

# DEFIANT BEHAVIOR

PARENTING CHALLENGES ★ PAGE 1 OF 1

So many parents email me with the question of what to do with a defiant child. There is not a Band-Aid solution for this problem. Read my whole section on Sandy's truths. Read about Anger and Conflict Resolution techniques.

Defiance is about anger and power. The child is feeling angry and asking the question, Is this how I use power? If the child gets away with the behavior, the behavior not only continues but accelerates.

Your child does not want to leave the park: Children do not like to be jerked out of their reality. Tell the child, "You are having such a great time that I am sure you want to stay here forever. In five minutes (show a small space of time with your thumb and forefinger) I will wave and then you need to run fast as the wind and come to me."

If the child does not come or runs the other way, say, "Ron, come here right now, please." Sound like you mean it. If he runs, block the child's return to the park, sit down and look at the child with no comment. The child knows. Wait. The child cannot come back into the park. It will get boring to be out on the lawn by himself. Then, take the child's hand and leave.

Next time you go to the park, go over and take your child's hand. "It is time for us to go now. I am taking your hand so you do not run. We are leaving now." Children hate to be in prison. The child will learn that now means now and choosing to run away has a consequence.

Your teenager will not stay in a conversation with you and starts to leave: "Before you walk out on this conversation, understand you are at choice right now. Stay and finish this conversation with me or go ahead and go. We both know I can't physically make you stay. If you choose to leave, I will find you at 8:00 tonight and we will sit down in the livingroom for a thirty minute talk about this problem. Finish the conversation now or at 8:00 tonight. You are at choice right now."

You will only meet at 8:00 with a child one time if you drag out the conversation and use boredom as your ally. A serious conversation with a parent is boring to every teenager.

Change your behavior or we will talk about it at 8:00, gives you the power of stopping behavior without violence or anger.

Defiant behavior is a question from your child: Is this how I use power? If the answer is no, the behavior will stop. It is possible to stop defiant behavior without getting angry.