

RESPECT

PARENTING CHALLENGES ★ PAGE 1 OF 1

If you want your children to be respectful, it will be because you modeled respect. It is not respectful to ridicule, blame, shame, criticize, or put down your child.

It is not respectful to treat your child like a ninny and give advice that is not needed,

"Do you have your suntan lotion?"

"Do you have enough money?"

"Are you leaving enough time to get there on time?"

"It is cold today, aren't you going to take a jacket?"

Children (especially teenagers) regard such comments as messages that they are not competent enough to handle their own lives. A teen who forgets a jacket may get cold and that will be the consequence of that choice. Have you (parent) ever failed to take a jacket somewhere and been cold? You learned from that consequence, right?

If the safety of the child is at stake, a comment may be warranted. It is important that the comment is a teaching moment rather than a put-down moment, "Remember, the freeways get slippery when they are wet; it is best to drive slower than usual in the rain."

It is important to respect how difficult it is to be a child in today's world. Children need loving guidance, appropriate consequences and most of all to be loved and respected.

"Stop eating with your fingers! What is the matter with you? You are a pig!"

"Look at how dirty you are! You are not coming in this house like that! Maybe the neighbors will let you live with them!"

"You got a D on that test when we studied so hard? What is your problem?"

"You are so slow that I am going to call you turtle from now on....."

"Don't talk and chew at the same time. Good grief! I won't be able to take you anywhere!"

These statements hold no respect inside of their messages. A child can be very frustrating. A child can make choices that you can't believe (but your grandmother might remember you making!) There is never enough time to do everything that needs to be done and one more blooper from your child can be irritating.

BOTTOM LINE: You gave birth to this child and in doing so you have chosen to be the architect of that child's life. Pay attention to what you say and how you say it. Take time to make a blooper a learning moment, not a stake that may be in your child's heart forever. Respect is best taught by modeling it!!