience educator, we talk about why it is important to really listen to your children, and how to reflect back their emotions so that they feel validated.

Nathan also shares how to stay calm, and how to understand the different “types of brains” that govern how your child acts.



“Neuroscience helps us to understand that it's hard work being a child. By understanding the neurobiology of the brain, I think it makes us more tolerant of the fact that they're emotional.”



In this interview

- About Nathan Wallis
- Why kids will listen to you if you listen to them
- How to reflect back your child's emotions, and validate what they are feeling
- How to use neuroscience discoveries to help children cooperate
- How to stay calm when your kids get upset
- How the balance between the "survival brain" and the "frontal cortex" affects how your child will act
- Why it is hard work being a kid...and how understanding that makes you more empathic towards them
- Why your teenager might be less able to regulate their emotions than your nine-year-old
- The best time to invest your full-time energy in your kids
- How to talk to babies
- Why you need to "reflect back" your child's emotions
- Action steps

About Nathan Wallis

Nathan Wallis is a grandfather of three, father of three, and foster father to many more. His professional background includes early childhood teacher, child therapist, social service manager, university lecturer, and neuroscience trainer.

Internationally acclaimed, Nathan is in hot demand throughout New Zealand, Australia, and China. Host of the documentary "All in the Mind", and co-host of the TV Series "The Secret Life of Girls",

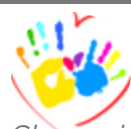


Nathan appears on National Radio and TV as a guest expert on parenting, teaching, and understanding the brain development of young people.

Inspirational and charismatic, Nathan's ability to translate neuroscience into everyday life engages all audiences.

You can [find more from Nathan at his website \(NathanWallis.com\)](http://NathanWallis.com) [here](#).

For Nathan's upcoming events (both in person and virtual), [visit his Facebook page here](#).



Why kids will listen to you if you listen to them

Nathan Wallis shares the critical listening techniques to really make kids feel understood.

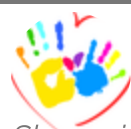
Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is working well for you or your clients, for getting kids to listen, or increasing the chances of them cooperating?

Nathan Wallis: The best technique has to be having a high-quality relationship. So, it's usually taking their frame of reference and their language and their words and putting them in a position of authority with my language and my words.

My best technique for getting kids to be more cooperative is to listen to them. I find that children listen to you if you listen to them. So, it's active listening, paraphrasing back what they mean, and reflecting back the emotion behind what they're saying first before I speak to the content, because children are mainly in their emotional brain.

How to reflect back your child's emotions, and validate what they are feeling

Sue Meintjes: That sounds great. Can you give me an example of how you would reflect back a child's emotions? For example, the other day my husband dropped off my son at school and didn't park in our usual spot. My son got very emotional and didn't want



to cross the road. How would you use active listening and reflecting back of emotions in a situation like this?

Nathan Wallis: By validating what your son was concerned about and reflecting back that emotion, and going, "Look, I realize that you're upset because you're used to doing this in a certain way and I've thrown that out for you."

So, validate what they're feeling. Because that then calms them down and engages less of their emotional brain, because you validated it. And then saying, "But the reason I'm dropping you off here is for this reason, so it'd be really good if today we can just go with that."

I would then say, "Sorry, I didn't realize that was going to upset you. I realize it's a different place than I normally drop you off on and that might've discombobulated you a bit and thrown you out. So, I'll think about that next time and endeavor next time to drop you off in the right place. But it'd be really good if today, because dad's in a hurry, if you could just go with that today." That's what I would do.

How to use neuroscience discoveries to help children cooperate

Why speaking to your child's emotions helps to calm down those emotions and gives your child more access to their frontal cortex.

Sue Meintjes: Awesome. Since you are an expert in neuroscience and childhood development, can you tell me more about how to

use neuroscience to help children cooperate?

Nathan Wallis: Yeah, well that example I just gave is using neuroscience. It's understood that the emotional brain comes under the frontal cortex - the reasonable part of the brain. The frontal cortex is brain number four, the emotional brain's brain number three. Brain number one is survival. And brain number two is movement.

You take until sort of mid-twenties on average before you have all four brains online. And the frontal cortex is the last to come online.

Being a child is a very emotional experience. So, by speaking to those emotions and validating them and going, "Oh look, I realize you're really upset," helps to calm those emotions and gives you more access to the frontal cortex.

But you could go a step further back and say, "I could use neuroscience to keep my children calm by keeping the brainstem calm." And that's done through predictability. I mean, number one, it's feeling safe, and I'm assuming the child feels safe. Probably the second most important word for calming the brainstem is predictability.

So having a regular bedtime, regular mealtimes, having routines and rituals in the family which are predictable, helps to keep the brainstem nice and calm.

There's also knowing that children use us as a social referencing point, and we often set the tone in the room, so making sure that I



am calm myself, and that I've regulated my own breathing, and I'm speaking at a calm rate, helps for the child's brain to do the same, to match the mind.

How to stay calm when your kids get upset

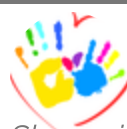
Why you need to know what your triggers are to avoid igniting your own emotional brain when your children start screaming

Sue Meintjes: I often find it difficult to stay calm - when my daughter gets upset, it triggers something in me that makes me upset, and staying calm is a struggle.

Nathan Wallis: Yeah, I think parents have to know what their triggers are. I think all good interactions involve at least one frontal cortex, and since children's often disappear when they're stressed, it's doubly important that we as parents try and keep our own frontal cortex present and don't ignite our own emotional brain.

Like I know for me as a parent, I'm quite tolerant of my children answering back. Because I was a child that answered back a lot. So that doesn't set my triggers. But a child rolling their eyes at me really infuriates me and I know that I'm likely to be triggered into my own lower brain. So, you have to identify what those triggers are and have plans as a parent for what to do instead.

Like I knew that when my daughter rolled her eyes, I didn't respond immediately. I stopped, allowed for a five to ten second silence while I regulated my own breathing. I breathed in on the



count six, out on the count four. I just sort of promised myself beforehand that I had to do three cycles of that before I was even allowed to respond in any way.

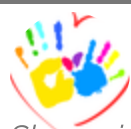
Because if you respond immediately, then you tend to respond from the limbic system, and it's the cortex where all your good parenting is. So just having a rule like that, knowing what your trigger is, so for me it was eyerolling, and knowing that whenever that happens, I'm not allowed to respond immediately. I have to do three cycles of 6, 4, 6, 4, 6, 4.

How the balance between the “survival brain” and the “frontal cortex” affects how your child will act

And what you can do regularly to calm your child's brainstem, leading to more cooperation and calmer kids.

Sue Meintjes: That's helpful, thank you. I'm also interested in what I read on your website, about how understanding how the brain works can inform our day-to-day interactions with our children, to get more peaceful cooperation.

Nathan Wallis: It's sort of like what we've talked about. I think just understanding the brain chemistry and understanding the relationship between your survival brain, brain number one, and your brain number four, your frontal cortex, and understanding that they work like they're on a set of scales. Scales can't be both up at the same time and can't be both down. If one's up, the other one's down.



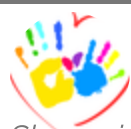
If I want your frontal cortex to be up and active, then I need their brainstem to be down and nice and calm. So, neuroscience informs my parenting because I know to do things regularly to calm the brainstem. Now, we already do a lot of these things automatically as parents. It's just understanding the neurobiology behind that.

We do have regular bedtimes where the kids go to bed at regular times, we get up at regular times, we have meals at regular times, we have family rituals like sitting down at the kitchen table to eat. We talk about the best thing that happened to you that day, or the worst thing that happened to you that day, or a good thing about your day and a bad thing about the day. Those rituals give predictability, which keeps the brainstem nice and calm, and helps to engage the frontal cortex.

Why it is hard work being a kid...and how understanding that makes you more emphatic towards them

And neuroscience helps us to understand that it's hard work being a child.

By understanding the neurobiology of the brain, I think it makes us more tolerant of the fact that they're emotional. They're often non-logical. We can get frustrated with that, but if you understand how their brain is working, I just think it makes you more



empathetic. And it makes you realize that they're kind of the apprentice, and you are the qualified person.

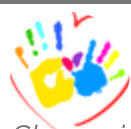
You've already got a frontal cortex, whereas they have to develop theirs through modeling from you. So, getting angry and screaming at our kids, or just standing over them, might scare them and have a short-term positive reaction for the parent, as in compliance, but it's just going to be modeling an aroused brainstem, and they're not going to get good outcomes long-term.

Why your teenager might be less able to regulate their emotions than your nine-year-old

Sue Meintjes: That makes a lot of sense, thanks. Is there anything else you think parents should know about neuroscience and how brain development affects their children's ability to listen and cooperate?

Nathan Wallis: To understand that there's a period, in adolescence especially, where that frontal cortex is kind of shut for renovations a lot of the time. All the structures are there. A certain percentage of the time, which might be only 10% of the time during adolescents, but a percentage of the time they've got as much access to the adult brain as we have.

They can regulate their emotions just as well as us. They can plan just as well as us. But we can sort of do that 90% of the time, whereas they're primed in lots of ways to only do it 10% of the time. So, understanding that your teenager might be less able to



regulate their emotions than your nine-year-old is. Your teenager or your 15-year-old might be less able to see things from your point of view than your nine-year-old is, and to understand that that's perfectly normal and that they just need more support during adolescents.

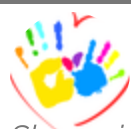
The best time to invest your full-time energy in your kids

Why the first thousand days are critical for the development of your child's brain.

Nathan Wallis: Parents need to understand the power of the first thousand days, that the human brain is designed to interact with the environment in the first thousand days from conception. So, it's all through pregnancy, conception until a thousand days after conception, your brain's interacting with the environment to see what sort of brain you've going to need for the rest of your life.

If you're going to invest a couple of years of your full-time energy into your children, don't leave that to adolescents. Do that in the first year of life. The more relaxed, and the more in partnership a child feels in the first year of life, probably the better and the easier they're going to be to raise.

The more a child feels alone and isolated in the first year alive, the more difficult a childhood you're going to have.



How to talk to babies

Sue Meintjes: Awesome. What are some of the best ways we can connect with our babies in that first thousand days?

Nathan Wallis: I think the best way to do it, is often just parallel talk. I tell dads, the more language you use in the first year of life, the more often you're in partnership, the better the outcomes are.

They'll say, "Oh, well I don't really know what to say to a baby." So, I say "Use parallel talk, which is like sports commentary."

You're just talking to them about what they're doing. "Oh, you're putting your foot up. Oh, you're trying to get your foot into your mouth. Oh, well done. You got your toe into your mouth!" Just describe what the baby is doing, because it immerses them in language and that's the best data that their little brains can get.

Why you need to "reflect back" your child's emotions

Sue Meintjes: That also connects with what you started with, about reflecting back what your child is saying and the emotions that they are feeling.

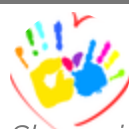
Nathan Wallis: Absolutely. That's right. Because as parents we're often so quick to want to help our children that we go straight to a solution. And if the child's really upset because you've said, "No, they can't have a biscuit before tea," and they get really upset, we



are more likely as parents to say, "Oh, we're just waiting until after tea and you'll be able to have a biscuit."

But that solution would be much better heard if we first reflected back the emotion, and said, "I know it's really hard when you don't get what you want, but if you just wait a little bit of time, it's only five minutes till teatime. And then we'll eat tea and then you can have a biscuit."

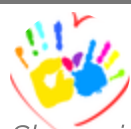
If you reflect their emotion back first, that's going to be a much more effective thing and works within neurochemistry.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Practice active listening next time you speak to your child, by paraphrasing back what they mean, and reflecting back the emotion behind what they're saying
- Next time your child is upset, first validate what they are concerned about and then reflect back their emotions
- Review your children's schedule and think about how you can make it more predictable for them – what daily rituals can you include?
- Next time your child frustrates you, try to remember that their brain is not fully developed yet, and that makes them naturally more emotional and less in control
- [Find more from Nathan at his website \(NathanWallis.com\)](http://NathanWallis.com) [here](#), or [visit his Facebook page here](#).



Dr. Beth Trammell - How to use “Pairing” to intentionally reconnect with your child

In this interview with Dr. Beth Trammell, psychologist, and author of Make Words Matter, we talk about how to be intentional with connecting and re-connecting with your child.

Dr. Beth shares a technique she calls “Pairing” that you can use to reconnect with your child after being away from them, and how to teach your children to regulate their emotions.



“ We just have to pause to think about what it is that we really want to build in the relationship right now, or what skill do we want to build in our child right now? And then say those words.



