



FROM THE GROWING KIDS' PARENTING RESOURCE LIBRARY

Save Most of Your Words for Happy Times

What's the best way to make an otherwise effective behavior technique backfire? It's simple: Talk too much.

In the store, I recently witnessed an unusually upset toddler whining to his mother about how "mean" she was and how badly he "needed" the toy she was telling him to put back on the shelf. This well-meaning mother quickly jumped into "psychotherapy mode" by listing all of the reasons why her three year old didn't need the toy, how it might put his eye out, how he might get one next year, why he shouldn't be so upset, how sorry she was that he couldn't have it, that money doesn't grow on trees, etc.

There they were...both of them...on their knees.

While well meaning, this mother was actually feeding the fire by talking way too much! There exists a basic rule about doing discipline with kids of all ages:

The more words we use when our kids are acting up, the LESS effective we become.