

Parenting Tips
from
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Opening times : Monday to Friday 12 PM to 4 PM

Swearing

Children swear for many reasons: to experiment with language; to attract your attention; to make themselves appear bigger or older than they are; and even as a challenge or expression of personal power. Like other forms of language children need to learn that there are times and places when its use is unacceptable or causes distress to others.

Bright Ideas

- Avoid over-reacting when children swear. However, make the message clear that you are unimpressed with swearing and you are willing to leave them alone when they swear. Consider withdrawing your cooperation temporarily if they swear at you.
- Discuss the concept of appropriate language with older children. Teach them that language may be appropriate in one context or be accepted by one group but it is not acceptable in every situation. While not condoning swearing get across to children that they need to learn to control their use of language and adjust it to suit the situation they are in.
- Children, like adults, can use inappropriate language out of habit. If this is the case make up alternative words that replace swearing. One family had replaced certain words with fruit. They had a fruit for every situation!
- Try the penalty system. When family members swear they are fined an agreed amount, which is placed in a money-box. At the end of the week or month the money can be given to a worthy cause or spent in a way that benefits others. Of course, parents should join in this as well.
- Examine your own choice of language to judge if it is an acceptable model for your children.

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