

5 Bad Child Behaviors You Need to Break Early

I hate going to the dentist. I know it's necessary, but I always put it off. It is the last thing I want to spend money on.

After several years of avoiding it, I was forced to make an appointment because of intense tooth pain. The result was exactly what I expected. Small cavities had grown into larger decay which eventually led to infection. Ultimately, smaller and cheaper cavity fixes turned into an expensive double root canal with two crowns. Routine checkups and maintenance would have prevented all of it.

In the same way, kids can develop bad habits early. Engaging those habits with consistent correction and guidance can be tiring. It can take thought and energy that can wear parents out. However, if left unchecked, they can grow into major problems down the line. It is important to engage the problem now in order to save us and them from more intense pain in the future.

Here are some bad kid behavior issues that you need to break early:

1. Lying. This leads to a life of secrecy. Growth and maturity come when we deal honestly with our mistakes and shortcomings. We learn responsibility by owning it. Others see us as dependable, faithful, and authentic. Trust is built leading to healthy relationships. Lying has the opposite effect. Distrust and immaturity take root. On a personal level, in our house, my kids know that this is offense receives the steepest consequence because it, more than anything, causes relational separation in the family.

2. Disrespectful to authority. We are all people under

authority in some way or another. Parents, teachers, government officials, elders, bosses, and police officers are some of the authorities in our lives. An attitude of disrespecting authority creates a dangerous habit in a child. It will lead to an attitude of entitlement and a lack of proper humility. They will end up suffering for it as their options are limited. Children need to learn a respectful disposition to those in authority over them. This doesn't mean they can't disagree with that authority or challenge it, particularly when the authority abuses its power. However, it is important to teach children to always submit to or challenge authority with grace and respect.

3. Unkind words. Words are important. Clearly, the words we choose affect those they are directed towards. Unkind words cause deep wounds in people. However, they can also lead our general attitude or our feelings about someone. I once made a decision to go an entire year saying only positive things about someone I had a hard time getting along with. After the year, I felt completely different about that person. There may be time to disagree, argue, or even fight, but there is never a reason to be unkind. The earlier our kids develop a vocabulary of kind words the better.

4. Aggressive behavior. Intervene as soon as possible to prevent other children or animals from being hurt. There are many reasons for a child exhibiting aggressive behavior. It is important to find out the reason by observing and listening. Many times, it is a coping mechanism in dealing with stress or feelings of insecurity. If the behavior is allowed or reinforced, it will continue. It is best to stop it immediately when it happens, remain calm, listen to the child, and enforce consistent nonphysical consequences.

5. Laziness. Children need to be taught to take responsibility for themselves early. Otherwise, they can come to expect that their parents will do everything for them. Instilling a good work ethic starts by giving them chores to do around the house

at a young age. Start by teaching them to make their bed and clean up their toys daily. When they develop a habit of taking care of their things, add a chore pertaining to a common area. Encourage and reward their work only when it deserves it. This will teach them to value and strive for good work. Starting as early as possible will make all the difference.

BJ Foster is the content manager for All Pro Dad and a married father of two. For the original article, visit [.](#)