

Say NO! to "No"

Ways to say "no" without tantrums

- * "Not for (child's name)."
- * "That's Mommy's" and move child away from object or place.
- * "Yes, but first____." Especially useful if what they want is ok, just not right now.
- * Don't ask open ended questions, give two choices. For example, don't say "What do you want to eat?" because they answer will be candy, and then you have to say "No". Ask "Do you want grapes or applesauce for snack?"
- * Rephrase what they said as a statement or question to distract them and make them think you are going along with it. Child- "I want candy". Mom- "Oh, you must be hungry. Do you want applesauce or grapes?"
- * Ignore the child's request and tell them what you are going to do, and then do it. Child- "I want candy". Mom "I'm hungry. I'm going to get some grapes. Do you want some?". And then get some grapes and eat them.
- * Tell them your feelings, especially if you agree with the child. "I know, Mommy's sad too because I wanted to go outside and play, but it's raining." And then suggest an indoor activity.
- * Don't say anything and continue doing what you were doing or wait expectantly for them to comply. Sometimes, they just want to tell you no. Mom- "Ok, time to put on your coat." Child "NO!". Mom then holds coat out near child and waits for child to put arms in without saying anything.

Breaking the Behavior Cycle

1. Only use the word "no" for extreme circumstance, like possible injury. "NO" is the biggest behavior trigger.
2. Warn child of any major changes in the day ahead. Even if it is something good, they still need to know before it happens.
3. Establish a daily routine. Even if you think your child is ok without one, if you have behaviors you don't want, this might be one of the reasons. Routines help kids feel in control because they know what is going to happen next. Without a routine, kids want to control other things, and then bad behavior results.
4. Let them make as many choices as you can to give them the feeling of control, so they don't have to tell you "NO" to get it. Do you want this plate or this plate? These pants or these pants? The red or green one? Still give choices, not open ended.
5. Never give into a tantrum. If you do, you've just taught them that tantrums get them what they want.
6. When they start whining or fussing, remind them that whining and fussing will never get them what they want, and then tell them what behavior will get them what they want. "Smile at Mommy and say please, and then you can play with your car."
 - a. If you only tell your kids what they should not do, without telling them what to do, they will likely never figure out what you really want.
7. Before going to Wal-Mart, church, someone else's house, remind them in the car what they need to do. One or two rules work best. At Wal-Mart, we need to stay close to Mommy and leave everything on the shelves. Do this every time!
8. *Don't ask yes/no questions if you don't really mean it. Instead of "Are you ready to go?" say "It's time to go now."