In this interview

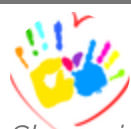
- About Dr. Beth Trammell
- How to use “Pairing” to intentionally reconnect with your child
- Why your need to understand what your emotional triggers are
- How to teach your children to regulate their emotions
- How to be more intentional in your parenting
- The essential skills you need to get kids to listen and cooperate
- Action steps

About Dr. Beth Trammell

Dr. Beth Trammell is a licensed psychologist, author, speaker, and all-around “growth promoter”. In addition to her clinical psychology practice, Dr. Trammell also serves as Associate Professor of Psychology at Indiana University East as well as the university's Director of the Master of Mental Health counseling program.

She specializes in communication and behavioral strategies related to interpersonal communication, connection, parenting, coaching and education.

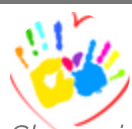
Dr. Trammell's years of clinical and practical experience perpetually influence the specialized trainings she leads throughout the country. Rooted on the premise of ‘Make Words Matter,’ Dr. Trammell blends the science of psychology with our contemporary culture to illuminate everyday challenges; leading



us on a transformative path toward authentic and productive interpersonal connections.

Dr. Trammell's books are available here:

- [Hard Topics: Anger and Littles](#)
- [Hard Topics: Listening and Littles](#)
- [How to have the Hard Conversations about Social Media and Screen \(with teens\)](#)



How to use “Pairing” to intentionally reconnect with your child

Dr. Beth Trammell shares a technique she calls “Pairing”, that you can use to reconnect each time you are away from your child for a period of time (like after school).

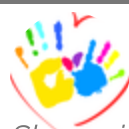
Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy to help kids to listen and cooperate?

Dr. Beth Trammell: Yeah, it's a good question. I think it's probably the most common question for parents. To get kids to listen and do the things we want them to do.

So, parenting is about guiding and teaching our kids how to effectively interact with the world. It's not just about protecting them. And we do this through our relationship with them and our words to them.

And so, I tend to teach relationship building through the use of a technique called Pairing, which is a behavioral tool whereby every day, every time we're away from them, we then spend intentional time within the first 15 to 90 seconds to reconnect with our kids.

The way we do that is by not asking questions and not placing demands. Instead, we are going to say something like, “I'm happy to see you. I'm glad you're here. I'm looking forward to hearing about your day. I love the shirt you picked out to wear to school today.” Any of those things.



We're focused on building connection instead of just pushing questions and our agenda, just in that first bit of time.

Once we're reconnected, then our relationship is reconnected and then they're more likely to follow what we need them to do because we have spent that intentional time redirecting them or reconnecting with them.

[You can find a free video demonstrating this "Pairing technique" here.](#)

Why your need to understand what your emotional triggers are

To stay calm, Dr. Beth says that you need to understand what triggers you, what makes you emotional, and then recognize those triggers before they blow you up!

Sue Meintjes: What are some practical tips that parents can use to do keep calm in the moment?

Dr. Beth Trammell: Start by recognizing what your emotional triggers are.

So maybe it's when they say no, maybe it's when they don't eat their dinner. Maybe it's whatever. Recognize what your emotional triggers are, and then you pause before you respond.

And even by saying, "Mommy's going to take a minute to think about that. Mommy's going to take a minute to take a deep breath

because I'm feeling frustrated right now."

Just saying out loud to our kids that I'm taking the pause is a good part of getting them to listen in the long run, because you're basically telling them out loud what's happening in your head.

How to teach your children to regulate their emotions

Children learn by watching you, so the best way to teach them to regulate their own emotions is to demonstrate how you regulate your emotions. Here's how Dr. Beth recommends you do this.

Sue Meintjes: It sounds like it is about emotional regulation, for yourself and for your child?

Dr. Beth Trammell: Yes. Absolutely. This is all a part of teaching. I always come back to that first part, that parenting is about guiding and teaching. We tend to see parenting, at least in the US especially, like, "Parenting is about protecting them from all the bad things that could happen."

And I don't talk about it that way because I actually don't think that that's helpful. When they become grownups, we're not going to be able to protect them forever. Instead, we've got to guide them and teach them how to make smart decisions and how to respond when bad things happen.

Because bad things are going to happen, and we've got to teach them how to respond. That includes things like out loud communication about the things that are going on in our mind so



that we can guide and teach our kids. And we don't tend to do that unless we're really intentional about doing it.

How to be more intentional in your parenting

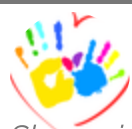
Sue Meintjes: That's very interesting. Do you have any more tips for how we can be more intentional in our parenting?

Dr. Beth Trammell: For me it's often coaching parents to pause to think about what they actually want to say. That idea of verbal vomit, it comes up a lot where I'm like, "Whoa, like your kid is not hearing what you want to say, so pause, think about what you want to say and then say it."

So, we get stuck in these patterns of "I'm just going to threaten, or I'm going to do what my parents did to me. I'm going to say what my parents said." And really, we just have to pause to think about what it is that we really want to build in the relationship right now, or what skill do we want to build in our child right now? And then say those words.

The essential skills you need to get kids to listen and cooperate

Sue Meintjes: I read on your website that there are essential skills to get kids to listen. Would you say Pairing is one of those?



Dr. Beth Trammell: Yeah, so Pairing is the first one. Effective instruction delivery is the second one, and that's actually the science behind giving a good instruction.

Then, "mean what you say and say what you mean" as my version of being consistent. It's really hard to expect parents to be consistent because everything in the world is always changing. And so, my focus is to mean what you say and say what you mean.

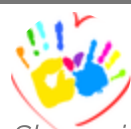
Teaching parents to, again, pause before you just start rambling all these things like "You're never going to grandma's house," is about creating that consistency.

Developing structure, which means having effective routines. There is a skill around parents developing effective routines. And so, teaching structure through the lens of clear expectations and effective routines.

And then the last skill is child directed play. We as parents, at least in the US, tend not to be great at playing, and teaching specific play skills for parents.

For me, those essential skills are the foundation to get high rates of compliance, which is the fancy word for getting our kids to listen and cooperate.

Sue Meintjes: I love that. Where can we find out more about these essential skills?



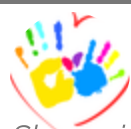
Dr. Beth Trammell: Well, my book covers all of those. I have videos that go with all of the chapters, that explain the six essential skills in my book.

And there's other things in my book too. I also talk about what I call game changers. Where before we start thinking a child is being naughty, we ask ourselves, "Are they eating? Are they sleeping? Can they see and can they hear?" And so first identifying those biological things that may be contributing to the child's misbehavior.

Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

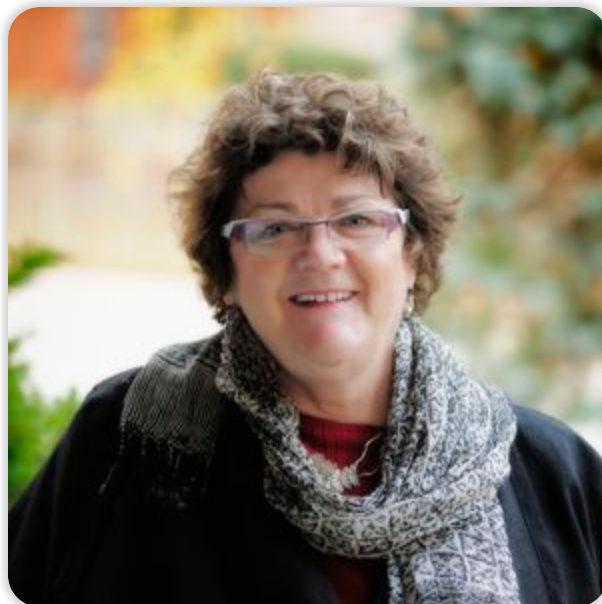
- Next time you pick up your kid after school, practice "Pairing" before asking them any questions
- Watch the video demonstrating the ["Pairing technique"](#)
- Make a note each time you notice one of your emotional triggers, then try to proactively plan how to calm down
- Next time you are upset with your child, try telling them how you feel by describing your emotions to them
- Find more from Dr Beth Trammell at [her website](#) ([MakeWordsMatterForGood.com](#)) [here](#).



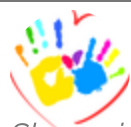
Dr. Jean Clinton - How to understand what it really means when your child is not cooperating

In this interview with Dr. Jean Clinton, child psychologist and clinical professor of psychiatry and behavioral neurosciences, we talk about how to really understand what it means when your child is not cooperating.

Dr. Jean also shares strategies for how to build your child's emotional competence.



“ I'd like parents to know is It's progress. We're not going for perfection, because I'll tell you with five kids, it was always about progress because you get it with one kid and the next one is completely different.



In this interview

- About Dr. Jean Clinton
- What it really means when your child is not cooperating
- How to prevent your own frustrations from driving your behavior
- How to help build your child's emotional competence and capacity by becoming a "stress detective"
- Why your love is a "super nutrient" for your child's brain
- Action steps

About Dr. Jean Clinton

Dr. Jean Clinton is a Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster, division of Child Psychiatry. She is a member on the MindUP Scientific Advisory Board, as well as a MindUp for Families advisor.

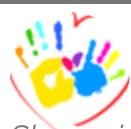
Dr. Clinton was a Fellow of the Child Trauma Academy, as well as a Zero to Three Academy Fellow since 2013. Dr. Clinton was appointed as an education advisor to the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Education 2014 - 2018.

She has been a consultant to children and youth mental health programs, child welfare, and primary care for over 30 years. Her special interest lies in brain development, and the crucial role relationships and connectedness play.



Dr. Clinton has also authored her first book, Love Builds Brains which can be ordered online through Tall Pines Press, on Amazon and in book stores everywhere.

You can find [Dr. Jean's book, Love Builds Brains, here](#).



What it really means when your child is not cooperating

Instead of focusing on getting your child to comply, Dr. Jean suggests placing the focus on building connection and relationship with your child.

Sue Meintjes: Thanks for joining us today. Can you tell us a bit more about yourself?

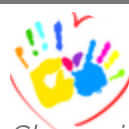
Dr. Jean Clinton: I'm an infant, child, and adolescent psychiatrist. I've been in practice for about 35 years. And I've focused very much in my work on the early years as a knowledge translator. So, I take the brain science and what we're learning and translate it into accessible materials.

But more importantly, my husband and I have five children who are grown and seven grandchildren who are all six and under. So, I get to observe and live and love this whole time period.

Parenting and working with parents has been my life's passion and work.

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that is really working well for you or your clients, to help kids listen and cooperate?

Dr. Jean Clinton: Well, I had the chance to have a conversation with my one daughter who's got four children under four. And



what was very interesting is she and I agreed that we don't really focus on getting children to listen.

That implies compliance and obedience. And compliance and obedience are not really values that are as important as helping kids develop their emotional capacity and potential and self-regulation.

If you think that you're wanting them to listen or be compliant, then you have a mindset that says, "I want to impose my way."

That puts the stakes in a certain way. I'd rather help parents see that when kids are not listening or when they are not doing what we want them to do, that there has to be an examination, an observation of their behavior as well as a questioning of ours.

Are we hoping that they do what I want them to do or are we encouraging them through our relationship to do what's the right thing? It starts from a place of respecting the child as competent and capable. Understanding that we are shepherding them. We are more like gardeners than carpenters.

It's not that we want a particular outcome that's fixed, but rather we want to be the nurturer, the creator of the condition so that thriving happens. So, back to your question. The most important thing is to observe and be respectful and build relationships and connections with kids.



How to prevent your own frustrations from driving your behavior

And instead, how to collaborate with your child by recognizing the value in both your agendas.

Sue Meintjes: Thanks. I really like that positive mindset. It sounds like it is more about walking away from your own frustrations in the moment, and thinking about how you can help your child, what they need right now?

Dr. Jean Clinton: Yeah. But also examining, “Where is my frustration coming from?” So, what is my image of my little one? You know, if I believe them to be fully right bearing individuals, then their agenda has as much value as my agenda, and our work together is getting to the point.

So, the technique is to observe and recognize your own frustration, but then to really dig in deep and say, well, “Where is my frustration coming from?”

I’ll give you an example. I’m Scottish Canadian. And one thing that would push my buttons when my kids were little, was if they were defiant.

I had to stop and say, well, “Where might that come from?” And, you know, I came from a very strict Scottish background and family, and we would never, ever have been defiant or pushed back in that way. So, it made me really examine well, “Hmm, you know,” there was a message around that, that said, “Do what I



want you to do and I'll love you." And I'm not sure that that built the best emotional competence.

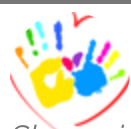
How to help build your child's emotional competence and capacity by becoming a “stress detective”

Why your job as a parent is to be a “stress detective” and how to re-frame your child's misbehavior as signs of physical or mental stress.

Sue Meintjes: I totally agree with that. You touched on helping kids develop their emotional capacity. What do you think parents should know about how to help kids develop their emotional capacity?

