

Parents: Got Defiance? 9 Ways to Get More Compliance!

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“No!” “I don’t want to!” “You can’t make me!”

Dealing with a defiant child can be exasperating! Children who are defiant will readily enter a power struggle and wear a parent down. The key is not to enter the power struggle with an oppositional child. Listed below are nine options from the “**Yell Less. Hug More.**” parenting program that you can use to gain more cooperation from your child.

1. **Use positive communication.** Try phrasing your parenting command in a positive way versus a negative way. For example, if your child says “Can I watch TV now?” instead of just saying, “No. You can’t.” you could say “You can watch TV after dinner.” Or “I can tape this show for you to watch after dinner.”
2. **Give the child two choices.** As a parent you can pick two choices that are equally acceptable to you and offer them to your child. The child is less likely to be oppositional if they feel they have some control over the situation. For example, you could say, “Would you like to do your chore before school or after school today?”
3. **Reflect the feeling back to the child.** Sometimes showing compassion for the child by reflecting back what they’re feeling can be helpful. You could say, “You’re irritated right now because you can’t finish building the Lego tower. It’s hard to leave a project before you’re done, isn’t it?”
4. **Tell them what you’re seeing and state what you’d like to see.** “Wow! You really like to say “no.” I love it when I hear kids say, “YES! YES! YES!” You could tickle the child or use humor to see if you can get them to say “YES!”
5. **State your command as a statement, not as a question.** Parents often say “Would you like to do your homework now?” or other commands that should be stated in a firm voice. Instead, just say, “It’s time to do homework now.”
6. **Make it fun to get to the next place.** If your child has trouble with transitions and becomes oppositional, ask them to hop like a frog to the door, or have their favorite CD waiting in the car that they can listen to.
7. **Establish house rules.** If the house rule is that bedtime is at 8 p.m., then simply state the rule. If the child argues, just repeat the rule over and over, rather than entering into a debate with the child.

8. **Use Rewards.** Focus on your child's positive behavior, rather than the negative. Put a marble in a jar every time that your child does something the first time that you ask. Brainstorm with your child on what the reward will be after they've complied a set number of times.
9. **Think Preventatively**- Many children develop patterns of negativity. Specific triggers set a child off. Look for what triggers your child's defiance and try to alter the pattern so your child can be successful.

Byline: Toni Schutta is a Parent Coach and Licensed Psychologist with 17 years experience helping families find solutions that work. To receive the **free report "The 7 Worst Mistakes Parents Make (and How to Avoid Them!)"** visit <http://www.getparentinghelpnow.com/7mistakessignup.html>. Toni also offers a complimentary 30-minute "Happier Family for You" Planning Session, that's done by telephone, at your convenience. Please contact Toni at toni@getparentinghelpnow.com to set up your session.