

Let Go of Behavior Management; Teach it Instead

Written by Kelly Bartlett for Parenting From Scratch.

I thought I was being helpful. My child made a mistake, and I thought I was helping by delving into the ramifications behind the mistake. Why it occurred, why it shouldn't have occurred, what kind of behavior I expect next time. What I didn't realize was that the undertones of shame (*How could you do that?*), disappointment (*I'm really surprised at this*) and threat (*Don't ever do that again*) in my speech conveyed far more hurt and far less help than I intended.

I was so caught up in teaching a lesson that I forgot that what I really needed to teach was skills. My kids don't need a disappointment-laced lecture from me or a consequence that is just unpleasant enough to ensure they'll never behave that way again. What they do need is someone to help them learn the skills for solving problems and thinking through their decisions. They need a teacher.

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