



**Priceless<sup>SM</sup>  
Parenting**

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

## Priceless Parenting Newsletter September 2009

Dear Parents,

When parents attending my classes talk about which of their behaviors they'd most like to change, the most common response is that they'd like to stop yelling at their kids. It is very natural to yell when we're angry; nobody has to teach us how to do that! Check out this month's article for ideas on what to do instead of yelling.

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.



### Yelling at Kids in Anger

Have you ever become frustrated with your children when they are begging you for something? If so, you can probably relate to this mom's story.

#### **Begging for Ice Cream**

One mom told me how exasperated she was while driving her 10-year-old son to Baskin Robbins to order cake for his upcoming birthday party. Her son started pleading with her to get an ice cream cone at Baskin Robbins. Mom said he couldn't have one since he had just had ice cream yesterday.

He didn't give up hope and instead kept asking her if he could please have an ice cream cone. Completely fed up, she pulled over and stepped out of the car for a few minutes explaining she needed a break from his behavior. After getting back in the car, he soon asked her again about the ice cream!

Feeling quite angry now, she yelled at him for continuing to ask after she had already told him no. By the end of her rant, he was crying. Needless to say, this wasn't exactly the pleasant outing she had envisioned.

#### **Alternative Parenting Responses**

### Presentations

[Priceless Parenting presentations](#) are being scheduled for fall 2009 for schools, churches and companies in the Seattle area. To schedule a presentation, please [email me](#) or call 425-770-1629.



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### Other Resources

We don't always do our best parenting in the heat of the moment. The good news is that when we realize we haven't handled a parenting situation in the ideal way, we can reflect on what happened and figure out what we would like to do differently in the future.

Sometimes we're too close to the situation or still too upset to see any alternatives. If this is the case, it can be helpful to ask other parents for ideas. It's always easier to see choices when you're not the parent involved!

What suggestions might you give this mom? Here are some possibilities:

- Repeatedly respond to each request for an ice cream cone with "What was my answer?" By using the same response, it is easier to remain calm and avoid becoming angry by arguing.
- Pull over, stop the car and say: "I will be happy to continue driving just as soon as you can ride without asking for an ice cream cone." (It helps to have a good book if you choose this response!)
- Give him a conditional yes: "I will be happy to buy an ice cream cone for you next Saturday if I'm not worn out from hearing you beg today."
- State what you are going to do: "I'm feeling hassled by your begging for an ice cream cone. If you beg again, I'm going to turn around and go home."

Ideally we are looking for a response that models both self-control and treating others with respect. We also need to be able to follow through with whatever we say we are going to do. For example, if he begs again after we said we would turn around and go home, then that's what we need to do.

### **The Power of Apologizing**

When we realize we've handled a parenting situation poorly, we can always apologize. Some parents are reluctant to apologize to their children fearing that it will make them appear weak. However, heart-felt apologies can actually increase children's respect for their parents.

By apologizing we are teaching that when we make mistakes we try to make amends for those mistakes. We are also modeling the process of making an apology:

- Recognizing what we have done that has hurt someone
- Expressing our regret
- Describing how we plan to handle it differently next time

While apologizing is never easy, it is an essential skill for maintaining close relationships.



### **[Scream Free Parenting: The Revolutionary Approach to Raising Your Kids by Keeping Your Cool](#)**

**This book explores how to parent in a way that is calm and doesn't involve yelling at your kids.**

When a parenting situation doesn't go quite as well as you would have liked, try apologizing. Next, look for a chance to try out your new parenting response!

### This Month's Challenge: Avoiding Yelling

Think back to the last time you yelled at your kids. Write down the situation along with other ideas for how you could have responded. If you are struggling to find alternatives, talk to another parent for ideas.

Under what situations are you most likely to yell at your kids? Is there something you can do to reduce the stress of these situations? For example, some parents report leaving extra time to get ready helps them avoid yelling at their kids in the morning.

When you avoid yelling at your kids, write down what you did instead of yelling. Keep building on your successes!

### Last Month's Challenge: The Morning Routine

Last month you were challenged to work with your children to figure out all the tasks that need to get done each morning before school. You were also encouraged to allow your children to take responsibility for whatever tasks they could do. How are your mornings going? I would love to [hear your stories!](#)

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