

PRESCHOOL PARENTS' CONVERSATION HOUR

Tantrums ... Forgetting/Nagging ... Chores

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Tantrums

Remember that behavior is always driven by emotions, not logic. So telling your child that *if he doesn't wear his coat, he's going to be cold* will have no effect. He's more invested in not putting on that coat than he is in not being cold later on.

Instead, consider something like ...

“Okay, I get it, the coat's a no go for today. Go ahead, go find something you like better. Your choice!”

Side-stepping tantrums

Can you quickly connect emotionally to the child, and address his or her frustration before he or she “gets going”?

“I know you really want to stay here longer, and I know why too. The playground's really fun, and we're going to go home and do really boring things like washing up and brushing our teeth. But we've got to find a way to do both, and here are a couple of ideas...”

- *To help make it easier to leave the playground, I can let you know when you have a little bit of time left, so it's not a surprise when we have to go.*
- *Instead of waiting until we get home to plan for the next day, we can start doing that on the walk home. That way, there's a little extra time before bed for you to read or play in your room.*

“I know you want that candy bar but I don't want to buy it today. But I *do* want to know why that candy bar seems so much better than the cookies we already have at home? What do I not know about that candy bar?!”



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Child ignores or “forgets,” leading parent to nag

Nagging happens when kids have successfully **farmed out to you** the task of remembering for them.

Guess what! You have become their memory bank.

The objective is to *get out of the middle between your child and the task.*

Structure tasks so that if she does it, her day/evening goes on as planned, and if she doesn't, there is a consequence. The trick is, *you have to let go of controlling the outcome.*

You can do this with some things:

Cleaning up room (must finish before friend comes over, before play/reading time)

Coming down for dinner (if delays then must spend time cleaning up from dinner afterward)

But not with others:

Washing up

Brushing teeth

Getting dressed in the morning for school

**You can “incentivize” some tasks:
As soon as you, you can.....**

**This is different from bribing:
If you, I will**

Consequences of inconvenience”

Give up 3 min of play time

Lose 5 min of computer or TV

Must come help fold towels, put water in dog's bowl

Do chore for sibling

None of these is punitive. You don't need punishments in order to modify your child's behavior.

The goal: raising children you enjoy being around!