Dr. Jean Clinton: Right. Well, I think it's a fabulous question, Sue, because I think what we know is that kids will do well if they can. The idea that kids do things to get us upset, I think, is a very wrong reframing of things. You know, in 35 years of child psychiatry, I've never met a kid who said, “I'm waking up this morning and screwing my life up.” They don't do it. I believe that children will do well if they can, and all behavior has a reason and happens in a specific context.

And so, when a little one is becoming dysregulated it means that emotionally they're under stress, or physically their body is saying, “I'm cold, I'm hungry.” And they don't necessarily have the words. So, the emotional expression and the behavior that we see really comes from an underlying stress dysregulation.



Our job as parents is to be stress detectors.

As the little one is having a meltdown in the grocery store, the first thing we have to do is frame it and say, "This is stress. This is not misbehavior, this is stress. And I'm going to figure out what's going on here. Are they hungry? Are they cold physically? Are they emotionally so tired and this is the wrong time to come grocery shopping?" Ding! Note to self, I'm not going to do it again.

Is it that I'm asking them to do too much? You can't expect a two-year-old to do the same and be the same as a four-year-old.

So, I love to help families look at misbehavior as really coming from a stressor inside the child. The family then becomes stress detectives to figure out. "Oh, it's 3:30. This is arsenic hours. This is when the kids really need a snack."

I always, always want kids to be felt emotionally and that their behavior is telling me something, and I want to be the co-regulator who figures out what that is.

Why your love is a “super nutrient” for your child's brain

Sue Meintjes: Thanks a lot for your insight! Is there anything else you think that is important for parents to know about this?

Dr. Jean Clinton: Yeah. Well, a lot of what I do, I'm informed by what we've learned about how the brain develops. And what we



know about the brain is that relationships, loving our kids, is a super nutrient for the brain.

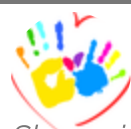
It's far more important to focus on connecting with your kids before you correct them. When they feel felt by you, you know, that real sense of "I'm seen, I'm valued," then that love is what builds brains.

But it is not just "Love, love, love. You can do whatever you like." Not at all. We have great evidence from the research that kids need limits. Kids need boundaries. So, my mantra is, "be kind, be firm, be fair."

And so that's all about love. That's all about helping them learn what's in bounds and out of bounds in a loving, natural way.

The other thing I'd like parents to know is "It's progress." We're not going for perfection, because I'll tell you with five kids, it was always about progress because you get it with one kid and the next one is completely different.

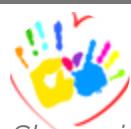
You have to always be working on it. So "progress, not perfection."



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Try to notice when you are forcing your image of what your child should be like on them, instead of helping to develop who they really are (think gardener instead of carpenter)
- Next time you are frustrated with your child, try to notice it, and then think about where that frustration is really coming from – “why does this frustrate me so much?”
- When your child is upset, emotional, or throwing a tantrum, try to become a “stress detective” and focus on understanding what is wrong with them, instead of trying to get them to calm down
- Focus on connecting with your child before you try to correct them
- You can find [Dr. Jean's book, Love Builds Brains, here](#).



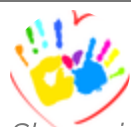
Dr. Hilary Mandzik - Why connection leads to cooperation

In this interview with Dr. Hilary Mandzik, licensed psychologist, and parent coach, we talk about why connecting with your child on a regular basis is so important for increasing cooperation.

Dr. Hilary also shares how you can get your kids to cooperate without frustrating arguments, and how to develop your child's ability to manage and regulate their own emotions.



“There are no bad guys here. Not bad parents, not bad kids. It's just people who are doing the best with what they have in that moment. And we can all do better over time.



In this interview

- About Dr. Hilary Mandzik
- Why connection leads to cooperation
- How to connect to your child before asking them to do something
- The “Taking the Pressure Off” technique for more cooperation without frustration
- What your child's “bad” behavior is telling you about them
- Why letting your child feel their own negative emotions is important
- What to do if your child does not want to listen, even after you've connected with them
- The single most important thing we can do for our kids to help them develop emotional regulation
- How to manage your own emotions when your kid gets emotional
- How to teach children that their feelings are normal
- Why there is no such thing as bad kids (or bad parents)
- Action steps

About Dr. Hilary Mandzik

Dr. Hilary Mandzik is a licensed psychologist, and mom of three, who's passionate about supporting parents.

She's actively working to change the narrative around parenting, to help parents break unhelpful generational cycles so they can parent in a way that TRULY feels good – for them and for their kids. She has a private therapy practice where she specializes in perinatal mental health as well as an online parenting support

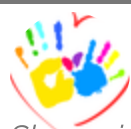


business, where she creates content and offers online programs to support parents in raising resilient, confident kids with less stress (and more joy!).

She's also the host of the parent-loved podcast Raised Resilient with Dr. Hilary. When she's not seeing clients, writing content, or recording podcast episodes, Dr. Hilary is usually hanging out with her family, spending time outside, doing yoga, lifting weights, or getting lost in a good book.

You can download her free guide, [6 Mindset Shifts to Ditch the Overwhelm & Parent in a Way That Feels Good, here](#).

Her podcast, [Raised Resilient with Dr. Hilary, is available here](#).



Why connection leads to cooperation

Dr. Hilary shares why she believes that the more connected your child feels to you, the more willing they'll be to cooperate with you.

Sue Meintjes: Thanks for joining me today. Can you please tell us a bit about yourself and your work with parents?

Dr. Hilary Mandzik: I'm a licensed psychologist and I have been working with and supporting parents for almost two decades now. I used to work with kids in residential treatment centers and therapeutic schools, and so I worked with the parents as part of my work there.

And then I was a child therapist for many, many years, so I worked with parents as part of that process. In my work as a child therapist, I found over time that the kids who did best were kids who I was seeing the parents simultaneously.

Because really a lot of the things that parents bring kids to therapy for are the things that the parents need strategies and support for, in order to support the kids at home.

Because if you think about it, therapy's only one hour a week. And so, the other times, these kids weren't getting what they needed unless I was also empowering the parents to support them. So over time I realized the most powerful work I can do with kids is actually with the parents.

And so now I work almost exclusively with parents. I do parent support and parent coaching, and then I also have a private



therapy practice where I specialize in perinatal mental health, so postpartum depression, postpartum anxiety, traumatic birth, and I help parents in that capacity too.

Sue Meintjes: It sounds like you have a lot of experience with our question. So, what is your favorite technique or strategy for getting kids to listen and increase cooperation?

Dr. Hilary Mandzik: That is such a great question. I think in order to understand my take on getting kids to listen, it's important to understand that I believe that kids are going to be so much more willing to cooperate with us when they feel connected to us.

And that's true for us as adults too. If someone asks us to do something and we're feeling annoyed or frustrated, or like they don't care about our needs, we're going to be way less likely to want to go help them or to do something for them, than if they're connected with us.

And so, what I tell parents is, "If you are asking your child to do something, have you connected with your child lately? Have you taken the time to join their world?"

How to connect to your child before asking them to do something

Why it is important to connect with what your child is doing, in the moment, before asking them to listen to you.



Dr. Hilary Mandzik: Let's say you want your child to turn off a video game. So instead of yelling across the house, "It's time to turn off the TV." You're going to want to go physically to where your child is.

And that's important because if you're yelling across the house, your child is absorbed in whatever they're doing, and they're not even going to register that you're talking to them. So, you're going to feel ignored and your child is not even going to be hearing you. They may hear you literally, but they're not hearing you. It's not registering.

Go to where your child is and then join their world for a minute. Can you sit down on the couch next to them and say, "Hey, what are you doing? Tell me about the game?" And ask some questions, get involved, and then say, "Hey, in five minutes we're going to turn off the game."

At that point, your child feels connected to you. Your child feels like you care, and they're going to be way more likely to do what you're asking.

The "Taking the Pressure Off" technique for more cooperation without frustration

Dr. Hilary shares her "Taking the Pressure Off" technique, which is a very simple strategy that works especially well to get younger kids to cooperate.



Dr. Hilary Mandzik: And then, another strategy I love is, “taking the pressure off a little bit.” Because sometimes kids feel like we are just constantly “do this, do that, because I said so.” And they need a little bit more autonomy.

This works really well with toddlers and preschoolers especially.

So, say you're asking them, “Okay, I need you to clean up the blocks. Clean up the blocks,” and they're not listening. What I would do, and I used to do this years ago when I was a kindergarten teacher, and it also worked beautifully with my own kids, I would say, “Okay, you know what, I'm just going to step out of the room for a minute. I don't know what's going to happen. Are you going to pick up the blocks? We'll see.”

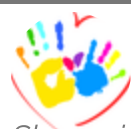
And then as soon as I wasn't looking, they would scurry and pick up the blocks, like every single time, like a charm.

All of these strategies are based on connection.

And that's what really makes them different than just, “do this thing.” Because we get frustrated, and we say it with even more frustration. And that leads to kids not listening and pushing back almost every time.

What your child's “bad” behavior is telling you about them

Dr. Hilary shares how to re-frame your child's bad behavior as data about what is going on inside their head, how to use that data to



make it easier for them to cooperate with you.

Sue Meintjes: That makes a lot of sense. What if your child is already emotional, or scared? How would you “join their world” in that case?

Dr. Hilary Mandzik: When your child is pushing back and saying, “No, I can’t do this,” or they’re scared of doing it, or they’re having sort of a meltdown around you asking them to do something. To me, I look at all behavior as communication. So, if you ask your child to do something and they fall apart, that to me is data.

That tells me, “Okay, something’s going on with my kid. My child needs something right now. My child is missing the skill to deal with this appropriately.” And I don’t necessarily know which thing is going on in any given moment. So, when I see my kiddo melt down over something that shouldn’t be a big deal, I’m going to get curious.

“I wonder what’s going on for my kid right now. I wonder why this is so hard.” And sometimes that need is just to push back. Sometimes our kids need to feel safe telling us No. That doesn’t mean that we’re going to change the expectation or say, “Okay, never mind. You don’t have to do the thing.”

But sometimes they need to tell us how much they don’t like whatever we’re asking them to do. And we need to be the safe people who can say, “I get that. You really don’t want to do this. It seems so hard. It seems so overwhelming. I hear you.”



Why letting your child feel their own negative emotions is important

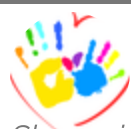
Dr. Hilary believes that children should be allowed to feel their feelings, even the bad ones. Here's why:

Dr. Hilary Mandzik: And then, if your child is feeling scared or sad or otherwise just emotional, my whole mantra around this is just let the feelings be. Just let your child feel what they're feeling. Don't try to make them feel better. Don't talk them out of it. We teach emotion regulation, which is essentially learning how to do the right things with our feelings, by letting our kids feel, in our safe presence.

If your child is scared, you can say, "I hear you. You're really scared right now. It's okay to feel scared. Tell me more about it." All of that is still based in connection.

It's just in any given moment, you're getting curious about what's going on for your child and when they're feeling something, instead of trying to get that feeling to stop or get them back to happy, we want to let that feeling come out, and we want to make sure that we let them do that safely.

We're not going to let them hit, we're not going to let them destroy the room. We are going to let them feel. We're going to let them cry. We're going to let them let that feeling out safely.



What to do if your child does not want to listen, even after you've connected with them

Why it is important to have clear boundaries, even when you are connecting with your child – and what to do if your child is upset when they can't have their way.

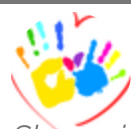
Sue Meintjes: That makes sense. And then, after you've connected, what is the next step?

Dr. Hilary Mandzik: I think if you're really getting pushback, the other thing I would add is, again, just to get curious.

"Why is this so hard for my child right now? What else might be going on?" Most of the time if a kid is really just like "No," digging their heels in, unwilling and unable to do the thing that you're asking, there's something going on emotionally for them.

And so, see if you can allow space for that. That might mean that you need to do the thing for them. Like, "Oh, I see you're having a really hard time turning off the video game. I'm going to help you by turning it off." You might have to set that boundary and step in and do that.

But then your kid gets to have feelings about that. Your child doesn't have to say, "Okay, sure, mom." Your child can say something like, "No, I don't want to." Your child can cry, get mad at you. All of that is okay. None of that is bad behavior. That's all just emotions coming out. And sometimes as parents, we have to set



that boundary and be the one to say, "Okay, I can see this is really hard for you, so I'm going to step in and help."

And we do that in a collaborative connected way. We don't do it in a punitive way. Like, "Look what you made me do now! I'm going to turn it off for you." It's not like that. It's very much just, "I can see this is hard, I'm going to help you."

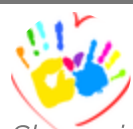
The single most important thing we can do for our kids to help them develop emotional regulation

Teaching our children how to manage their emotions is one of our most important parenting tasks. Here Dr. Hilary shares what we need to do to help them learn this important skill.

Sue Meintjes: Can you talk a bit more about emotional regulation? How to teach your child about managing their emotions?

