

## The Most Effective Parenting Strategy is a Balanced Style that Uses *No*

The word *no* is not what's important. It's the strategy you use. There are a million ways to say *no* without ever using the word. In fact, with preschoolers it's better to avoid the word *no* because it's easier for preschoolers to understand the positive than the negative. For example, rather than saying, "Don't stand on the chair" it's better to say, "Stand on the floor" because it's easier for children that age to understand what you *want* them to do.

The following is a list of action-response tips for balanced-response-parenting kids of **all ages**, in scenarios where it may be tempting to use the word *no* or to respond negatively.

### CHILD ACTIONS:

1. Little Max screams and hits his mother.
2. Becca leaves all her toys on the floor.
3. Rachel screams, "I want that toy!"
4. Ness and her brother fight over markers.
5. Teenager, Greta, comes home fifteen minutes after curfew.
6. Derek, angrily, turns away from his father and goes back out the door.
7. Regina starts to rant and rave at her mother.
8. Todd tells his dad that he accidentally broke the picture window while playing ball.
9. Nate ignores his mother's request to turn off the TV and come to dinner.
10. Buster proudly shows off the brownies he bakes.

### PARENT RESPONSE:

1. "Our family rule is no hitting mommy, daddy, or baby sister."
2. "Remember— You chose to leave your toys on the floor, so you are choosing the consequence: they will be away in the closet for two days."
3. "I know why you are angry, but we are not buying anything today."
4. "Remember, if you are choosing not to share the markers, you are choosing not to have them."
5. "Remember, you choose to come in 15 minutes after curfew, so you are choosing to have a 15 minute earlier curfew the rest of the week."
6. "Come here. I know this is hard for you, but I'm angry that you walked away while I was trying to talk with you."
7. "You don't seem to be able to talk about this right now. When you are able to discuss this without yelling, we'll talk." (Parent: make sure to come back and finish!)
8. "Right now I'm too angry to discuss this. I need a time-out to calm down. I'll talk with you in fifteen minutes about what we're going to do about this."
9. "You know the family rule. By choosing not to turn off the TV, you are choosing the consequence: there will be no TV after school tomorrow."
10. "Wow—thanks. You worked hard on this."