

What makes your heart sink?

Submitted by canyonstar on 7 June, 2005 - 15:15

There are phrases and statements that make me cringe when I hear them, like "children have to learn..." because I know that what comes next is something hideously coercive, or because the statement is code for "no" – "We'll see" tends to be a sneaky way of saying "No". What other phrases do parents use that make your heart sink?

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"We don't..."

Submitted by solasister (not verified) on 7 June, 2005 - 22:05

... or, for that matter, "we do". Or any of those other creepy laying-down-the-law statements that pretend to be all nicey-nice. "We don't eat chocolate for breakfast". "We share our toys when people come to visit".

tbh, I think I find a parent saying "you're not allowed to eat chocolate for breakfast" or whatever less annoying, although I suppose it sounds nastier. The child can (at least theoretically) turn round and say "Why on earth not?". Even if they aren't voice that, at least they can think it, and work along that line of thinking.

Now I look back at the statements that make you cringe, canyonstar, I see that those too are part of this fakely abstract, nothing-to-do-with-me-personally style of parental discipline, which is so horribly, horribly manipulative. Yuk!

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You'll understand when you're

Submitted by klsdf (not verified) on 7 June, 2005 - 23:33

"You'll understand when you're older."

Elliot

[to post comments](#)

heart sinks...

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 8 June, 2005 - 13:59

"Is (s)he good?"

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Go give grandma a kiss!

Submitted by Virginia Warren on 8 June, 2005 - 17:37

I really, **really** hate it when people instruct their children to express physical affection. Hey, the kid will give grandma a kiss if she wants to!

"You were so good when we were [somewhere the child dislikes] I'm going to take you [somewhere the child likes]."

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I've been known to say, truth

Submitted by nomama (not verified) on 8 June, 2005 - 19:53

I've been known to say, truthfully, that something went so well that I have energy to do something else of the child's choice. And we've had weak common preferences that involved trading tolerance of the other's preferred activity - in the absence of a happy robust common preference.

But the carrot and stick! Oh yuck.

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so let me see ...

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 12 June, 2005 - 05:14

if I've got this straight ... if a child wants to stick flaming daggers in his eyes because he is three and stupid, do you let him?

arrrggghhh ::: runs screaming from the room :::

TCS, yup folks, it really IS rocket science ;)

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If you don't (blah), then you won't get (blah)

Submitted by Sara (not verified) on 4 October, 2005 - 03:42

come ON! Adults should know better than to BLACKMAIL their own CHILDREN!

It's a bit sick, disgusting, and immature.

[to post comments](#)

You're not "listening!"

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 16 December, 2005 - 20:23

The child is almost certainly listening. He or she isn't "obeying," for which this is a euphamism.

[to post comments](#)

"You need to..."

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 13 January, 2006 - 15:21

as in "You need to clean up." "You need to share.:" "You need to be home by 8." "You need to do your homework."

"Need to" is being used as a tricky replacement for "must" or "should" to cover up whose "need" is being expressed.

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Here's one...

Submitted by The Struggle Within (not verified) on 4 March, 2006 - 00:32

"When I was your age _____"

This is just an example of the many 'had it tougher than thou' lines parents so love to crack. I really hate it when parents try to give their child/ren some sort of guilt trip for being miserable by sharing one of their boring, washed-up life stories. Lines like "when I was your age blah blah blah" usually are meant to express that the parents had a much rougher life than the child, therefore the child should shut the hell up and stop feeling down/angry/bad/whatever. As far as I'm concerned, the quality of every person's life is equal in its own relative little way: Some get to explore more in life, some are better-nurtured, some learn the most, etc. This goes for how hard your life may be, too. And yet parents like this never get it, and selfishly categorize misery solely or almost entirely based on their own life experiences when they've never even been in their child's shoes. For example, a parent who grew up in poverty and starvation will probably think that if their child is raised in a very nurturing, rich environment, he/she will have no right to feel miserable. And I would bet that even if the child did end up in a poverty-stricken environment and suffered from starvation like their parent did, the parent would still act like he/she has seen it all and would probably still try and convince the child of not being able to keep things in

perspective and not allowed to feel like they're going through a hard time. I'm sorry, but these types of parents really need to get bent.

[to post comments](#)

Don't be scared of your children's "big feelings!"

