

Does Your Child Argue?

1. Establish rules for following directions (e.g., listen, do not argue, ask questions if you don't understand, follow the directions, etc.) These rules should be consistent and followed by everyone in the home. Talk about the rules often and reward your child for following the rules.



Cam's propensity
for arguing
was his least
attractive feature

2. Do not argue with your child.
3. Do not argue with others. If you do so, your child will learn to argue.
4. Treat your child with respect. Talk in an objective manner at all times.
5. Avoid confrontations with your child which may lead to arguing by giving options (e.g., say "You can either set the table or wash the dishes tonight. Which do you want to do?")
6. Develop a routine schedule of activities and chores for your child in order that he/she knows what to expect at all times.
7. Avoid arguing with your child by discussing in advance the reasons he/she must be home at a certain time, why he/she cannot go out on a school night, etc.
8. Have your child keep track of the number of times he/she does not argue when given a direction by placing a sticker, star, etc. on a sheet of paper.

9. Make certain your child understands his/her responsibilities and when to take care of them.
10. Carefully consider your child's age and experience before asking your child to do something that is too difficult and may result in arguing.
11. Along with a directive, provide an incentive statement (e.g., "When you finish the dishes you may watch TV" "You may play outside after you finish your homework.", etc.)
12. When your child argues in public, remove him/her from the situation until he/she can demonstrate self-control and refrain from arguing.
13. Do not give your child more than two or three steps to follow in one direction. Directions that involve several steps can be confusing and cause your child to argue.
14. Deliver directions in a supportive rather than a threatening manner (e.g., "Please take out the trash." Rather than "You better takes out the trash or else!")
15. Be consistent. Do not give in to your child's arguing one time and expect your child not to argue the next time.
16. Model appropriate ways to question someone's decision.
17. Let your child know that "questioning" should be done in private and not in public places.
18. Tape record your child to let him/her hear talking back, arguing, etc.
19. Make certain that your child does not get out of doing things or get his/her way simply because of being persistent in arguing.
20. Make certain your child gets attention from you and others, in the presence of others, etc. for behaving appropriately and not arguing. Include your child in conversations, activities, etc. when others are present in order to satisfy your child's need for attention.

Source: www.parentingaz.org

Extract from **Stephen B. McCarney, Ed.D and Angela M. Bauer, M.Ed** *The Parents Guide: Solutions to Today's Most Common Behavior Problems in the Home.*