

It's OK to Say NO

It's a short (only 2 letters) and simple word. It's also a word that many of us have a difficulty saying AND meaning.

NO

Sometimes we would rather be our child's friend than their parent. Nobody wants to be the "bad guy." The fact remains that we are the parent and part of being a parent is saying no – strongly and convincingly.

Often, families live miles away from their extended families. Two working parent families are the norm. There's more disposable income and also less free time to spend together. It's easier to give in rather than put up the good fight. "No" has lost its value in many families.

In many homes, the children have come to realize that "no" really means "not now" or "I don't think so." They've also learned that if they whine or nag enough, they're going to wear a parents down and that "no" will become a "yes." While it may seem easier in the short run to say "yes," giving in will only cause more problems later on. Children who never hear the word "no" are eventually going to believe they can do whatever they want, whenever they want.

Many times we feel uncomfortable saying "no" and setting limits. We don't want to see our daughter cry or have our son mad at us. As parents, we have an obligation to make decisions on what is, and is not appropriate for our children.

Setting limits is a fundamental job of parenting. Children need limits to survive in the world. They need to know that they will not get everything they want and that they cannot do everything they want to do.

As a parent, we're not required to explain our actions. We don't have to say we're sorry for our decision and we don't have to tell our child we love them *when we turn down a request*. We need to tell them that we love them and show it by our everyday words and deeds.