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## **Tips for Parents of School Age Children**

(5-9 years)

#### FIGHTING WITH SIBLINGS

Child is learning about power and empathy.

### INSTEAD OF SAYING ...

- "Stop fighting right now!"
- "Let me give you both a good spanking/ whooping so you stop fighting all the time."
- "No TV for a month!"

### TRY...

- "If we play together without fighting, we get to do more fun stuff."
- "Let me set the timer so you and your [brother] can take turns."
- "Your [sister] is younger than you and doesn't understand how taking turns works yet. Can you show her/him?"
- "Let's wait. I'll hold the remote while we figure out what we want to watch."

#### **BAD GRADES**

Some children learn easily, and some need your help to get their grades up. Make sure your child is getting enough sleep in order to learn. 9-11 hours is ideal for ages 6-13. Help child learn good habits by having daily routines around homework and studying.

### INSTEAD OF SAYING ...

- "You are so stupid."
- "You are not good at [reading] at all."
- "This is so easy why are you so bad at this?"

### TRY...

- "You just haven't learned [multiplication] YET, but if we work on it together, you will get better."
- "I notice the grade for this class is low. What is difficult about this class? How can I help?"
- "Do you have a friend we could ask to help you with this?"

### MISBEHAVING AT SCHOOL

Listen to your child's problems. Try to understand the need underneath the behavior.

### INSTEAD OF SAYING ...

- "You are stupid for getting into trouble!"
- "You are heading straight for jail!"
- "Let me give you a whooping so you can remember to behave next time."

#### TRY...

- "Your teacher called me about something that happened at school. I want to help. Tell me what happened."
- "If you could make school any way you wanted, how would it be?"
- "When you behave this way [whatever the behavior might be], what do you need?"

### BEING AGGRESSIVE – HITTING, GRABBING THINGS FROM OTHERS

Instead of calling out child for assertive behavior, try helping them to stand up for themselves without aggression.

### INSTEAD OF SAYING...

#### "You are so mean stop hitting!"

- "You are a bad boy/girl!"
- "Don't hit!"

### *TRY...*

- "When you [hit, bite] your [brother], it hurts him, and he feels sad."
- "Let's find something else to play with."
- "It's OK to be angry, but I won't let you hit. We need to keep everyone safe."
- "It's your [sister]'s turn with the [train]. I will help you wait until it's your turn."

### **CONNECTING WITH PRE-TEENS**

### INSTEAD OF SAYING...

### "You finally listened to me."

"Why can't you ever do what I tell you to do?"

#### TRY...

- "I notice that you were so kind."
- "I notice you feel really good today."
- "Your jokes make me laugh."
- "You bring me joy."
- "I had such a good time with you today."
- "It really feels good when you listen to me."
- "Thank you for listening."
- "I can see you are really engaged, and it's hard for you hear me."
- "I noticed you weren't able to do... How can I help you?"

# Dear Parents,

# Did you know that –

• Spanking shrinks brains.

Harvard Medical School found that kids who are spanked just once a month had 14-19% smaller brains in the decision-making area. These were children who remembered being spanked at least 12 times a year and once with a belt, paddle or brush, but were not injured or spanked in anger.

- 1,574 studies found that spanking is harmful.
- Even 'everyday spanking' is consistently associated with:
- **More** aggression
- **More** negative relationships

Substance abuse

- More fighting

with parents

- Lower cognitive ability - Weaker moral values
- Delinguent behavior

- More mental health problems Lower self-esteem
- More antisocial behavior
- Lower self-control<sup>2</sup>

Spanking lowers IQ.

The University of New Hampshire found that American children who are spanked at ages 2-4 have 5 less 10 points than non-spanked children, even years later. Children spanked at ages 5-9 have 2.8 less 10 points.3

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Does this mean that everyone who was spanked as a child has problems? No, it means that spanking doesn't help children learn what we want them to learn. Every time we spank a child, we raise the risk that the child will develop problems.
- Why is this so? Spanking focuses on the behavior and misses the underlying need. It might stop a child from doing something in the moment, but the child hasn't learned how to do things differently. And it can lead to built-up resentment and hostility, and prevent some children from telling about sexual abuse for fear of further punishment.
- But I was spanked and turned out okay? Today, we have a tremendous amount of knowledge about how children learn and develop. We know other ways of teaching children that don't have these risks and harms.

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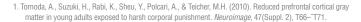


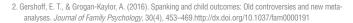












3. Straus, M. & Paschall, M.J. Corporal punishment by mothers and development of children's cognitive ability: A longitudinal study of two nationally representative age cohorts. (2009). Journal of Aggression Maltreatment & Trauma, 18(5): 459. doi:10.1080/10926770903035168









