



Kind and Firm & The power of “NO”

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USING THESE STRATEGIES HELPS TO:

- Develop greater self-regulation skills
- Create a feeling of “I am capable!”
- Establish a sense of boundaries with known limits.
- Create feelings of safety, especially around emotionality
- Learn to deal with disappointments
- Encourages the development of problem solving skills
- Foster a sense of independence, and the ability to follow through on rules and expectations

One of our favorite strategies that we encourage ALL of our parents to use is being kind AND firm. The “**KIND**” can be established by validating your child’s feelings and demonstrating an understanding of their perspective. Use the word “**AND**” to establish the boundary of what you will do and stay “**FIRM**”. For example, “I love you and no.” “AND” is very different than “but”. The word “but” can negate your validation. Do not use the word but. Try substituting AND whenever you want to say BUT.

LESS IS MORE

As a parent, you will want to avoid lecturing and engaging in a long explanation of your rationale. We do not always owe our child an explanation of our thinking. Try:

1. *Stating what you expect. “Give me the iPad.”*
2. *Wait with a neutral face.*
3. *Use one word as a kind reminder. “iPad.”*
4. *Add in a physical gesture, such as a point if needed. (Point to your other hand, palm up, where the iPad is to be placed.)*

BEGIN WHEN THEY’RE LITTLE, BUT IT’S NOT TOO LATE!

With repetition, these strategies will be come easier to you. Your child will know you mean business, especially because you will always follow through on what you say. If your child is young, start now! If your child is older, it may take longer to change your old patterns, but it is never too late.

THE POWER OF “NO”:

When a situation arises, practice saying “no” using a calm, neutral voice and facial expression. No extra words allowed! Notice your desires. Do you want to explain yourself? Raise your voice? Give in? See what happens when you remain quiet and do not say anything else. By not verbally engaging further, it allows your child to the time and opportunity to feel their own emotions and figure out what to do with them.



Family Tree Therapies is a multi-disciplinary therapy clinic specializing in occupational and speech & language therapy. We help families **IDENTIFY** the underlying factors contributing to the concerns at hand, **UNDERSTAND** how these factors impact language, development, learning, play and friendships, and **EMPOWER** your family with tools and strategies for overcoming such factors.