

RUDE TO ANOTHER ADULT

PARENTING CHALLENGES ★ PAGE 1 OF 1

PARENT: Whenever I go out with a friend, my youngest child says, "I don't want (name) to go with us." She says it in front of my friend. What can I say?

SANDY: Children seem to know that they have you over a barrel when company is present. The trick is to remain consistent, with or without company. In the case mentioned say, "Melinda and I are having dinner together tonight. You are welcome to join us. Should you choose to make a fuss, we will go and get dinner, bring it home and Melinda and I will eat our dinner without children. There will be no television during dinner. Shall we go out to dinner together or get dinner and bring it home?" Chances are, the child will not relish eating alone. Sure, it wrecks your plans for going out to dinner --and makes the point that negative behavior will not be tolerated.

If you want to talk to the child when an embarrassing comment is made, take the child out of the room. Simply excuse yourselves. Be powerful rather than threatening with the child, "You may not be disrespectful to my friends. You are at choice; go out with the two of us and have a pleasant time or tomorrow you and I will have a thirty minute, boring talk about your choice. The talk will be during your favorite TV time or your play time."

See "Sandy's Parenting Truths" and "Defiant Behavior" for more information.