

TOOLS TO ENCOURAGE COOPERATION FROM YOUR CHILD - PART ONE



We are regularly asked by parents, "How do I get my child to do what I need them to do?" In this handout, we outline the crucial first step outlined in a fantastic book about effective communication with children:

How to talk so kids will listen and listen so kids will talk

by **Joanna Faber and Julie King**

For our summary of the tools they encourage to engage cooperation following this first step, have a look at part two!

Acknowledge their feelings

"When kids don't feel right, they can't behave right"

Every parent wants a kid who will do what they say. But there is no shortcut to getting a cooperative kid! If we don't take care of their feelings first, we have little chance of engaging their cooperation.

As parents, sometimes we can have trouble accepting negative feelings because we don't want to give them power. But actually, acknowledging feelings can make them disappear more quickly, and leave a child feeling relieved and understood.

Joanna and Julie share their five tools for acknowledging feelings:



Acknowledge with words

Label the feeling you suspect your child is feeling, and put it in a sentence. This simple acknowledgement can be enough to defuse a meltdown. "You are disappointed we are leaving the playground! You wish we could stay all day!"

Top tip: lose the word 'but' - it takes away your hard work acknowledging their feelings! Replace with "The problem is..." or "Even though you know..." For example: "Even though you know the shops are closed, you sure would like some ice-cream right now!"

ACKNOWLEDGE WITH WRITING

Take out a pencil and paper and write it down! Acknowledge their needs, even for pre-writers. "Oh that unicorn is fabulous! Let's write it down on your wishlist." You may be surprised how happy your child is just to know their request has been acknowledged!

Acknowledge with art

Draw a sad face. Draw tears. Show your child how mad you suspect they feel by making angry scribbles on the page! They might join in, and even if they don't - this acknowledgement of their feelings is often enough to help work through it!

Give in fantasy what you can't give in reality

Sometimes you simply can't give your child what they want. It is tempting to reason with them and try to explain. Try using fantasy to manage this situation: "Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could eat lollies all day? What lolly would you choose? I'm going to pretend this shopping trolley is made of snakes! That's what I would choose!"

Acknowledge with (almost) silent attention

Don't say anything at all. Continue to listen to your child, with empathetic noises and facial expressions to show you understand and care about their feelings. Don't be tempted to jump in - your non-verbal cues may be enough to help them work through it!

Give it a go!

Pick one of these and try it out. For more information and strategies, we highly recommend reading the book. Still unsure? Our Qualia therapists can help with encouraging cooperation from your children.



02 95559776
info@qualiatherapy.com.au
www.qualiatherapy.com.au