## Tips for Parents of School Age Children (5-9 years)

### Fighting With Siblings
Child is learning about power and empathy.

**INSTEAD OF SAYING...**

- “Stop fighting right now!”
- “Let me give you both a good spanking/whooping so you stop fighting all the time.”
- “No TV for a month!”

**TRY...**

- “If we play together without fighting, we get to do more fun stuff.”
- “Let me set the timer so you and your [brother] can take turns.”
- “Your [sister] is younger than you and doesn’t understand how taking turns works yet. Can you show her/him?”
- “Let’s wait. I’ll hold the remote while we figure out what we want to watch.”

### Being Aggressive – Hitting, Grabbing Things from Others
Instead of calling out child for assertive behavior, try helping them to stand up for themselves without aggression.

**INSTEAD OF SAYING...**

- “You are so mean – stop hitting!”
- “You are a bad boy/girl!”
- “Don’t hit!”

**TRY...**

- “When you [hit, bite] your [brother], it hurts him, and he feels sad.”
- “Let’s find something else to play with.”
- “It’s OK to be angry, but I won’t let you hit. We need to keep everyone safe.”
- “It’s your [sister]’s turn with the [train]. I will help you wait until it’s your turn.”

### Bad Grades
Some children learn easily, and some need your help to get their grades up. Make sure your child is getting enough sleep in order to learn. 9-11 hours is ideal for ages 6-13. Help child learn good habits by having daily routines around homework and studying.

**INSTEAD OF SAYING...**

- “You are so stupid.”
- “You are not good at [reading] at all.”
- “This is so easy – why are you so bad at this?”

**TRY...**

- “You just haven’t learned [multiplication] YET, but if we work on it together, you will get better.”
- “I notice the grade for this class is low. What is difficult about this class? How can I help?”
- “Do you have a friend we could ask to help you with this?”

### Misbehaving at School
Listen to your child’s problems. Try to understand the need underneath the behavior.

**INSTEAD OF SAYING...**

- “You are stupid for getting into trouble!”
- “You are heading straight for jail!”
- “Let me give you a whooping so you can remember to behave next time.”

**TRY...**

- “Your teacher called me about something that happened at school. I want to help. Tell me what happened.”
- “If you could make school any way you wanted, how would it be?”
- “When you behave this way [whatever the behavior might be], what do you need?”

### Connecting with Pre-Teens

**INSTEAD OF SAYING...**

- “You finally listened to me.”
- “Why can’t you ever do what I tell you to do?”

**TRY...**

- “I notice that you were so kind.”
- “I notice you feel really good today.”
- “Your jokes make me laugh.”
- “I had such a good time with you today.”
- “It really feels good when you listen to me.”
- “Thank you for listening.”
- “I can see you are really engaged, and it’s hard for you hear me.”
- “I noticed you weren’t able to do… How can I help you?”
Dear Parents,

Did you know that –

• **Spanking shrinks brains.**
  Harvard Medical School found that kids who are spanked just once a month had **14-19% smaller brains in the decision-making area.**¹ These were children who remembered being spanked at least 12 times a year and once with a belt, paddle or brush, but were not injured or spanked in anger.

• **1,574 studies found that spanking is harmful.**

• Even ‘everyday spanking’ is **consistently associated with:**
  - More aggression
  - More fighting
  - More mental health problems
  - More negative relationships with parents
  - Lower cognitive ability
  - Weaker moral values
  - More antisocial behavior
  - Lower self-esteem
  - Substant abuse
  - Delinquent behavior
  - Lower self-control²

• **Spanking lowers IQ.**
  The University of New Hampshire found that American children who are spanked at ages 2-4 have **5 less IQ points** than non-spanked children, even years later. Children spanked at ages 5-9 have **2.8 less IQ points.**³

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

• **Does this mean that everyone who was spanked as a child has problems?** No, it means that spanking doesn’t help children learn what we want them to learn. Every time we spank a child, we raise the risk that the child will develop problems.

• **Why is this so?** Spanking focuses on the behavior and misses the underlying need. It might stop a child from doing something in the moment, but the child hasn’t learned how to do things differently. And it can lead to built-up resentment and hostility, and prevent some children from telling about sexual abuse for fear of further punishment.

• **But I was spanked and turned out okay?** Today, we have a tremendous amount of knowledge about how children learn and develop. We know other ways of teaching children that don’t have these risks and harms.

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