

How to Survive the Strong-Willed Child

Children who make decisions with intensity tend to be labeled “strong-willed.” At the end of the day, their parents feel as if they’ve been engaged in hand-to-hand combat—and that the child often wins at the parents’ expense! Most parents consider a strong will a negative personality trait because it often creates resistance and frustration in family life. Yet, in reality, it’s the strong-willed kids who often are better equipped to succeed, be creative and face adversity.

Children with strong wills have the potential to become the next generation of leaders. They have their own ideas and plans. They know what they want. They’re persistent, confident, passionate and determined to succeed at whatever they choose to do.

Leaders have an agenda, look for ways to incorporate others into their plans, and have a high need for control in life. Balanced with graciousness, leaders become a treasure because they make things happen, create organization out of chaos, and motivate people to action.

Unfortunately, it’s hard to raise a leader. These kids tend to have their own ways of doing things and like to tell other people (including their parents) what to do. A strong will keeps a child moving in a certain direction in spite of obstacles. Often these children need bigger barriers or tighter limits to teach them that those boundaries are firm.

Don’t be discouraged by the effort it takes to teach a strong-willed child which limits not to push. The strong-willed child accomplishes things in life, because the roadblocks that might hold others back are no match for this kid’s determination. Your job is to help him know the difference between obstacles

to overcome and limits to live within.

A strong will can be an asset ... as long as the heart is in the right place.

Have you developed some tools to teach boundaries to a strong-willed child in your family while still enjoying the child's determination?

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