Dr. Hilary Mandzik: Emotion regulation is essentially just learning to do the right things with our feelings. So, as adults, we know that we can't just go and hit somebody every time we feel mad, even though we might still have that impulse.

But our kids, their brains are literally not developed yet. And so, they are going to deal with their feelings in the wrong ways most of the time, unless we help them. What the research tells us is that emotion regulation develops in the context of a safe and supportive relationship.



The single most important thing we can do for our kids to help them develop emotional regulation and learn to do the right things with their feelings is to let them feel and then to keep them safe while they're feeling.

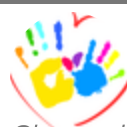
For example, maybe your child is mad at you because you made them turn off the video game, and they try to hit you. And you are going to say, "I see that you're so mad, I'm not going to let you hit." You might literally grab their wrist and say, "I'm not going to let you hit, but I get that your mad and it is okay to be mad."

So, in that moment, you are physically teaching them how to do the right things with their mad feelings. You're going to stop that hit, but you're allowing the feelings. And so over time when we do that, our kids get the message, "Oh, okay, cool. It's not bad to feel angry, but it's not OK to hit. I have to do something different with that feeling."

And we can read books about it, and we can talk about it all we want to, but really where we get the best results is when we actually let our kids feel the feelings.

How to manage your own emotions when your kid gets emotional

Managing our own emotions is just as important as teaching our kids to manage their own emotions – and the better we get at it, the better our kids can learn from us.



Dr. Hilary Mandzik: And I think that's where a lot of parents get tripped up, is that we don't want our kids to feel the feelings. Like it's super uncomfortable for the kids to feel the feelings because when we were kids, we were punished if we acted that way.

We were punished when we felt mad. And our parents didn't know to do something different, so it's not their fault. But for most of us, when our kids are mad, it's super triggering. Like we feel so unsafe in that moment, and we just want to make it stop no matter what.

And I think what we have to learn is that we are safe, and it is safe for our kids to express those emotions.

The work starts with us. We have to say to ourselves, "You know what? I am feeling really triggered right now." Like saying this to yourself in your own mind. "I feel really triggered right now. Now my kid is hitting me. My kid is angry with me. I feel triggered and that's okay. I can feel that way. And also, I am safe, and I can be here with my kid right now. I can do this."

It's kind of like a "we can do hard things" mentality. You can feel triggered and still choose to do the right thing for your kid.

How to teach children that their feelings are normal

Why validating what your kid is feeling is more important than calming them down.



Sue Meintjes: Yeah. And also, just validating and helping them feel that you understand what they are feeling.

Dr. Hilary Mandzik: Absolutely. Exactly. Feelings aren't scary for kids. Kids are used to feeling feelings. They are natural feelers of their feelings. But what they really need from us is to not feel alone with those feelings.

And so, when we can validate and say, "Yeah, I see that you're so mad. I see that you're mad at me, and that's okay. You can be mad at me. I'm not going anywhere." That is so empowering and validating for a kid.

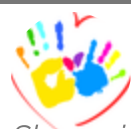
Because now that feeling is like a safe experience and kids learn that feelings come and they go, they don't stay forever.

And I think that's what can feel so scary as a kid. If you're constantly shooed away from your emotions, like "get up, brush it off, you're fine, don't cry." Then you learn that feelings are scary and that's not what we want to teach our kids.

So yeah, validating is huge because it shows kids that, A, I understand you, and B, this feeling is going to go away at some point. You will not feel this way forever. And it's safe to let your body feel it.

Why there is no such thing as bad kids (or bad parents)

This is such an important message. Everyone is doing the best they can – kids and parents both. We just need to focus on improving



and trying to do better.

Sue Meintjes: That's great, thanks so much for that. Is there any take-away message you want parents to remember?

Dr. Hilary Mandzik: Yeah, absolutely. Here's what I would say. I don't believe in bad kids or bad behavior. I think that everything our kids do that looks like bad behavior is for a reason. And we have to, as parents, get curious about that reason.

"What's going on? What does my kid need?" And for us as parents, if we yell at our kids, if we have a hard time letting our kids express their feelings, that doesn't make us bad parents.

Our nervous system is reacting the way it was taught to react based on how we were raised. We're not bad parents. We're doing the best we can, but as we learn more about parenting, then we can change things if we're not meeting our kids' needs.

So, there's no bad guys here. Not bad parents, not bad kids. It's just people who are doing the best with what they have in that moment. And we can all do better over time.

I want people to move away from this idea of bad kids or bad behavior or bad parenting. All of us are just doing our best. And so, as we know better, we can do better.

And for our kids, if we can get curious. If we can remember that behavior is communication. It always tells us about what's going on for our kid. And so instead of thinking "That's bad behavior and I have to get it to stop," we need to get curious. "What is going on?"

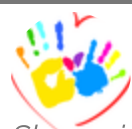


What does my kid need at this moment? What is this behavior telling me?" And when we can do that, we're going to be so much more able to meet our kids' needs.

Sue Meintjes: That's really true. I think you can do the same for your own feelings. Just try to reflect on why you acted in a certain way when you felt a certain feeling.

Dr. Hilary Mandzik: Absolutely. And I think that's one of the things that people don't realize. A lot of parenting is actually re-parenting ourselves. Like the needs that didn't get met for us when we were kids, we have to meet those needs for ourselves now as adults. We have to feel our own feelings, and that helps us be there for our kids.

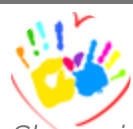
It's really hard to be there for our kids if we don't try to support ourselves too and feel our feelings.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Before asking your child to do something, next time think about how you can first connect with them in their world
- Use the “Taking the Pressure Off” technique next time you want your young child to do something
- Try to re-frame your child's tantrum as a mystery, and become curious about the real reason why they are acting that way
- Next time your child feels negative emotions, don't try to calm them or make them feel better, but rather just explain to them how they are feeling, and that it is normal to have bad feelings sometimes
- Next time you are angry or upset, reassure yourself that feeling this way is ok, that you are allowed to feel bad or negative emotions
- Download Dr Hilary's free guide, [6 Mindset Shifts to Ditch the Overwhelm & Parent in a Way That Feels Good, here](#)



Sandi and Melissa Schwartz: The "One Minute Miracle" technique to get kids excited about cooperation

In this interview with mother-daughter team Sandi and Melissa Schwartz, parenting coaches and authors of the book Authentic Parenting Power, they share what children need to be able to listen, and how to help your child feel empowered.

Sandi also shares a simple "One Minute Miracle" technique that you can use to get your children excited about cooperation, while also building a deeper connection and respect between you.



“ It's not just about listening; it's about creating the kind of connection so that they want to be cooperative.



In this interview

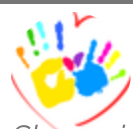
- About Sandi and Melissa Schwartz
- The "One Minute Miracle" technique to get kids to cooperate without fighting
- What children need to be able to cooperate and listen
- How to stop kids from pushing back when you need them to cooperate
- Why routines and predictability are so important for kids
- How to help your kids feel seen and heard to avoid power struggles
- The "One Minute Miracle" technique to get kids to cooperate without fighting
- Why connecting with your child makes them more likely to listen when you really need them to
- The most important "mindset shift" parents need to make
- Action steps

About Sandi and Melissa Schwartz

Sandi and Melissa Schwartz are a mother-daughter team, supporting educators and parents in understanding the inner world of children and what it is that they need from adults in order to thrive.

Internationally acclaimed authors, coaches and public speakers, they bring new perspective based on current research and personal experience to transform the field of child development.

Sandi received her Master Degree from Columbia University and has worked with children and families for over forty years,



bringing a wide range of wisdom to her roles as educator, college professor, and radio show host.

Melissa's expertise is in helping parents and teachers make a shift in understanding children with high sensitivity and sensory processing disorder. She is a Stanford University alumna and a graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

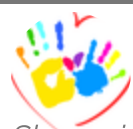
They co-founded Leading Edge Parenting in 2007, co-authored "Authentic Parenting Power" in 2013 and each have their own thriving coaching practices supporting parents and children around the world.

[Download a free copy of their book Emotionally Healthy Discipline here.](#)

If your family has one or more highly sensitive and/or sensory children or parents, then [check out their Sensitive Parenting program for tools](#), resources, and support.

Learn more about their work at [Leading Edge Parenting](#).

You can also [follow them on Facebook](#).



The "One Minute Miracle" technique to get kids to cooperate without fighting

Sue Meintjes: Let's just start off by telling us more about yourself and your work with parents.

Melissa Schwartz: My mom and I are both coaches at Leading Edge Parenting, which we co-founded in 2007.

We also wrote a book together, called *Authentic Parenting Power*. I also wrote a children's book for highly sensitive children. So, while we both coach parents, our practices are slightly different.

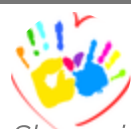
My mom works with parents of all types of children to help families have more harmony, to help parents get on the same page in how they're approaching their children. She brings the background of her 30, 35-year career, where she was a classroom teacher working in a corporate environment with children.

Sandi Schwartz: Over 50 years in education.

Melissa Schwartz: And my specialty is really with children that are highly sensitive. I work with families who've got either adults or children that have more intense emotions, are a little more reactive, and feel things deeply. So, I work more specifically with the highly sensitive people and highly sensitive families.

Sue Meintjes: Awesome. Did you want to add something, Sandi?

Sandi Schwartz: I want to say that as an educator, a teacher in a classroom, we're never allowed to get really angry, punishing, or



shaming. We're not allowed to use discipline strategies that parents have sort of just relaxed into using, because they didn't have to do it any other way.

And so, when I started coaching parents, what I would say to them is, "How is it that a teacher can move 30 to 40 children through a day without relying on the discipline strategies that so many parents fall into using?" There must be something that the teachers know that we need to share with parents.

But even though I knew these strategies, and used them in the classroom, as a parent, when I came home, I was tired and exhausted, and I just wanted my kids to listen to me. So even I, who knew the strategies that would work, would still use some of the "negative" strategies that parents fall into.

And really all these "negative" strategies do is cause everybody to feel disempowered and unappreciated. And it doesn't really build a safe, loving environment for children to grow up in.

So, I like to share strategies that I know work.

And then also suggest to parents that they learn how to soothe themselves. Take pauses. Get out of the thoughts in their minds that "children should listen just because I'm the parent." It doesn't really work like that.

What we really want to do is teach children to feel their own sense of healthy empowerment, and how good it feels when they are cooperative. That they don't have to grab for power by

pushing back at their parents, because they feel like you're bossing them around.

What children need to be able to cooperate and listen

Sue Meintjes: That sounds really good. So, what is your favorite strategy or technique that's working really well for you or your clients to get kids to listen and cooperate?

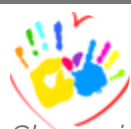
Melissa Schwartz: My first suggestion would be to encourage parents to actually reframe the question. Rather than "how to get their kids to listen," I prefer to think about it as "what helps kids listen" or "what do children need to be able to listen?"

Because really what we see is that children, first of all, have to feel empowered.

If they feel like they're being bossed around or told what to do, or there's a grown-up who doesn't get it, who's making them do something they don't want to do, they are going to push back because they want to feel power.

What we want to do is help children feel healthy power, not this combative power with the adults in their lives.

In order for kids to be able to listen, there are a few general suggestions I'd like to offer, and then I think my mom will give a really nice specific technique that parents can use as a takeaway.



How to stop kids from pushing back when you need them to cooperate

So, when we want children to listen, what tends to work best is if we have really consistent routines.

When children know what to expect, when their day-to-day requests are predictable and consistent, they're much less likely to push back.

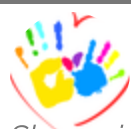
For example, if they know that after dinner, they take a shower or a bath, and then brush their teeth and then put on pajamas, and then they read a book and get into bed and cuddle, they're not as likely to push back against the brushing of the teeth because it's part of the routine that they expect to have every night.

Another thing that can be really helpful is to have really clear boundaries with children so that if they do push back, they sort of know how far they can push before there's a consequence. A loving consequence that's tied to the pushing back, tied to the behavior, makes sense to the child, ideally known in advance, and age appropriate.

And that can all be thought of in advance by the parents as well.

Why routines and predictability are so important for kids

Another piece that goes hand in hand with that is that when kids know what's to come, they're much more likely to be cooperative.



So again, when it feels predictable, it won't turn into this power struggle, where they don't want to comply because they're looking to feel their own power.

So really the main takeaway I think that's going to help children be able to listen is helping them to feel empowered, so that they don't have to push back against you to feel their power.

Especially with sensitive and strong-willed children, if they aren't feeling empowered in their life, when we ask them to do something, they're going to look for their power by pushing back and saying No. And we can shift that dynamic by setting up these pieces in advance.

In general, when we've got routines that can be in place to help them be more cooperative, they will naturally listen because they're in on it with us.

