



Priceless ParentingSM

"Online training for the most important job you'll ever have"

Priceless Parenting Newsletter October 2009

Dear Parents,

Have you ever heard your children repeat something you've said? The fact that children excel at repeating word-for-word something they've heard (especially if it's something we'd rather not have repeated) has caused more than a few parents to clean up their language! This month we'll look at stories where parents learn how their words sound when those same "boomerang words" come back at them from their children.

Warm Regards,

Kathy Slattengren

P.S. I hope you enjoy this newsletter. Please do me a favor and forward this to a friend who also may enjoy reading it.



Beware of Boomerang Words

Do your children's words ever take you by surprise because they sound remarkably like something you've said? These "boomerang words" can be a good thing or not such a good thing.

When we hear our children repeat our words, it's a strong reminder of just how much they are picking up from us. We also get a new appreciation for how those words feel to the person receiving them!

Where have I heard that before?

One mom told me that she was in her 6-year-old daughter's bedroom when she accidentally knocked a toy off her dresser. Her daughter exclaimed "*Mom, next time could you be a little more careful!*" This mom was taken aback by this rather rude sounding comment.

Sadly she realized her daughter had learned these precise words from her. She remembered how often she reminded her daughter to be more careful when she made a mistake. Hearing these words directed back at her, she understood how harsh they sound. She's now working on showing empathy when her daughter accidentally spills something instead of admonishing her to be more careful in the future.

Repeating Familiar Phrases

Presentations

Parent Learning Link is offering a [5-week series of parenting classes](#) starting Monday evening, October 5th in Seattle.

I will be presenting on November 2nd "*Bringing Out Their Best: Providing Guidance While Avoiding Parenting Pitfalls*". I hope you'll be able to attend!



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When his children had problems, John often responded to them "Well, it's not the end of the world." This phrase came back to haunt him one night when they were out camping in a trailer.

It was dark and he was tired. The last thing he planned to do before going to bed was set up the coffee pot for the next morning. Unfortunately the entire can of coffee spilled. He was angry! John then heard his daughter proclaim "Well, it's not the end of the world."

He did not find these words at all comforting or helpful. It dawned on him that his daughter probably felt the same way when he said those words to her.

"Because I said so!"

Lucy vividly recalled a turning point in her relationship with her mom over 50 years ago. She was graduating from 9th grade and asked her mother if after the graduation ceremony she could spend the afternoon at a lake with some of her girlfriends. One of the other mothers was driving them to the lake and bringing lunch. Her mom replied "You're not going." When Lucy asked her mom why she couldn't go, her response was "Because I said so."

Lucy was enraged with her mother's explanation. She angrily told her mother that she planned to go to the lake with her friends despite the fact her mother told her she couldn't go. When her mother asked for an explanation, Lucy replied "Because I said so." Lucy did go to the lake with her friends that day. Her relationship with her mother remained cool and unaffectionate for many years.

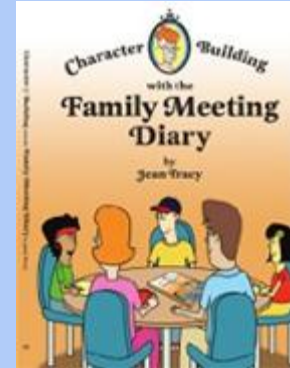
Speak to Your Children as You Would Like Them to Speak to You

If we want our children to treat us with respect and compassion, then we need to begin by treating them that way. For example, instead of trying to end a discussion with "Because I said so.", a better approach is to carefully listen to a child's request and ask questions to address any concerns before deciding. Providing respectful, thoughtful explanations for decisions helps maintain good relationships with our children even when the decision isn't the one they wanted.

What we say to our children affects what they say to others. Choose your words carefully so when they boomerang back from your children you'll be happy to hear them!

This Month's Challenge: Watching Your Words

Spend a day paying attention to what you say to your children especially when they're not behaving as you would like. Write down some of your common responses. How would these responses sound if your children said them to you? Are there any changes you'd like to make?



[Character Building with the Family Meeting Diary](#)

by Jean Tracy

Family meetings provide a wonderful format for working on positive messages between family members. This 52 week diary encourages regular family discussions where love and respect are communicated.

Now spend a day listening for the words your children use - especially with their siblings and friends. Do you hear them repeating anything you've said? How do those words sound coming from them?

Last Month's Challenge: Avoiding Yelling

Last month you were challenged to review situations where you yelled at your kids and brainstorm ideas for how else you could have responded. Under what situations did you find you are most likely to yell at your kids? Were you able to successfully stop yourself from yelling at your kids in a situation? What did you do instead? Please share [your stories!](#)

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