

## Two Lists . . . and a Third

Adapted by Deb Pysno, CPDT, and Cheryl Forse, CPDT

### First list

What are some behavior challenges you are having with your child/children?  
Things that keep happening that are troubling?

### Second list

Fast forward to a time when your child is about 25 and walks in the front door to have Sunday dinner with you. What are some characteristics you hope your child has as an adult? What do you hope they will be like then? What values do you hope they hold?

### Process

- How does it help you to create that first list together?
- How does it help you to create the second list?
- What is the connection between the two lists?
- What on the first list is due to development?
- Are any of the challenges age-appropriate expressions of the qualities on the right? If so, what implications does that have for "discipline?"
- What is the time frame to get to the second list?
- What keeps you from remembering the second list when faced with the things on the first list?
- What would help you remember it?

### Third list

- What do kids need to get from the first list to the second? (Who else needs these things? Parents!)
- [What kind of relationship do you have with your child now? Want with your child now? What kind of relationship do you want with your child as an adult?]

### Final process

- What did you learn from this activity?
- What might you do differently going forward?

*Designed  
Refer with  
to two 1.5L*

## Kid Power Demonstration

By Cheryl Forse, CPDT

Adapted from an activity by Jane Nelson and Lynn Lott

**Objective:** To understand the importance of sharing power with children to avoid power struggles and to develop feelings of competence and self-worth in children.

**Materials:** 8 markers, pencils or pens

### Directions:

1. Ask for a volunteer to play the child.
2. Hold out one of the markers to the child and say, "This marker represents your power. Do you want it?"
3. As the child starts to take it, pull it back and say, "I don't know. You're too little to do that."
4. Whatever the child says, start to give the marker again, this time saying, as you pull it back, "You might make a mess."
5. Continue 2 more times, saying:
  - a. "You're too slow and I'm in a hurry."
  - b. "I'm not ready for you to try."
6. After step 5, let the child have the marker for a moment, then take it back from him/her, saying, "Ok, that's enough for now."
7. Process with the child, "What were you thinking? What were you feeling? What decisions were you making about yourself? Your ability to handle things? About me, as your parent?"
8. Process with observers. What did they notice?
9. Ask the child if they are willing to trust you and try it again.
10. This time, offer the marker, and say:
  - a. "You can try that." – hand the volunteer the marker.
  - b. "If you make a mess, we can clean it up." – hand over another marker
  - c. "I can wait, I have time." – hand over another marker
  - d. "I love you no matter what." – hand over a fourth marker
11. Process again with the same questions as before. Was this time different? What did you think about us both having markers?
12. Ask all parents, "What did you learn from this activity?"

**Note:** Sometimes, during the second round, a person will not take all 4 markers. This gives an opportunity to ask about what that means to a child when they have enough power, and what it might mean when we try to make them take power before they are ready for it (ie: toilet training?)

## Do vs. Don't Activity

Adapted from an activity by Kelly Pfeiffer

**Objective:** Participants will experience what children feel when told "Don't" vs "Do."

**Materials Needed:** Chart paper, divided in half vertically, one side labeled "Round One," the other labeled "Round Two"; markers

### Directions:

1. Tell parents, "I am going to give you some directions."
2. Give the following commands:
  1. Please don't sit down.
  2. Don't put your hands by your sides.
  3. Don't close your mouth.
  4. Don't open your mouth.
  5. Don't look at me.
  6. Don't stand still.
  7. Please don't stand up.
  8. Thank you.
3. (Record responses on chart paper, divided in half vertically, with columns labeled, "Round One" and "Round Two"). Process by asking participants: "What did you notice? What were you thinking? What were you feeling? What were you deciding about yourself and your ability to understand and follow directions? What do you think the "adult" had decided about you?"
4. Tell parents, "That was round one. Now I have some more things I'd like you to do."
  1. Please stand up.
  2. Raise your right hand.
  3. Open your mouth.
  4. Close your mouth.
  5. Look at the person to your left.
  6. Clap your hands.
  7. Please sit down.
  8. Thank you.
5. (Record answers on chart paper, under section labeled "Round Two"). Process by asking participants, "What did you notice this time? What were you thinking? Feeling?" Also ask, "What were you deciding about yourself and the "adult" this time?"
6. Ask participants, "What did you learn from this activity?"

## **Do As I Say**

by Ruben Castaneda

**Objective:** To demonstrate to parents how most children pay more attention to what you do than to what you say.

**Directions:**

1. Don't tell people the objective. Let them figure it out for themselves.
2. Give the following instructions:  
  
    Sit up straight.  
    Place both hands on your knees.  
    Take a deep breath in and let it out. Keep your eyes open.  
    Make a circle with your index finger and thumb as if signing "okay." (Demonstrate)  
    Say "Place your circle on your chin" (while you place your circle on your cheek).
3. Notice how many people did what you did rather than what you said.  
    Ask the group to look around the room and see what they notice. (Usually they laugh when they see that some have their circle on the cheek.)  
    Ask, "How many of you heard what I said?" Some will tell you.  
    "How many of you did what I did instead of what I said?"
4. Ask what they learned from this activity. Ask: How does this relate to children who "don't listen?" (Be sure to tell about mirror neurons and that children are visual learners.) Point out that no one ever complains that children "don't watch."
5. If the point isn't made, ask "Which is more powerful, what we say or what we do?"