How to help your kids feel seen and heard to avoid power struggles

Sandi Schwartz: The second half is, now that we have established that children will listen more when they feel self-empowered, and they feel seen and heard, here is a specific example of how a parent can make that happen:

In most homes, one of the big issues can be "It's time for dinner. Stop doing what you're doing and come to the dinner table."



That often creates a power struggle. Parents just want the kids to listen because the parent has worked hard, is exhausted, got healthy food, made a good dinner, and "the least you could do is come over to the table when I tell you to!"

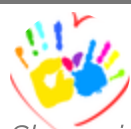
But we want to get away from that thinking and emotional hysteria, which makes us yell at them, and realize that in order for them to be more cooperative, they need to be seen and heard first. That will make them cooperative.

The "One Minute Miracle" technique to get kids to cooperate without fighting

Here's how you do it: say your child is in his bedroom. Instead of shouting across the house from the kitchen, "It's time for dinner. Get off your computer and come into the kitchen now!" which sounds very bossy and not empowering or being seen at all, take one minute to do the following.

Because this one minute will create a miracle for you.

As long as it's safe to leave the food on the stove or whatever you're doing, walk into the room where your child is. In a soft, loving voice, say, "I came in to tell you that dinner will be on the table in five minutes."



So, first you state what you want them to know. But it's not about, "Stop what you're doing!" You just state what's important to you: "Dinner's on the table in five minutes."

The next thing, which is really important, is to acknowledge that your child is involved in something that's important to them. You can articulate it by saying something like this:

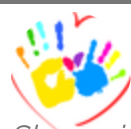
"You look busy. Can I watch you for a minute and see what you're doing?"

Most of the time, depending on their age, I mean, teenagers may not want you to see what they're doing, but most of the time kids will say, "Look, mommy, look mommy, look what I did. I did this, I did that. I did!"

So, the second step is to acknowledge that your child is doing and showing interest, for just one minute.

And then after the minute, the third piece of the strategy is, after you have connected with them by showing legitimate interest, you connect it with what you need to happen.

You can say "This looks so cool. You're so good at that. Well, that's really interesting. I'd love to see more. How about you show me how this works as soon as we..."



Be very specific now. State what you need them to do. For example, you can say "How about you show me how this works as soon as we *clear the table after dinner.*"

It's a three-part strategy that is going to encourage connection, because you acknowledge that their life is important, as important as your life is, and that you are there for them.

And after dinner, you can reiterate, "Let's clean the table because I can't wait to see about that game," or "I can't wait for you to show me what you were doing."

And then, don't wash the dishes. Don't tidy up the kitchen. Show the child how important it is that they show you what they're doing. You say, "I got five minutes to watch you. Let's sit down. You show me what you've done."

And really show interest. Get your head out of all your grown-up things. Really connect with your child. Show interest and appreciate it. And then after the five minutes, say, "I wish I had more time, but it's been five minutes, I'm going to have to go clean up the kitchen now."

That is a wonderful strategy.

It works the best when you are talking about routines during the day. I'm not talking about in the park or when you go shopping or if there's an emergency. Because if there's an emergency, they have to just listen.



I'm talking about developing a relationship with your child throughout the day, during the routines of what you need to do, where you actually show your child that you care about what they're doing. It's mutual respect.

You tell them what you need from them, but you also see what they're doing and show them that that's important as well. You get much more cooperation that way.

Why connecting with your child makes them more likely to listen when you really need them to

Melissa Schwartz: I want to add one last thought because I think you just touched on something really important, which is sometimes there is an emergency and they do need to listen. "Stop!" "Don't do that!" "Come over here!" And when parents employ these strategies, most of the time children can handle an emergency "Stop, listen, don't do that. Come this way."

It's when everything in life is being given to them like an emergency. When they feel like they're being bossed around constantly, that that doesn't work.

I don't want parents to think that we are saying kids never have to listen.

There are absolutely times where they must listen, "Stop, don't run in the street" or "Look out! There's a car coming!"



And when we generally create this atmosphere of empowerment and connection, they can really handle those moments when they need to listen in the moment, because everything doesn't feel like it's an emergency. It doesn't drown out the urgency of that specific moment when they really have to listen.

Sandi Schwartz: There's so much more we have to say, but I know we have to keep it down to this one strategy.

The most important "mindset shift" parents need to make

Sue Meintjes: You've given a really good example and lots of things to think about. Is there anything else you want to add?

Sandi Schwartz: I think the biggest thing parents need to change is the attitude of "I'm the parent, therefore the child must listen."

That is the basic thing to change: "I'm the parent and I'm responsible, but I also want to, through the 15 years I have them, develop a relationship of trust and that the child believes I'm there for their best interest and that I really, really care about them and that I'm a safe place for them. I'm not just their boss. And that's a 15-year development and it gets developed every day throughout all of our interactions."

Sue Meintjes: Yeah, and I guess it helps to work on creating a strong connection with your child as well.



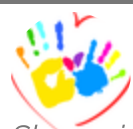
Sandi Schwartz: Yes. It's not just about listening; it's about creating the kind of connection so that they want to be cooperative.

Sue Meintjes: I like that. Thank you very much for your time. I'm so glad we could have a talk and you gave me lots to think about.

Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Think about your mindset around your children - do you believe that they "children listen just because you're the parent?" If so, think about how you can build a relationship of trust with them instead of focusing on dominating them.
- Where can you help make your child's life more predictable? In what areas can you make your routines more predictable and clear?
- Instead of yelling at your child to get them to cooperate, try using the "One Minute Miracle" technique, by connecting with them in what they are doing, showing interest, and then coming back to their activity after they've cooperated.
- [Download a free copy of Sandi and Melissa's book Emotionally Healthy Discipline here.](#)



Elisabeth Stitt - How to use anticipation to get your kids to cooperate

In this interview with Elisabeth Stitt, an author, parent educator, coach, and retired school teacher, we talk about how to anticipate problem times (like getting kids ready for school in the morning), and then develop plans in collaboration with your children to make things go easier and smoother.



“*If we're just all doing it together and we make it a routine and we make it light hearted, then everybody is helped altogether.*”



In this interview

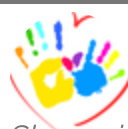
- About Elisabeth Stitt
- How to use anticipation to get your kids to cooperate
- When and how to use routines and checklists to make your day go smoother
- How to make transitions easier (like going from playing to leaving for school)
- How to anticipate and plan when things don't go well
- The three types of choices you can offer your kids (and which ones works best)
- How to train your kids to take responsibility instead of doing everything yourself
- Three techniques for finding the joy in parenting again
- How to stop feeling resentful about doing all the chores
- Action steps

About Elisabeth Stitt

Elisabeth Stitt is an author, parent educator, coach and retired school teacher, but first and foremost a mother and a stepmother.

She was teacher for 25 years and supports parents through her own extensive experience and expertise. She's been there and knows how to navigate the difficult world of parenting.

You can find out more about Elisabeth's parenting coaching at [Joyful Parenting Coaching](#).



How to use anticipation to get your kids to cooperate

Sue Meintjes: Thanks for joining me today. Please tell us a bit more about yourself and your work with parents.

Elisabeth Stitt: I have been a parenting coach for nine years, and I came to it from 25 years of teaching, mostly middle school. I work with parents of kids of all ages. I love middle school parents, but actually a lot of the parents who come to me are parents of slightly younger kids, like two to eight year olds.

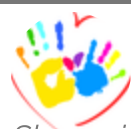
Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy for getting kids to listen and cooperate that's working well for you or your clients?

Elisabeth Stitt: Well, one of the things that I talk to my parents about a lot is setting our kids up for success. And one of my favorite tools for that is **anticipation**.

So I really ask parents to take the time to review with kids what's going to happen, and what the expectations are going to be in a particular situation.

Sue Meintjes: Yeah. This morning my kids were busy crafting, but they they had to go to school. It ended up being very difficult to get them to stop playing and start getting ready for school. How can I use **anticipation** to make this easier?

Elisabeth Stitt: Well, for one, we're going to have fairly routine ways of going through the morning. If kids tend towards ADHD,



then you may go so far as to writing it down and having a checklist that they check off every day.

When and how to use routines and checklists to make your day go smoother

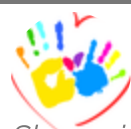
Sue Meintjes: Yeah, I think a checklist can work for anyone.

Elisabeth Stitt: Checklists can work for anyone, but lots of kids don't need them, and I don't want to burden kids with things that they don't need. But there's no reason why you can't write it out and post it on a whiteboard, and then the child who needs it can physically check it off every day, and then they get to see that it's done. Whereas another child is going to be done before they even look at the list.

Let's say that we're going to set them up for success by having the same routine every morning. And we know that some will need more prompting of what's next on the list or what needs to happen now. But I'm going to have a conversation with them as I'm making that list, to say when all of this is done, then we might have some time for play before we have to leave to go to school.

How to make transitions easier (like going from playing to leaving for school)

But what can we do to make transitioning from playing to leaving the school easier? Enlist their conversation and enlist their input.



Acknowledge that it's hard to start playing and be in the middle of play and then having to go and do something else.

Sue Meintjes: Do you acknowledge that? Do you tell them it's hard to stop playing?

Elisabeth Stitt: Yeah, sure. Because it is hard, for adults too. I always remind adults, when's the last time you got hooked into one more episodes of the Netflix series that you were watching? It was probably last night because it's hard to stop doing something pleasurable to go do something we have to do.

Sue Meintjes: How do we make it easier?

Elisabeth Stitt: Give kids lots of warning. Some kids like to have a five minute warning, or even a five minute and a ten minute warning.

Another idea is if you have something like Google or Siri to remind them, it can help them feel more independent than if mom or dad is nagging. But mom and dad might set something up, like when the timer goes off or when Siri says it's time to go, we're going to stop what we're doing and clap three times. And that's a great method because it requires kids to put down out of their hands whatever they were doing.

And chances are they're going to clap and they're going to look up to where the sound came, either to you if you gave the reminder, or to wherever the sound came from. So they're going to put down what they're doing, they're going to look up, they're



going to clap three times. By the time we've clapped three times, of course, we are engaging our musical brain, and that's using two sides of the brain. So that helps us also to get out of the focus or concentration of whatever we were doing while we were playing.

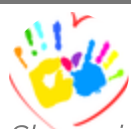
And if the parent is stepping in right at that moment, saying what needs to happen now, with a bright, cheerful voice, there's much bigger chance that the child is going to go put their shoes on, or get their backpack, or whatever the next step is.

How to anticipate and plan when things don't go well

If it's still not going well, then it's a great opportunity to, maybe on the way home in the car, say, "You know, our plan for getting out the door smoothly this morning didn't work as well as it could have worked. It needs some new ideas. What do you think?"

We engage them in their thinking again, not right in the moment that they're trying to get out the door, but we're **anticipating**.

It doesn't really matter what the kids suggest. I always say *try what the kids suggest first and say, "Let's see if that will work."* If it doesn't work, then we can suggest something ourselves. But by going with the kids suggestion, we build credibility, we get credit for having listened to them and taken their views into consideration, and we have helped them to develop their critical thinking skills. And whatever it is, they're going to have more buy-in into a solution that they proposed.



So if I'm driving home in the car and we're talking about it, we're making a plan. Before we get out of the car, I'm going to turn around and I'm going to say, "So tell me again what our plan for tomorrow morning for getting out the door smoothly and easily is." Have them repeat it. And when they repeat it they're laying the neural pathway to have that be the plan.

And part of the plan may be adding it to the to-do list. So we have our before play to do to-do list and we have our after play to-do list.

The three types of choices you can offer your kids (and which ones works best)

Sue Meintjes: That's really good, I like it. What else can parents do to make this easier?

Elisabeth Stitt: Well, kids love to play. That's their "mode". If we can keep things playful, that helps, too.

So when the alarm goes off, and I come in and say, "Okay, what needs to happen now in order to help them go right away?" I might offer an A or B choice. And it might just be a what choice. "Are you wearing your red boots today or your sneakers?"

Or it might be a when choice. "Are you putting your jacket on first? Are you putting your shoes on first?"

But my favorite kind are how choices. "Are you going to fly to the front door or are you going to be a tutu train to the front door?"



Because, that's going to require kids to engage their imagination, and the very act of imagining the two possibilities is going to help disconnect them from whatever they're playing and move them towards something else but still in a playful mode.

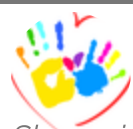
How to train your kids to take responsibility instead of doing everything yourself

Sue Meintjes: Yeah, playfulness is really helpful to ease the parent's stress as well. This morning I was so stressed and I ended up yelling at the kids because they didn't want to get ready for school. So is there anything you can tell us about how to manage your own stress as a parent so you are not so stressed in the morning just before they have to go?

Elisabeth Stitt: Well, one of my favorite methods is to train my children young to do things for themselves. For instance, my daughter made her own lunch when she was three, in as much as I would have made the elements of her lunch the night before. But she was responsible for getting them out of the cupboard, out of the refrigerator, and putting them in her lunch box.

