

A Positive First Response

Things are busy here and set to get even busier. When I am feeling stretched my temper shortens and I cut corners. I say and do things I wish I hadn't, especially on the parenting front. So today I am restocking my collection of 'positive first responses'.

A positive first response is a little trick I have up my sleeve to at least get me started in the right direction when it comes to some recurring situations that push my buttons. This is how it works...

Sit down and think about the kinds of things your kids do that drive you bonkers.

These are the times that I am pushed to say or do something right then and there, and the times when I often say or do something that makes things worse not better.

You know those times with your kids that seem to happen over and over and afterwards you always wished you'd handled them better? Yep, those times.

With those times in mind the idea is to think up better ways to handle them.

Think up something that you can say when you are in the moment. A little script that you can remember and repeat without too much thought.

Think up something to say that might diffuse the situation, something that might buy you a little time to think, something with a more positive tone, something that shows you hear them, something that shows you recognize their feelings, something with compassion.

I go all the way and actually come up with a full sentence and even say it out loud a few times to make sure I remember it.

"Fair is not equal It is everyone getting what they need when they need it."

"If you put it away you will be able to find it the next time you need it."

"Speak calmly to your brother/sister/father/me and we will be able to sort it out."

"Please be gentle."

"Rough play is for outside."

"I can see you are frustrated, can I help?"

"Can you think of another way?"

"I need time to think about it, come back in five minutes and we'll discuss it."

I store these little phrases away in the back of mind and I trot them out whenever I'm cornered, or stressed, or tired and need to have 'a positive first response'.

What kid situations are pushing your buttons right now?

How do you deal with things when you are stressed or tired?

Do you have a store of positive first responses?

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