

4 Reasons to Stop Yelling at Your Kids

I'm on a mission to stamp out yelling at kids. I'm going to share four more reasons why yelling at your kids is a bad strategy. I've been enjoying the discussion on yelling and anger these past few weeks. I'm very passionate about this subject. Have you found it helpful? Were you able to tune in to one of the webinars? Please let us know what you think.

1) Yelling Breeds More Yelling

Dr. Scott Turansky shared in his last article that yelling at kids may work to get them in the car or get the dishes off the table. That's right, it does work. It gets kids moving and it's an easy tool to use. If it's one of the main tools in your parenting toolbox, you're going to have to keep using it. And you're going to have to turn up the volume over the months and years until your kids become teenagers and start to just turn it off. If you keep trying to raise the volume you're going to eventually lose them. And even worse, you just might find a fight breaking out. So stop yelling and find another way.

2) Yelling Is the Opposite of Blessing

I'm a firm believer that one of the critical roles of parents is to bless their children. As they grow and mature, it's our job to prepare them for adulthood and to let them know that we believe in them. We believe that they're going to grow into outstanding young men and women.

Yelling communicates the almost exact opposite message. "You frustrate me and you're never going to amount to anything." These kids will grow up and struggle with low self-esteem, anxiety, fear and depression.

I once went out to the mound to talk with a young pitcher. (Do you ever wonder what managers and coaches say to pitchers? It's different every time.) He was struggling, and his father was making loud, angry comments.

I'll never forget what this young 9-year-old said to me. With tears in his eyes, he said, "My dad is really mad at me." I was speechless at the time, but my heart sank. I could feel the pain of that boy.

The child hears a message that he's unloved, unworthy and unacceptable at these times. Is that the message you want your child to hear?

3) Yelling Garbles the Message

We all want our kids to become mature adults. And we want them to learn from our words. Joanne and I had a mantra that we must have repeated a thousand times. We said, "Obey my words."

Yelling and things of that nature are really manipulation. We're using emotional intensity to get action. The problem is that emotional intensity garbles the message. There's power in words, and yelling diminishes that power.

Spend your energy crafting a clear message for your kids and then train them to respond to your words. Bring them close to you and give them clear instructions. You'll want to practice your discipline routine many times. It's therapy that is just practice. It's not as hard as you'd think. You just need to change your strategy.

4) Yelling Is Harsh and Harmful

Most people confuse harshness (yelling) with **firmness**. I'm certainly not advocating a wimpy approach to training our kids. Children need tough love and discipline.

They often need consequences in order to make changes in their hearts and then in their actions. The Bible tells us to "Train

up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). Your kids are in training now for the future.

Use a firm approach with clear instructions communicated in a calm manner. Expect obedience. If you don't get it, you'll need to use some form of follow-through. Each child is unique, so you'll have to find the follow-through that works best for each child.

Remember the goal is heart change and character development. If you need more help with consequences, check *Good and Angry* by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, R.N., .

Let me conclude by sharing that I yelled at my kids more times than I would like to admit. I was yelled at a lot by my father, and I thought that was the way you got things done. I had to get some support, but I've been able to change my approach with God's help. I pray that you'll be able to make the change as well. God bless you. {eo}

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