

## Parenting Using Promises Instead of Threats

by Kathy Slattengren

---

One mom was exasperated with her preschool daughter after she pitched fit for 45 minutes upon learning that her little brother was going swimming while she was at preschool. When mom was completely fed up with the whining and crying, she threatened to let her daughter sit in her room all day missing both preschool and a dance class. Her daughter stopped crying and got ready for school.

In this case, the threat got the girl to stop her tantrum. But what if she would have continued the tantrum? Does mom really want her daughter to have the choice of skipping school? Probably not.

The problem with threats is that we often make them when we are angry and therefore threaten things that we really don't want carry through on. Instead of using a threat, mom could have used a promise when her daughter started protesting like "I'll be happy to take you swimming next week if I don't use up that energy listening to you whining and crying."



The benefits of this promise over the previous threat:

- The daughter goes to preschool regardless of whether or not she continues to whine and cry.
- Mom can take son swimming as originally planned.
- If the daughter stops her whining and crying, she receives the positive benefit of going swimming at a later date.

We want our children to be able to trust that we will follow through on what we say. Therefore, we want to avoid threats made in anger since those threats tend to be extreme and not well thought out. It is far better to choose promises we'd be happy to fulfill rather than angry threats that will deteriorate our relationship with our children.

---

Kathy Slattengren is a noted parenting speaker, trainer and founder of Priceless Parenting. [PricelessParenting.com](http://PricelessParenting.com) provides an [online parenting class](#) which teaches effective discipline techniques for positively dealing with misbehavior.

*This article is available to be reprinted or republished free of charge courtesy of Priceless Parenting on the condition that the byline, article text and hyperlinks are not altered.* © Priceless Parenting, LLC