Submitted by mammal_mama on 20 March, 2007 - 18:28

One annoying thing I've been hearing recently -- is the accusation that I'm "scared" of my children's "big feelings."

This because I care how my children perceive my behavior towards them: I don't think it's enough just for ME to know I love my children: I think THEIR perceptions matter just as much as mine.

Apparently some people perceive my caring as cowardice.

Susan

[to post comments](#)

"Don't you ever force him to do something...?"

Submitted by momofgreatson (not verified) on 22 March, 2007 - 20:36

Recently an acquaintance asked if I ever thought of forcing my child to do something he doesn't want to do. I didn't even know what she meant, so I asked. She told me she thinks that, while guiding a child toward things, part of growing up is having your parents 'make you' do things- for instance, playing a sport for years that a parent has forced a child to play even though the child absolutely hated it; that this would teach the child that she could survive things she loathes. Like this is a good lesson? It's certainly disrespectful to the child.

[to post comments](#)

Force a child to do something

Submitted by Willow on 11 April, 2007 - 09:40

Yes I do force my son (10 months) to have his teeth brushed. However I think it is daft to force a child to do sport. It is quite easily resolveable. Perhaps stop sport for a bit or offer other sports. Sometimes there might be an issue with the people one is playing with, in which case a change, or a lone sport might be better. I remember hating PE at school but loving Karate outside school, which I went to 3 times a week, loved and was good at.

Any ideas on the tooth brushing issue are welcome. Forcing makes the issue worse at the moment because the struggle increases the risk of bumped gums. I'm glad I don't have someone else to brush my teeth. Forcing I use as a last resort and think it should be avoided if at all possible.

[to post comments](#)

ideas about toothbrushing

Submitted by [emma \(not verified\)](http://www.childrenarepeople.blogspot.com) on 13 April, 2007 - 17:07

<http://p081.ezboard.com/fsageparentingfrm17.showMessage?topicID=3181.topic>
(<http://p081.ezboard.com/fsageparentingfrm17.showMessage?topicID=3181.topic>)

<http://p081.ezboard.com/fsageparentingfrm13.showMessage?topicID=341.topic>
(<http://p081.ezboard.com/fsageparentingfrm13.showMessage?topicID=341.topic>)

<http://p081.ezboard.com/fsageparentingfrm13.showMessage?topicID=134.topic>
(<http://p081.ezboard.com/fsageparentingfrm13.showMessage?topicID=134.topic>)

Lots of ideas about toothbrushing there.

[to post comments](#)

and

Submitted by [emma \(not verified\)](#) on 13 April, 2007 - 17:36

and here...

<http://p075.ezboard.com/ftcscommunityfrm50.showMessage?topicID=1.topic>
(<http://p075.ezboard.com/ftcscommunityfrm50.showMessage?topicID=1.topic>)

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"We can't afford that."

Submitted by [Neglected \(not verified\)](#) on 10 July, 2007 - 18:39

I hated my parents! They were mean; At the age of 13 I had never been to disneyland, or any amusment or theme park, thiugh my folks went on an "Adults only" cruise to the Bahamas anuually, leaving me with a babysitter I hardely knew. They claimed they couldn't afford Girl Scouts, or summer camp, or daycare. I never got to decorate my room; the theme was white and green. I only had one barbie doll, while our 1200 dollar dog got French Pedicures! We had a pool with a waterslide and waterfall that was off limits to me when my parents weren't home, and they both worked overtime schedules! My prom dress was my Mom's old bridesmaid dress, and the only place I ever got anything was at my grandmothets house, and she lived hundreds of miles away!

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I'm the parent and you're the child....

as well as comments like "children obey" or "children obey their parents...for this is right"

"because I said so"

"do as you're told"

"no arguing"

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ok i hate when my aunt and

Submitted by a TCS reader (not verified) on 15 December, 2008 - 21:05

ok i hate when my aunt and uncle (i live with them!) tell me im doing something im most definately not. the criticize me just because i came from an imperfect mom. they sit there and blame me for things i am not doin! it pisses me off so effin much!

[to post comments](#)

Cornering the child

Submitted by Sophie (not verified) on 18 March, 2009 - 01:20

I really hated it when my parents (and sister for that matter) cornered me into saying things I didn't necessarily mean, or things that would embarrass me. It really hurts. That is the one thing I will be absolutely sure never to do when I become a parent.