Sue Meintjes: And you can also make that part of the routine and part of the checklist.

Elisabeth Stitt: Right, that was absolutely part of the checklist, but it just meant it was something which I was taking off of my list and putting onto her list.



And so that gave me a little bit more time. And by the time she was probably eight or nine, she was making lunch for both of us. Because I was a teacher, I also needed my lunch packed.

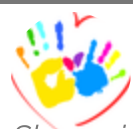
And so then getting ready in the mornings was a cooperative effort. When we were together, we were having fun, we were talking, we were chatting, but we were both getting our tasks done.

Three techniques for finding the joy in parenting again

Sue Meintjes: Thanks, that was really insightful and helpful, thank you very much. You talk a lot on your website about finding the joy of parenting. How can parents go from feeling overwhelmed, overstimulated and stressed to finding the joy of parenting again?

Elisabeth Stitt: I really have three techniques to find joy in parenting again.

One is to use structure and routine in our favor. Of course it takes them more time in the short-run to really teach their children to take responsibility for themselves and to do things themselves. But in the long run, kids are happier because they basically don't want to be told what to do. So if it's routine, then you're not nagging them every day.



So right away there's more joy in the fact that your first ten interactions in the morning aren't you telling your kids what to do, because they're just doing them.

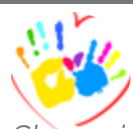
In the classroom setting, we call this *time on task*. *Time on task* is the time where you are actually teaching curriculum as opposed to handing out books, collecting homework, collecting lunch money or permission slips, telling children to sit down, be quiet.

With my children, I spent a lot of time at the beginning of the school year making sure my students knew exactly what to do the first 10 minutes of class *without me*. That meant that I could stand at the door and I could say, "Hi Betty, how are you today? How'd your soccer games go yesterday? Hey, John, I really liked that poem that you wrote. Louise, is that a new shirt? You're looking so handsome today."

I was interacting positively and joyfully with my students, while at the same time they were just executing on coming in, turning in their homework and getting their books out, because they knew where to look, where it was on the board.

So the routine was running things, freeing me up to be joyfully interacting with my kids. That's one of my favorite techniques for finding joy in parenting.

My other technique for finding joy in parenting is to really be deliberate and clear about your boundaries for your family. That means limiting the number of activities that your kids are signed



up for. It means saying no to 28 birthday parties just because there are 28 kids in the class. It means having some chunks of time during the week where you are going to say "No, I can't go to a meeting on that night. No, I can't sign up for this."

And sometimes that means your kids are going to be disappointed, but in the long run, it's going to mean that they have a clear sense of "this is our family, and our family is important, and it's fun to be a family."

And then the third thing really is to make sure that you're just bringing a lot of playfulness in.

If you're going to do chores on Saturday morning, that's great, but turn up the music, put on funny hat, start dancing, and have everybody dancing and moving and doing chores all at the same time, as opposed to "You need to do this. Go do this. Go do that by yourself. Go do that chore by yourself." Rather, let's all work together to make our house welcoming and fun, and afterwards, let's make sure we schedule something fun.

How to stop feeling resentful about doing all the chores

Sue Meintjes: Yeah. Thank you for your advice today. You personally helped me too.

Elisabeth Stitt: How old are your kids?

Sue Meintjes: I've got a daughter. She's four, and I've got a son. He's six.

Elisabeth Stitt: Okay. Yeah. Perfect age to really capitalize on the fact that they basically want to spend time with you and to help you. And so try to come at it with a sense of fun and adventure.

There's just lots of ways to be creative about making family life fun rather than what most parents are doing. Most parents are slogging through their chores while they're letting their kids be on their devices, and then they feel guilty because their kids are on their devices too much, and they feel resentful because they have been doing all the chores.

If we're just all doing it together and we make it a routine and we make it light hearted, then everybody is helped altogether. The kids have bragging rights. The kids feel the pride of having contributed and been a part of making things nice, and then the whole family can go celebrate.

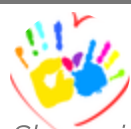
I'll leave you with a simple technique to make cleanup more fun. Hide quarters in places that you want to make sure that they've dusted. Then they can search for the quarters while they are cleaning for an extra allowance. Don't let them know how many quarters there are, so that they don't give up after they found a few.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Identify the "problem times" in your house and then talk to your child to get their suggestions for making those times go smoother.
- Instead of doing all the chores yourself, break them down until you find the parts of the chores suitable for your child to do themselves, then slowly give them more responsibility.
- Create checklists for the common routines in your house - for example, getting ready for school in the morning or getting ready for bed at night.
- [Visit Joyful Parenting Coaching](#) for more parenting tips and resources.



Shirley Pastiroff - How to cultivate mindfulness for effective parenting

In this interview with Shirley Pastiroff, a seasoned counselor and co-author of The Mindful Parent book, she shares invaluable insights on the power of self-awareness in parent-child relationships.

Shirley explains that by understanding our own emotions, we can guide our children more effectively. She also introduces the A.L.L. technique (Acknowledge, Link, Let Go), which offers a practical approach to staying present when your kids frustrate or upset you.



“We've really been all oversold the idea of parenting as this incredibly difficult job, rather than a really precious relationship.”



In this interview

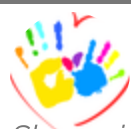
- About Shirley Pastiroff
- How to cultivate mindfulness for effective parenting
- Why listening to yourself is the key to getting your kids to listen
- How to move from Orange Brain to Green Brain
- "Why am I triggered?" Emotion regulation in 10 seconds
- How to practice mindfulness in daily parenting using the A.L.L. technique
- Experience a richer life from having children by letting your child give you the gift of slowing down
- Actions steps

About Shirley Pastiroff

Shirley Pastiroff is a Counsellor, Parent Coach and author of *The Mindful Parent*. She has trained and supported thousands of parents in their journey to becoming the parents they always wanted to be, and to having the relationship with their children they always wanted to have. She lives in Auckland with her husband and five children.

You can find more about her book, [The Mindful Parent](#), [here](#).

Follow her on [Facebook](#), or [Instagram](#).



How to cultivate mindfulness for effective parenting

Sue Meintjes: Let us get started and just tell us a little bit more about yourself and your work with parents.

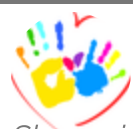
Shirley Pastiroff: I'm a counselor, so therapist. I don't just see parents, I see all kinds of different adults. But over the last sort of five or six years I have developed, alongside my colleague, a mindful parenting course that turned into *The Mindful Parent* book.

Probably 50 or 60 percent of my clients are parents. I work with them in a pretty holistic way in the sense that I don't work with any one particular age group or any one particular presenting issue. I generally work with the internal world of the parent and the space between the parent and the child.

So that's my expertise area if you like, and my interest, my passion.

Why listening to yourself is the key to getting your kids to listen

Sue Meintjes: What is your favorite technique or strategy that's working really well for you or your clients to get kids to listen and increase cooperation?



Shirley Pastiroff: My overriding strategy and the one that has made the biggest impact on me, and my client's lives, is that **we have to listen to ourselves.**

This is a scientific approach. *The chemistry of the body doing the speaking determines the level of listening available to the listener, whether they're an adult or a child.*

When we speak with a voice that has some cortisol and adrenaline in it, so some activation, even if it's a really small amount, a slight frustration, a bit of a hurry, the ability for the child to have open pathways in their brain (and that includes their auditory pathways, not just their cognition and their emotions) start to shut down a little bit.

Just as if I spoke to you slightly impatiently now, you would slightly shut down just a little bit. And if I carried on being a little bit aggressive, like asking you "Why are you asking me these questions?" you would start to either get defensive, or move forward to justify.

And so, what a lot of parents don't understand is that the brain science behind getting children to do what we want is actually based on the "launch" rather than the "landing".

I have lots of strategies for this, but the sort of foundational framework is this: we can listen to ourselves, and try to keep ourselves in the zone where we've got serotonin, oxytocin, and dopamine running through our bodies. And when we're in this



state, when we've got a good relationship with ourselves and with our children, then the child's brain stays open, because the connection feels safe.

This is all subconscious. They feel like we're on their team. And then their ability to do what we want becomes so much better. It becomes much more likely they will just amble over and pick up the shoes, even if it's the second or third time we ask.

But when we get triggered out of that what I call the "Green Brain Zone", getting our children to listen and do what we want is almost impossible. They will either refuse or they'll do it out of fear, both of which are unsustainable over the long term.

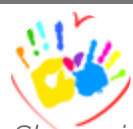
How to move from Orange Brain to Green Brain

Sue Meintjes: What are a couple of things that parents can do to ensure we speak with the right tone of voice and the right mindset with children?

Shirley Pastiroff: So, this is where the work is really. It's not easy, but it's very effective.

The first would be that we need to work out how we live our own lives, our "general way of being in the world".

Are we moving in what we call the "Orange Brain State", which is at speed, in a hurry, with most of our brain in the future rather than in



the present moment? If we live like that, we don't stand a chance of getting our children to listen to us.

So, the first is a foundational, how are we developing what I call "Green Brain" in our lives?

And that doesn't mean an hour of meditation every day. It just means dropping into pockets of mindfulness so that we can actually tell where we are. We can notice our breathing. We can be aware of our emotions. We can be aware of the thought patterns that we have.

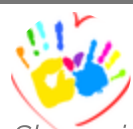
This is basically about getting fit as a human being, regardless of whether we're a parent.

There are a whole bunch of mindfulness strategies out there, but understanding what they're for, that they're not just so that we can be "Zen", but so that we can be present to our own internal environment.

So that's the first one.

"Why am I triggered?" Emotion regulation in 10 seconds

And the second one, which is probably the bigger one in-the-moment is, "Can we understand and regulate our emotions?" Because when our child isn't quite listening, we will be triggered.



We need to know that we're triggered, and we need to know whether it's fear, sadness, or anger.

It's usually anger, but sometimes it's fear. "I'm going to be late." "I'm going to get into trouble myself at work." Or it could be sadness. "My child has become an uncompliant child, having been a really easy child."

So, there are lots of different emotions, not just frustration and anger going on. I have some very specific processes for emotion regulation, but basically, they're about turning towards ourselves and away from the child, and identifying the feelings in our body.

And this can happen in 10 seconds once we get practice, it doesn't take forever. You start by recognizing high feeling of frustration, "they're still not doing what I've asked them to do," my voice is rising, my body's got tense, I've gone into tunnel vision, I'm not in good relationship with this child anymore, I'm just in "let's get this thing done" mode.

Once you recognise that, you accept it. So "I have a high feeling of frustration. It makes perfect sense. They're not listening again." Take some deep breaths.

And then what starts to happen is we start to say, "Hey buddy," or "Hey hun." We tend to get down on their level. We hold their shoulders. We look in their eyes and go, "Did you hear that I said, it really is time to put your shoes on. Have you heard me?"



And often at that stage, you get a nod and an okay and a shrug because you've dialed yourself down and you've moved into the space of the relationship. And at that point, if they want to say, "I don't want to put my shoes on," then you still got connection and you've got a conversation to have.

But all the work happens *within* the physiology of the parent. And then the second little piece, which usually goes quite smoothly happens *between* parent and child.

How to practice mindfulness in daily parenting using the A.L.L. technique

Sue Meintjes: Is there any one mindfulness technique you can recommend?

Shirley Pastiroff: Yeah, so the one that I just referred to there, I'll just describe it very quickly. It's called Acknowledge, Link, Let Go, and the acronym for that is A.L.L., and what it means is that in any moment that you notice that you're not in that lovely, productive, present state, which is often for a lot of us, is that we turn to the body, we acknowledge something like, "Hey, tight chest," "Hey, feeling of frustration," "Hey, feeling of, ugh, my stomach just dropped," just noticing, acknowledging.

Then we do the L, which is the link, "Makes perfect sense, I'm half an hour late," "Makes perfect sense, he just pooped in his nappy again," "Makes perfect sense, they're fighting over X again."



And then we let it go, which is a simple breath technique.

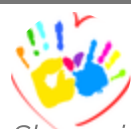
And again, none of this solves the problem. What it does is it takes the body's activation, and it gives it a chance to reduce so that instead of going from stimulus directly to reaction, we go from stimulus to pause to response.

And so, the pause is the Acknowledge, Link, Let go. And then we move into whatever problem solving needs to be done.

Sometimes we walk away and let them sort it themselves. Sometimes we engage really definitely with, "This is coming to an end right now, but I'm still on your team, but I'm intervening."

And usually what starts to happen is the children start to recognize that certain tone, because it's not cross, it's not disappointed, it's not frustrated, it's just got a really definite, boundary.

