



RESPECTFUL VOICE PLAN

peaceful
parent
happy
kids

If you're a yeller or shouter, it can be really, really hard to change your habit. But the results are priceless. You and your child will be much closer, which means he'll want to behave better. And watching you manage your emotions will help him learn to regulate his own emotions better.

The key is supporting yourself so you're less likely to lose it. That's why I recommend you take a Vow of Yellibacy. Once you clearly state your intention, you have more chance of success.

The next thing you need is an accountability partner. Who knows if you're using a respectful voice with your child? Your child! So your child decides whether you get a sticker each day. Obviously, yelling is not a respectful voice. Notice you can still guide your child -- just respectfully.

Try it for a week. Give yourself whatever support you need to be successful. I'm betting you'll see a wonderful change in your family, one that will keep you going long after your experiment ends. In a year, you won't remember the last time you yelled. Miraculous? Yes. But this is something you can do. Which doesn't make it less of a miracle.

(If you have a partner, don't push them to sign on if they are not interested, because they will end up feeling attacked when the kids won't give them a star. Always work on yourself first. Your role modeling will be noticed.)

Every day during the bedtime routine, ask your child if you used a respectful voice all day and thus earned a star. Your child can give you a sticker or draw a happy face or star for each day when you don't shout. If your child says you didn't earn a star, try not to get defensive. (That just results in your trying to make it your child's fault.) Instead, remind yourself that your child doesn't deserve to get yelled at, no matter what, and that you're the role model. Then ask yourself what you can do tomorrow to give yourself more support to stay on track.

Don't forget to promise yourself a nice reward. This is the hardest work there is, and you deserve it!

Wishing you less drama and more love!



What to do instead of raising your voice

I invite you to focus on using a respectful voice even when your child is acting badly. Take the high road and model self-regulation. You'll find that your child actually cooperates better. And if not, that's an important indicator. If you have to rely on yelling and fear to get your child to do what you say, that's not sustainable, especially as your child gets older. You're teaching all the wrong lessons and shaping a child who is LESS able to self-regulate, which means less able to manage their behavior.

So what can you do to get your child cooperating, if you can't yell?

- Take a few deep breaths.
- Remind yourself that you can handle this situation. There's no emergency.
- Use a mantra to reframe the situation more positively. Something like: *"Choose Love!"* or *"My child is having a hard time. He needs my help."*

Then:

- Connect!
- Get in your child's face in a friendly way.
- Make it fun.
- Give your child a choice.
- Lead with your natural authority, which doesn't need to throw tantrums to be heard.
- Set limits with empathy: "It sounds like you wish you could keep playing. I hear you. It's hard to stop playing. And right now, I need you to get ready." ("You wish" is the closest thing I know to a magic word with children, because it makes empathizing so easy. Try writing "You wish....." on a sticky note and putting it up where you'll see it, to train yourself to use it.)

I understand that you may not have these tools in your toolkit yet—and that's perfectly okay. That's why you're here, learning and growing. Give self-regulation your best effort, and you'll likely start to notice positive changes in your child's behavior.



What if your child is acting out more than usual?

Please don't panic. That's what happens when you stop using punishment to control your child, and the connection isn't yet strong enough to motivate cooperation. I know, you didn't get this bundle to have your child act worse! But using fear and control isn't sustainable, especially as kids get older, and it teaches them all the wrong lessons. **The solution is to step up your empathy and connection**, because those are what increase your child's desire to cooperate.

So keep setting your usual limits! But here's the difference, and the reason your child will follow your limits without threats or punishment. Be sure to empathize by describing what your child wishes could happen, even while you set the limit. And of course, try to keep your sense of humor! I should also warn you that it's not unusual for kids to start having more tantrums as you begin to self-regulate more. That's because when you self-regulate, you create safety. That feeling of safety lets your child show you all the fear he or she has felt, all those times you were loud or angry. That's what we call emptying their emotional backpack. What your child needs from you now, so they can heal, is loving acceptance and understanding, even while still setting your regular limits.

So don't worry -- this is temporary. **You're cleaning up the mess from the past.** If you didn't do this, your child would have to carry that mess, and you would see it in misbehavior and defiance. Keep setting limits with understanding, and greet your child's tears and upsets with loving compassion, so your child will move past this emotional phase more quickly.

Please note that this issue is covered in detail during Week 1 of the [Peaceful Parent, Happy Kids online course](#). If your child's behavior is worsening instead of improving, this would be an excellent time to revisit that section. If you don't have the course yet, I highly recommend getting it. The sooner you start applying these principles, the sooner you'll see positive changes in your child and your family