[to post comments](#)

i just feel so bad when I see

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 25 June, 2009 - 20:17

i just feel so bad when I see parents forcing their children to hold thier hands when walking in public places. I mean, they know who you are and you know who your child is,they wont get lost, why dont you stop being so controlling.

[to post comments](#)

I always wondered

Submitted by sunflower on 20 August, 2009 - 10:42

I always wondered why some grown ups would talk to me in a sing song voice, like I couldn't understand normal speech. Did they think I was stupid because I was young, or it would make me like them? It just left me bewildered as to how I was supposed to respond - respond and it confirms to them I am stupid, because I'm talking to someone who thinks I'm an idiot - not respond because they've made me feel bad, and it confirms to them I'm an idiot, because I can't respond. Maybe I was stupid. I had no idea dinosaurs were real until I was an adult. I thought the grown ups thought children were so dumb they needed to invent something so oversized and unrealistic to impress us.

My biggest cringe is when people tell children off just for being there. 'Stop interrupting/interfering/ bothering so and so' because what they mean is 'I can't be bothered to acknowledge you so don't ask them to talk to instead.

Aaaaaarrggghhhh!!! You wouldn't treat me that way - I'm an adult. Why are you doing it to them?

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"(Name), don't do this to me right now."

Submitted by Timothy on 16 September, 2009 - 23:03

I live in Los Angeles and I hear this exact threat all too often from well-manicured women dragging around suffering toddlers. I can't help but cringe at the astonishing egotism inherent in the statement.

The three-year-old is really expected to understand his mother's fluctuating need for mental tranquility, and to respect it ahead of all his own needs? And his behavior is not an attempt to communicate, but some kind of gratuitous violence that he "does to" his mother?

The iceberg of which this is the tip terrifies me.

And although this isn't verbal, one of my biggest peeves is when an adult spits on a napkin and wipes a child's face with it. My relatives would ambush me with this trick all the time as a little kid and I hated it. What a humiliating experience to smell the stench of some adult's saliva drying on your face. If it's so hard to procure water or wet-wipes, can't we just use children's own saliva? Heaven knows they produce enough of it!

[to post comments](#)

We here at FGMS personally

Submitted by TylerDoll;) (not verified) on 29 January, 2010 - 16:38

We here at FGMS personally hate it when our parents say "maybe".... It irks our nerves.;; My parents say stupid stuff like;;; "Wait and we'll see," and "Sorry, but you cant. It's too late." Yes mom; we can, and no dad; it's not too late.

[to post comments](#)

Calling adults [Miss|Mr.] [First Name]

Submitted by Virginia (not verified) on 14 February, 2010 - 08:21

It reminds me of Jim Crow South crap to have little kids call me Miss Virginia. All of my friends do it.

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Brain explosions

Submitted by Sidetracked on 8 September, 2010 - 11:25

Oh, how I will continue to strive to prevent, or at least reduce the amount of spleen-venting my children will feel they need to do as they get older, the amount of times they will feel the need to tell their friends how stupid Mum (sorry, Australian speech impediment) and Dad are and how stupid they think we think *they* are. I'm not the brightest spark and I find it almost impossible at times to break the conditioning inflicted upon me by a somewhat typical, traditional, upbringing.

I say *almost* though. Which means I make great attempts to explain myself to my two boys (well at least my 4yo who is fast learning what it means to 'have the wool pulled over his eyes', the other is two and he is trying so hard to speak like his older brother).

One thing that does help me be mindful of their feelings is a strong memory of being fobbed off with the "because I said so!" retort. Apparently some things "just were." As a result it took me a long time to be sure of my own opinions. Though Mum and Dad weren't alone in that, some Primary School teachers (yes, I'm referring to you Mr Smith, you over-sized, bloated, grubby-bearded...) 20 odd years back were probably in the wrong profession.

I think it would be safe to say I'm not talking for everyone when I say that I know my parents tried pretty hard to bring me up the best way they knew, but nevertheless I feel that in my darker moments I need to remind myself that thinking too absolutely about these things only blurs my judgment and gets my blood pressure up. Oh, and I tend to have a healthy fear and loathing of the authoritarian approach to parenting... Something else that I am scared of ever using is anything that may suggest that the greater population is doing things right: if in doubt, tell the kids "if you don't do such-and-such the kids at school will tease you" or "one must not be seen in public without a plum up one's bum" or such like.

