

# 10 Discipline Don'ts

by DAVID SPARROW

**1** **YELL**  
YOUR SCREAMING HAS ZERO EFFECT ON BEHAVIOR (OTHER THAN TO TEACH YOUR CHILD THAT IT'S OKAY FOR HIM TO LOSE IT TOO).

**2** **OFFER EMPTY THREATS**  
If your child knows you won't follow through, she won't take you seriously.

**3** **UNDERMINE YOUR PARTNER**  
Openly disagreeing about discipline will confuse your kid and erode your authority.

**4** **FAIL TO SET RULES**  
It's not fair to punish a child for playing ball in the house if you didn't tell him it was verboten beforehand.

**5** **BRIBE**  
YEAH, IT WORKS THE FIRST TIME. But eventually your child will expect a reward every single time you request her cooperation.

**6** **ARGUE ABOUT CONSEQUENCES**  
YOUR DISCIPLINE METHODS ARE NOT UP FOR DISCUSSION, OR NEGOTIATION, PERIOD.



**8** **spank**  
RESEARCH SHOWS THAT STRIKING A CHILD MAKES HIM MORE AGGRESSIVE, NOT BETTER-BEHAVED.

**9** **CAVE IN TO WHINING**  
Standing firm now will make it less likely you'll hear that annoying voice the next time she wants something.

**compare**  
When you say, "Why can't you be more like your sister?" the implication is that your child isn't fine the way she is.



**10** **SET A BAD EXAMPLE**  
Need to scold your child for fibbing? Fine. But then don't let him catch you canceling plans due to your own phantom illness.