



Hurtful VS Helpful Responses to a Child

Hurtful

- “Stop being so bad!”
- “Do you want me to get rid of you?”
- “What is wrong with you?”
- “Do you want to get spanked?”
- “Because I said so”
- “Who is going to want you if you keep acting like this?”

Helpful

- “I see you are (insert feeling word), please stop (specific behavior)
- -Give choices!: “You have a choice right now: either continue (unwanted behavior) and (specific consequence will occur) or you can (preferred behavior) and (positive consequence) will happen.”
EX: “You have a choice right now, you can continue to kick and yell and choose no TV tonight or you can choose to talk to me calmly and you keep TV and maybe get what you are asking for.”
- “Do you think this is a good choice? What would be a better one?”
- “It’s ok to be mad, not ok to do (unwanted behavior), do this instead”
- (Give an actual reason for request)
- Just don’t say that! - DO NOT equate worth of child with behaviors – – saying things like “I love you, I want you here, I am committed to you, etc)
SHOULD be said often and not presented as conditional:
- I’m feeling very frustrated/impatient/upset when you act this way, but I need (time out, calm voice, etc) before deciding what to do
- ***** “I am committed to you and love you even when you make bad choices” *****

