

Subjects of Conversation for a 3.5 year old

Submitted by makisdad on 13 June, 2005 - 07:06

Hi all looking for some advice here. I am a seperated Father, i.e, my wife left me for someone else and took our son. He now lives with me every other weekend and half of nursery holidays. This situation sucks but thats another story.

My dilemma is this;

Time between my son and i is precious. We have and always have had a very close and loving relationship. Before his mum and i split i was the main carer for 8 months, during which time i treated him in a non-coercive way. He responded to this excellently. Since the split his mum has imposed a regime of daily nursery and what she calls 'a 3 year old must meet resistance' - boiled down this is 'a 3 yr old is too young to be allowed choices over much of what happens in his life.' I still follow the non-coercive route and our relationship continues to flourish in a very close and bonding way. The problem is my son is now showing a 'preference' my parenting 'style' and comlains to me about the 'regime' type imposed by his mum. I have talked to him as a fellow human being about this in a positive way, e.g. it's good for him to have mummy and daddy etc. I have not criticised his mums ways but have told him when he is with me he has control over his own choices. However he appears to have made some serious leaps wit hthis and has informed his mum that when he is 'older' he will live with me. Mum clearly is alarmed at this and accuses me of putting these ideas into his head. His mum told him i was lying to him about his choices to which he responded by hitting her. I have told him hitting his mum is bad and he is clearly close to wanting a conversation about the why's and whereford of this situation. My instinct is this - if he is old enough to ask me, he is old enough to have a balanced and sensitive answer. His mum strongly disagrees, as have friends of mine - they say he is too young. I really am in a corner over this - i dont want to make intellectual boundaries for my son, lie to him, or co-erce him. Anyone got some words of wisdom, previous experience for me? Would be greatly appreciated.

Many thanks Vern

to post comments

Subjects of conversation

Submitted by Francine (not verified) on 13 June, 2005 - 15:31

Hi Vern -

I think the key is to let your child know what you believe is right and wrong without demonizing his mother.

The right frame of mind for such comments would be factual and kindly and non-inflammatory.

In otherwords, help the child solve the problems that living with a tyrant entails without endangering his necessary relationship with her.

And be very clear to weed out any of your own bad feelings about her etc. so that you are not , on even the most subtle levels, using the child to express your differences.

Focus on being helpful and finding good pleasant ways for the child to solve his problems.

to post comments

Many thanks Francine. Yes, th

Submitted by makisdad on 13 June, 2005 - 20:05

Many thanks Francine. Yes, the last thing i need is to demonize the mother, so i am very wary to not do that in any way. Our child is clearly trying to make sense of his life and the boundaries that the adults around him set up. I feel we have a responsibility to enable our son to do that in as pleasant(your word, i like it) and positive ways as possible.

Vern

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