

TEACH CHILDREN HOW TO SAY NO WHEN THEY WANT TO SAY NO

PARENTING CHALLENGES ★ PAGE 1 OF 1

■ PARENT: I want to help my children be able to say no when they want to say no. Any suggestions?

■ SANDY: Great question. Children who have a parent as an ally for saying no are more likely to say no to a negative situation. If my children called me and prefaced any question with "Mommy Dearest" it was a signal to say no—even if they argued with me.

■ Teach your children how to repeat an answer in an "oatmeal" tone of voice to use boredom as their ally:

- "I don't want to see that movie tonight." (Repeat exact words many times.)
- "I am not going to drink alcohol with you tonight." (Repeat exact words many times.)
- "I don't ever smoke anything when I don't know what it is." (Repeat exact words many times.)

■ This form of the "broken record" gives the child a tool with which to stand up to peer pressure.