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Apologize

Submitted by Stacy (not verified) on 28 April, 2011 - 17:22

When adults tell their children and teenagers to apologize. HATE IT! Chances are your child/teenager will know that there is the option to express that they didn't do something on purpose or that they regret something they did because they hurt someone unintentionally (and for small children who don't know this- i don't think they should be forced to apologize either because the only rationale to this is that it "sounds nice" and they should learn that when they do anything that is disagreeable they should "repent of their sins" if you may. Someone who is truly sorry will simply try not to do what they are sorry about again WITHOUT coercion or manipulation into proclaiming their supposed "sorry-ness"... duh!) so I have never understood why someone would tell another to apologize. I

personally won't apologize unless something really was an accident or if I did something hurtful unintentionally. No one has to tell me to do so. I also follow up by trying not to do the act again to ANYONE. I don't find anything wrong with suggesting apologizing if the person genuinely feels bad and doesn't know how to express it and looks to you for advice, but rarely do children ask for such advice and they are the main ones being told to apologize. Adults always say "apologize" without knowing or caring if the child is really regretting what they did to the other person or if it was an accident or done purposefully. Not everything bad is done unintentionally. When Tommy punches the neighbor boy and his mother comes looking for answers, making sure that Tommy apologizes is not what's important. I think it is fake and teaches children fake "sincerity" where they just blurt out sorry even if they meant to do something while knowing the hurt it would cause. My thing is if people are truly regretful it will show. They will go out of their way not to do it again. I believe children are the same (yes children ARE people too). Parents should stop forcing kids to apologize because there is a chance they are not really "sorry." You can tell by the way they keep on doing the act to others. A better way of dealing with this situation would be to advise your child to put themselves in the other's shoes if they are struggling to see why someone was hurt from what they did, or better yet try to get to the reason behind why the child/teen did what they did and talk it out. What would be other/more effective ways to deal with a situation where noone would be hurt/upset? etc. Forcing your kid to apply an apology to someone else's emotional or physical wound and forgetting about it is just plain ineffective.

Another one is telling your child to do something under the guise of asking. Like "Will you do the dishes for me?", "Can you clean your room?" (yes, they "can") or "Will you take out the trash before dinner?" (I just love the ones with time limits)...over and over and over again. It's called nagging and yes wives/husbands do it to their husbands/wives also. If the child (or spouse) should say no to the "request" they know they will be punished in some form. Either emotionally, physically, and sometimes its both. The person then really has no say or choice and you are just trying to make it seem like they do, like you are being reasonable ... very deceptive. And why do they then say "well, I asked you nicely..." and then punish accordingly. It wasn't asking then -it was an inherent demand with an underlying arbitrary consequence for not complying. These are very common and its sad.

to post comments

Statements that are forcing

Submitted by Little Harvest (not verified) on 28 July, 2011 - 21:33

Statements that are forcing politeness on a child based on the wishes and social values of the PARENT. For example someone gave me joyful, spirited little son a lollipop at a restaurant because she thought he was being so "good". cringe. Well my son took it, which WAS his act of politeness since he does not care for HFCS or junk like mainstream lollys. Then the woman's partner started saying "NOW YOUNG MAN YOU NEED TO SAY THANK YOU!" over and over. WHAT???? My child will express thanks and politeness on his own terms if HE wants to. He did not even want that lolly so why on earth would he thank a stranger. OMG I am **fuming** now!!!

to post comments

Sinking heart!!!FOod

Submitted by [Candice \(not verified\)](http://funschoolingnwa.blogspot.com) (http://funschoolingnwa.blogspot.com) on 3 January, 2012 - 02:35

I hate when other adults comment on my free eating six year old. This is the most challenging TCS concept for me, yet the benefits of his freedom are many and awesome. The "why do you only want baby food" or "no cake unless you eat this" really get me going! Ugh! If folks only knew how much I have had to unlearn to trust this kid,

probably how much he has had to deal with because of GROWN UP and OUTDATED paradigms he had no say in!

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