And so, for me, the Acknowledge, Link, Let Go piece is the bridge between people saying, "Hey, calm down, parent," and parents actually calming down. Because parents can't just calm down. They actually need some strategy so that they can really kindly and compassionately take care of their own emotional activation, and then become more effective in moving into the difficult space with the child.



Experience a richer life from having children by letting your child give you the gift of slowing down

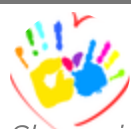
Sue Meintjes: We've just about to come to the end of our time. Before we finish up, was there anything else you wanted to add about what we spoke about?

Shirley Pastiroff: Yeah, I think we've really all been oversold the idea of parenting as this incredibly difficult job, rather than a really precious relationship.

And because we're moving so fast these days, I think the biggest gift we can give ourselves as parents is kindness to ourselves, because it's really hard to bring up children, because children move slowly. I mean, they run around fast, but they move in the world very present to the moment, and we as parents are moving at a very different speed.

And so, giving ourselves the gift of slowing down, by recognizing our internal state, is actually a win-win. Because that means we as parents get to be in the moment a little bit more.

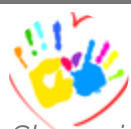
That makes our relationship with our children a whole bunch easier. They then start to actually do what they're told, which is one of the main things we want to happen. And we get to experience a richer life, rather than a poorer life, from having our children, because it's almost like they invite us back into that slightly more mindful, in-the-moment world that we've often let go of in the hurly-burly of modern Western life.



Actions steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Take moments throughout the day to check in with your own emotional state. Are you feeling rushed, frustrated, or anxious? Acknowledge these feelings without judgment.
- Practice the A.L.L. technique (Acknowledge, Link, Let Go) when you notice negative emotions. Acknowledge what you're feeling, understand why, and then consciously let go using simple breath techniques. This practice helps you respond, rather than react, to challenging situations with your child.
- Incorporate mindfulness into your routine by creating "pockets of mindfulness". These don't have to be long meditation sessions but can be short moments where you focus on your breathing, emotions, or thought patterns. This practice enhances your ability to stay present and calm, creating a positive atmosphere for interaction with your child.
- Embrace the idea of slowing down and being present in the moment with your child. Instead of viewing parenting as a difficult job, see it as a precious relationship that requires your attention and care.
- Be mindful of your mental state, striving to stay in the "Green Brain Zone" where you have serotonin, oxytocin, and



dopamine flowing, indicating well-being and positivity.
Practice self-compassion and self-care to promote a positive internal environment.

- Check out Shirley's book, [The Mindful Parent, here](#).
- Follow Shirley Pastiroff on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).



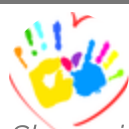
Dr. Jenny Michaelson - How to connect with your child when you're looking for cooperation

In this interview with Dr. Jenny Michaelson, founder of True North Parent Coaching, she shares practical strategies for improving cooperation and connection with your child.

Jenny shares valuable techniques, including the power of genuine connection, why you only need one minute to connect with your child, and the importance of acknowledging your child's emotions.



“ When parents take a moment to connect with their child before they direct them to something...that really works.



Expert Parenting Advice

Share via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

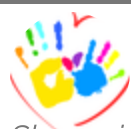
In this interview

- About Dr. Jenny Michaelson
- How to connect with your child when you're looking for cooperation
- How to transition your child from playing to getting ready for dinner
- Why you only need one minute to connect with your child
- What to do when your child is really engaged in what they are doing
- Why the difficult transitions are the best learning experiences
- 3 more quick tips to make transitions and getting your child to cooperate easier
- Action steps

About Dr. Jenny Michaelson

My name is Jenny Michaelson. My business is called True North Parent Coaching, and I coach individuals, couples, and I do some group coaching. And my work is about helping parents get in touch with their values as an anchor point for making the best parenting decisions for themselves and their children.

You can book a free 30 minute online consultation with Dr. Jenny Michaelson [at her website](#).



How to connect with your child when you're looking for cooperation

Sue Meintjes: So, if you can just tell us a little bit more about yourself and your work with parents and children.

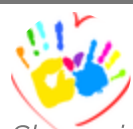
Jenny Michaelson: My name is Jenny Michaelson. My business is called True North Parent Coaching, and I coach individuals, couples, and I do some group coaching. And my work is about helping parents get in touch with their values as an anchor point for making the best parenting decisions for themselves and their children.

And that's what I do.

Sue Meintjes: So, what is your favorite strategy or technique that is working really well for you or your clients to get kids to listen and increase cooperation?

Jenny Michaelson: It's such a good question. And one that I hear often, it's almost always a part of any parenting challenge, no matter whether that's the challenge itself or if it's a fundamental piece of the challenge that we're working on. And I have a lot of strategies that I like to use.

The one that I believe in the most and feel has the most credence is really to connect with your child when you're looking for cooperation and or listening or both. When parents take a moment to connect with their child before they direct them to



something...that really works. I call it a special sauce and there's many ways to do that.

It's important to stop whatever you're doing, if possible. You're obviously not going to stop driving if that's what you're doing, but I find that it works best when you can stop what you're doing and really give your full attention to your child.

How to transition your child from playing to getting ready for dinner

And so, say you're ready to have your child clean up and get ready for dinner. You're in the kitchen cooking and your child's playing and all is right with the world. But then it's time for you to ask your child to stop and clean up, and then get ready for dinner, wash hands, whatever's needed next.

It's simply good practice to connect before you do that. So, if it's possible to leave your dinner preparation, temporarily move into the space that your child is occupying, where they're playing. If they happen to be on the floor, you get down on the floor and actually play with them for a couple of minutes.

You can get curious about what they're doing, ask them what they're building. "What are you drawing?" Whatever it is they happen to be doing and if you can even do that down at their level.

I said, "get down on the floor" because I'm just picturing a smaller child playing on the floor. Or if they're drawing, you can sit at the

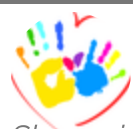


table with them.

Why you only need one minute to connect with your child

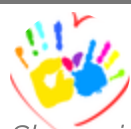
Just moving into their world for a minute gives you that touch point, that connection.

And again, like just either getting curious about what they're doing and asking them really open-ended questions, or just literally jumping in on the play, if they're willing to have you.

And then from there, and even I'm talking about like a minute, I'm not saying take 10 minutes before dinner time, just give a minute. And then you can make eye contact, so that you know that you have the attention of your child, that's the time. That's the moment when you can give them, "Hey, in a minute, we're going to need to start cleaning up."

And then have the directions be really clear and specific, not just clean up, but rather let's go ahead and put our toys away in the toy boxes, or let's put away our colored pencils and put them back where they belong. *Giving really specific language for what you want them to do can be really helpful.*

That's a lot of tips in one tip. Do the connection. But how to make that connection? Engage in their space. Get into their play. Open with curiosity, and then they get to your level, make eye contact, be clear and specific.



Those can be really helpful.

Sue Meintjes: Why does it work? What is the why behind the methods? Why does it work to connect with a child and join their world?

Jenny Michaelson: It's like akin to, if you're at work and maybe you're writing an email and your boss comes in and says, "Uh, right now I need you to come over because we have this meeting that's going on that just came up" and there's no acknowledgement of what you are doing at that moment, that really allows you to be seen.

So, I think it's really about being seen, and acknowledged and validated for what you're actually doing in the moment. Rather than just feeling like, "Well, I need you to do something right now. So, let's pull you away from what maybe feels really important to you and force you to go off and do something else."

So really, I think it's about acknowledgement and validation and really being seen in that moment and really understanding that whatever is happening is really important to you.

And kids need that same courtesy, just like we would expect if we were in the working world from other adults.

Sue Meintjes: Yeah. It's good to see and respect them.

Jenny Michaelson: Absolutely.



What to do when your child is really engaged in what they are doing

Sue Meintjes: And what about if what they are doing is really fun and they are so engaged and just joining them in their world makes them want to go in their world more deeply. So, what can we do if it's really difficult to drag a child away from something they are in the moment in?

Jenny Michaelson: Yeah. I mean, that happens a lot, right? I mean, that's what you want. You want your kid to really dive into something and be so into it. It's hard to take them away. And there are certainly kids who have a really tough time with those kinds of transitions. So that's the point at which giving a lot of warning about what's coming.

So even if you have this opportunity to connect and within that time being able to say, "You know, we're going to need to transition out of this in five minutes." And so often it just feels better to kids when they know what's coming because they have a sense of control.

That's one thing to do. It doesn't work for every child.

Sometimes it's just going to be hard to pull a kid out of something that they're really into. And at that point, you have to switch hats to being supportive of the fact that this child does not want to stop playing, and that might cause a meltdown, and that's also okay.



It's hard to stop doing something you're having a really fun time doing.

We've all been there.

Instead of getting into a fight about it, you have to switch into mode of like, "Okay, now's the time that I'm going to pull out my own coping strategies for staying calm." And if my child is not able to stay calm because they're going to have to do something they don't want to do, then I have the wherewithal to lend them my calm and help them through this tough emotional moment.

And sometimes that's the way we have to shepherd them from one thing to the other, when what they're doing is super fun. So, it's about changing hats and going from, "Okay, this isn't going to be an easy one, I got to put on my sort of coping skills hat, and I'm going to help my child through this tough moment, but we're going to get through it together. And I'm going to stay calm and we're going to get to the other side onto what needs to be done."

Why the difficult transitions are the best learning experiences

Sue Meintjes: It's also a learning experience to practice emotional regulation too?

Jenny Michaelson: Absolutely. I mean, that's a skill, like everything else, right? I mean, our job as parents is to identify what skills our kids need to develop and to help them develop them. So as difficult as it is in the moment to have to deal with, "Okay, I really



just wanted to like transition to dinner and eat and move on to bedtime and put these kids to bed."

Every one of those challenging moments is an opportunity for skill building for our kids. If we can think of it in that way, sometimes it can then be a little bit less frustrating.

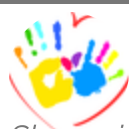
Sue Meintjes: Yeah. And I think children that find it difficult to transition from one activity to something we want them to do is also, they need to learn the skills.

Jenny Michaelson: Exactly. Exactly.

Sue Meintjes: And we teach them.

Jenny Michaelson: Yeah. We teach them and also, we build their emotional resilience to those moments too. It's okay if they never like transitioning from one thing to the next, but what our job is in those moments is to help them recognize that they can feel frustrated and upset about it, but they can handle those feelings and they can get through to the other side.

That's the learning opportunity there. That's the building of their emotional resilience. We don't expect them to never get upset again. But we hope to help them learn at an early age that, like, "Okay, I can get upset. I have someone I can depend on, someone who's going to help me support me through this. And on the other side, I'm going to recognize that I can have big, uncomfortable



feelings and I'm okay. Like I can get through them and then I feel better."

So, sounds simple. And it is, even though it's really not simple in practice, because there's a lot of different factors, but I do think it's fundamentally, it's such a gift if we can truly provide that foundation of emotional resilience for kids, because then they're kind of prepped and ready for anything that comes their way. Because we all know we're handed many transitions in life that we never expected or wanted as adults. And the more we're able to sort of, when they're in our care, teach kids to be able to weather those storms the better off the world will be to be perfectly honest with you.

Sue Meintjes: That all sounds really good. I just want to know, is there anything else you want to add before we move on?

3 more quick tips to make transitions and getting your child to cooperate easier

Jenny Michaelson: Sure. You know, another couple of quick tips when you want a kid to transition is to offer some choices. "Hey, do you want to brush your teeth before pajamas or after."

Use positive language, if there's something you, you don't want them to throw balls in the house, instead of saying, "Don't throw balls in the house," you can say, "Let's throw our balls outside." You know, giving them something they can do instead of something they can't do that's a potential alternative.

And really what I'd love is to, when you feel like your child is really cooperating and listening is just to really acknowledge and reflect that with them at different times so that they can understand that cooperation and listening is really valued and appreciated in your home.

And we forget. Often, things go easy, and we just move on because there's lots of things to do. But I think it's important to acknowledge and reflect and to help kids understand that those things are really heavily valued.

And the last one is that they're just our days when I don't want to cooperate either.

So, if your kid has a day where they're just like, it's not happening. Sometimes you have to give yourself and you have to give your child a little grace. And I don't mean to loosen all boundaries, but if they haven't slept or they're not feeling well, we have to release our expectations a little bit and then hold a little bit more space for some nurture until a day when they feel better, and then we can get back to holding them accountable and to the expectations that we have on a daily basis. So that's what I have for you.

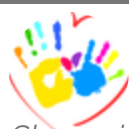
Sue Meintjes: That is excellent. Thank you very much for taking the time and giving this great advice.



