

THREATENING YOUR CHILD

PARENTING CHALLENGES ★ PAGE 1 OF 1

Threats are an announcement that you have lost your power, "If you don't come right now, I am going to leave you here!" It is also a lie. You will not leave your child in the park. You have just lost control of the situation and you are misusing power.

INSTEAD: Children like an agenda, "I can see you are having lots of fun. We need to go home pretty soon. Play really hard for five minutes," (show a space between your thumb and forefinger), "When I wave my arms like this it will be time for us to go. When I call you, why don't you see if you can run to me before I count to (ten)." Turning a challenge into a game takes the "shall I mind or not mind" energy out of the moment. A game is fun. Minding is not always fun.

Have the child help you with something so there is more to do than to leave the fun place that the child really doesn't want to leave. Talk about what is next on the agenda, "When we go home, I am going to fix dinner because daddy is coming home to see us." Again, the child's mind is diverted from the fun at the park to something else that is fun.

Threatening is unnecessary. Instead, try some of the following techniques:

- "You will do your chore before dinner. Your ticket to dinner is that the chore is finished." The child who forgets will have a cold dinner to eat AFTER the chore is completed.
- "You forgot your math book, so you will write all the times tables from two to ten, beginning with two times two and ending with two times twelve. Tomorrow night, you will bring your math book home and do the homework you are not doing tonight."
- "You forgot to put the trash out this morning. I put it out for you. We have a rule in our home that if you forget one chore, you get two. Before you go play with your friends, you will empty the dishwasher and vacuum the living room."

Your child is learning how to function successfully in his/her world. You are that child's teacher. Instead of modeling threats, choose to use the positive power that you are being taught.