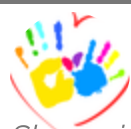
Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- **Connect Before Directing:** Take a moment to connect with your child before asking them to do something. Stop what you're doing, move into their space, and engage with them for just a minute. Ask open-ended questions or join in their play. Make eye contact and then give clear and specific directions.
- **Give Warnings and Offer Choices:** When transitions are necessary, give warnings about upcoming changes to allow the child to prepare mentally. Also, offer choices to empower them. For example, ask if they want to brush their teeth before or after putting on pajamas.
- **Use Positive Language and Offer Alternatives:** Instead of focusing on what they shouldn't do, provide positive alternatives. For instance, if you don't want them throwing balls inside, suggest going outside to play with the balls.
- **Acknowledge and Reflect Cooperation:** Regularly acknowledge and reflect your child's cooperation and good behavior. Express appreciation and value for their efforts to listen and cooperate.
- **Practice Grace on Difficult Days:** Understand that there will be days when your child finds it challenging to cooperate due



to factors like lack of sleep or illness. On these days, be compassionate and flexible. Adjust your expectations and offer extra nurture and support. Hold space for them until they feel better and can return to the usual routine and expectations.



Naama Cameron - Why clear expectations and boundaries helps you be a more flexible parent

In this interview with Naama Cameron, an ex-nursery school teacher, experienced parent coach, and mom of two, she shares her secrets to getting kids to listen and cooperate while maintaining a strong parent-child connection.

Naama shares practical tips on setting boundaries, handling disappointments, and empowering children. Plus, learn about the magic of family traditions in creating lasting bonds.



“ If you have your clear boundaries, like I said in the beginning, and you are consistent with them and you follow through, your children know that you follow through, and so they trust you.



In this interview

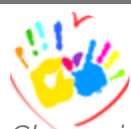
- About Naama Cameron
- Why clear expectations and boundaries helps you be more flexible
- Why you need to allow your kids to feel disappointed
- How to build connection and trust with your children
- How to handle slip-ups and rule changes
- Why you need to work with your partner to establish core boundaries
- How involving children in decision making empowers them
- How to empower your child without letting them run the show
- Bonus tip: The importance of family traditions
- Action steps

About Naama Cameron

Naama Cameron, M.S., is a Parent Coach and Child Behavior Specialist.

For as long as I remember, I knew I had a gift with children. I have worked with children for over 25 years in a variety of capacities. Friends and family always called me "the child whisperer", so twelve years ago I decided to pursue my passion.

I love helping other parents reap the benefits of my knowledge and gift. From high profile/celebrity parents to your "average" parent next door, my approach allows



me to be flexible with my techniques to accommodate your individual family needs.

Being a very happy mommy (and yes I want to be called mommy for as long as possible) of two kids further reiterated and emphasized the techniques, expertise and knowledge that I have accumulated and used with so many families.

And because I have two beautiful children of my own, I truly do understand the emotional roller coaster of parenting.

I cannot wait to partner with you to help your children have loving, healthy relationships with everyone around them.

You can find out more about [Naama Cameron's at her website](#) or [follow her on Instagram](#).



Why clear expectations and boundaries helps you be more flexible

Sue Meintjes: Please tell us a little bit about yourself and your work with parents.

Naama Cameron: I worked as a nursery school teacher. I taught parenting classes. Did one-on-one behavior therapy. I worked as a school psychologist and then I decided to open my own practice and I have been working as a parent coach and a behaviorist for the last 12 years.

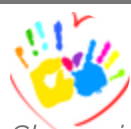
And I'm a mom. I've got two of my own little beings in the house. Eight and a seven-year-old.

Sue Meintjes: So, what is your favorite strategy or technique that is working really well for you or your clients to get kids to listen and to increase cooperation.

Naama Cameron: I always say it's very important to have clear expectations and boundaries.

You don't have to have 20 rules. In my house, I have a handful of rules. My foundation. And everything else is what I call "negotiable". The core is not negotiable, and it doesn't change. For example, "Don't ever hit me or my husband." "You do have to do your homework." "You have to be respectful to your teachers."

But am I flexible about dessert? Absolutely.



I think it's very important to have that balance of your non-negotiables and your negotiables. And what it teaches kids is that your rules are fair. It's not that you have no rules, and it's not that you are a dictatorship. It's you have your core rules and then everything else is a little bit more flexible.

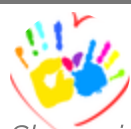
Why you need to allow your kids to feel disappointed

Sue Meintjes: I think it's difficult to have that balance. It's difficult to be flexible. So, is there any way we can make it easier?

Naama Cameron: A lot of times parents don't want their kids to be disappointed. They don't want them to cry or to hear "No". And what I tell parents is, "It's okay if your kids feel disappointment or they're upset." Let them do that in the comfort of your home with you there and develop those coping skills.

Like I said, having a very clear set of your non-negotiables helps you know, "Okay, these are the things I'm going to be very hardcore about." I tell parents all the time, "Let your kids pick whatever they want to wear. If it's raining and your child wants to wear shorts, let them have that. Let them have a natural consequence and learn if they're really cold or not."

That's where a lot of times we as parents feel like we have to control. And then you get this power struggle. Is it really worth it? Let them figure it out. Let them go outside, let them feel cold.



Maybe they won't feel cold. But that way they'll learn naturally rather than us constantly being on top of it.

How to build connection and trust with your children

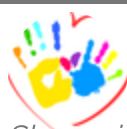
I always say it's very important to connect with your kids because if we don't connect with them, then they're not going to be receptive.

I think it's key to have a connection with your child. We're so busy all the time. We're so connected to our phones. Even in the evenings sometimes I'm texting clients and it's like, "Put your phone down and be present."

Having present time with your children is valuable, and it really means put everything aside, be present.

Whether it's watching them do 15 cartwheels or watching my son dribble the ball back and forth for 20 minutes, at least he feels like I'm connecting. I'm validating. I'm commenting on what I'm watching. I'm really being present, and it teaches them to value our time together. To value the things that I say as well.

A big piece of trust falls in there. If you have your clear boundaries, like I said in the beginning, and you are consistent with them and you follow through, your children know that you follow through, and so they trust you. They trust your word. So, it's very important to have your boundaries and to follow through, because it teaches your children trust.



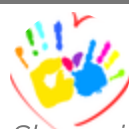
"Okay, so now I know that no matter what, I don't get TV in the morning. That's a safe rule for them. They're not going to ask you once they know that you're consistent with that. And so that does build trust. Also, they feel safe because they know what to expect from you. If they don't know what to expect, it becomes very insecure.

Sue Meintjes: And it makes them want to push their boundaries, want to see what they can get, and then keep on nagging you until you give in.

How to handle slip-ups and rule changes

Naama Cameron: And look, we're human. Like I said, I have my kids and they know when I'm stressed. They know to ask me a certain thing over and over and like we're human. There are times that I slip up. But I will say to them after, "Look, I made a mistake. I changed the rule. I shouldn't have done that. And I want to let you know from now on we're going back to the way it was."

Even at bedtime, if they stay up a little bit later because I was busy, I'll say, "Okay, well now we're back. You know, I made a mistake. I let you guys stay up or we bent the rule, but tonight we're getting back on track."



Why you need to work with your partner to establish core boundaries

Sue Meintjes: So, is it a matter of having a meeting with your partner and then determining what are the rules that you are going to be firm about, and then communicating them with your children?

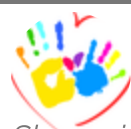
Naama Cameron: Exactly. You have to be on the same page. You have to support each other. What we've done, which has made our lives easier is, because we're on the same page with our foundation, our kids won't ask me and then go ask him because they know that our non-negotiables, neither one of us are going to change that.

How involving children in decision making empowers them

Sue Meintjes: What are other things that parents can do to help them set those base boundaries?

Naama Cameron: Have meetings with your kids. Two-and-a-half-years-old. Yes. I tell every client that I meet, "When we get off the phone, I want you to sit with your child or your children, and I want you to go over the rules. I want you to sit and say, we're having a family meeting, and this is our new plan. These are the new rules."

Even if they're two, two and a half, let them process it. Kids are smarter than we really give them credit for. They're aware of everything. So, if you give them three or four rules and then you



follow through, it makes sense to them. I always say present it to them, never have surprises.

Sue Meintjes: Do you involve them in the decision making? Do you listen to their perspective and then let them have a say?

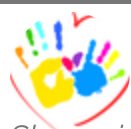
Naama Cameron: Depends on what it is. So again, I'm very easy-going about food, about what we do on the weekends. A lot of things I let them have a say because I want them to feel independent. I want them to feel confident. But homework, even though it's at our school it's optional, in my house, not optional. And that's not even open for discussion.

But my kids wear whatever they want to school. If it's a hundred degrees and my daughter's like, "You know, I want to wear my leggings." Go ahead. If you're hot, you'll figure it out when you're at school.

Sue Meintjes: So, it's all about establishing those boundaries and then also at the same time, making sure that you connect.

How to empower your child without letting them run the show

Naama Cameron: It's very important to have that balance of really empowering your children without letting them run the show.



And that seems to get very confusing for parents. They seem to really struggle with that of, "Well, how do I let them feel empowered and independent without running the show?"

That's where it's okay if they're disappointed. It's okay if they cry and they don't get their way. They'll learn how to cope with disappointment. But at the same time, we want them to be independent. If they want water, they can go to the fridge, get their water out, fill it up when it's empty. If they want a snack, have a little snack cabinet for them with snacks that you're okay with them having. So, they build those skills.

Bonus tip: The importance of family traditions

Sue Meintjes: That sounds good. We've just about come to the end of our time. Is there anything else you would like to add about what we talked about?

Naama Cameron: Just the last thing I like to say is, have like one family tradition that is special to your family. So, like for our family, every Friday night is movie night. We order pizza. We have some snacks, and we watch a movie. It's our little family tradition, and my kids love that that's our family tradition. No matter how crazy things are, no matter what goes on, Friday night, is family night.

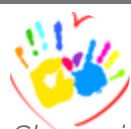
It gives them something to look forward to. And I think they know no matter what happens on Friday night, we're all together. They know what to expect.



Action steps

Here are my action steps that I got from this interview. I hope you'll find these useful as well:

- Identify your non-negotiable rules, the things that you are not willing to compromise about. Keep this list short.
- If you have a partner, or someone that helps taking care of your kids, communicate these rules to them and work with them so that you are on the same page
- Meet with your children and explain these rules to them. Ask them to help you think of ways to implement these rules.
- Try to be more flexible about allowing things outside these core rules, the things that are not that important to you
- Plan to spend at least 20 minutes with your child each day without distractions, just watch what they do and comment on things you like about them
- Visit [Naama Cameron's website](#) or [follow her on Instagram](#)



Conclusion

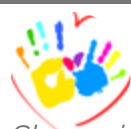
So, what do you think? Did these interviews give you new perspectives on dealing with your kids? Do you have new tools, mindsets, and information that you can use to build better relationships with your kids, while getting them to cooperate?

I promised you in the introduction to this book that there would be valuable information packed into these short interviews. Based on my own experience, and the experience of the people I've shared this book with, I'm confident that the tips and secrets you discovered in this book exceeded your expectations.

I know that there is a lot of information in this book, and that you might be overwhelmed. So, here's my advice: don't try to change everything at once. Pick one interview, or one topic, and then just try to make one change to the way you are dealing with your children.

Maybe try to just spend 10 minutes of focused time with your child (using Tia Slightham's Golden Time), or just focus on connecting with your child when you pick them up from school (using Dr. Beth Trammell's Pairing method).

Or focus on just truly listening to your child (using Nathan Wallis' guidance, or Rebecca Rolland's Curious Waiting strategy).



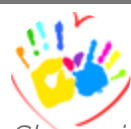
Or just try to incorporate more playfulness into your interactions with your child (using Julie King's simple suggestions, or Karen Thurm Safran's Playfulness Mindset).

Whatever you decide to do, just remember that the goal is progress, not perfection. Whenever I struggle, I think about what Dr. Jean Clinton said:

The other thing I'd like parents to know is "It's progress." We're not going for perfection, because I'll tell you with five kids, it was always about progress because you get it with one kid and the next one is completely different.

You have to always be working on it. So "progress, not perfection."

Dr. Jean Clinton



Expert Parenting Advice

Share via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

What to do next

Here's some good news if you liked what you saw in this book. The interviews you've read here are part of an ongoing series, where I interview and talk to the world's leading parenting experts. I'm continually adding new interviews.

You can get access to the latest interviews by subscribing to my daily parenting newsletter.

If you haven't already signed up, you can sign up by going to:

www.ExpertParentingAdvice.com/listen-book

Also, my mission is to get this powerful collection of parenting strategies and tips into the hands of as many people as possible. And I need your help to do this. So please help me out by letting others know that they can register and get a free download of this ebook:

www.ExpertParentingAdvice.com/listen-book

You can also share it via [Email](#), [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), or [Twitter](#)

Finally, I would love your feedback on this book, as well as recommendations of more parenting experts to interview. You can contact me on:

Sue@ExpertParentingAdvice.com

Thanks for taking the time to read this book. And I wish you a deep, connected relationship with your kids!

