

# WORDS FOR PARENTS NOT TO LIVE BY

The idea behind this pamphlet is rather simple. We need to 'watch our language' when we interact with children. **When we stop saying these words we have to find some other way to handle difficulties** when they arise. If we stop using these words, then we soon recognize that spanking is really violence. **When we stop using these words**, we recognize that we, as parents, need to control our behavior if we want our children to control theirs. **When we stop saying these words**, we recognize that we have to take responsibility for our behavior and not rely on what we perceive as social expectations to tell us what to do.

What are WORDS **NOT TO LIVE BY**? What are the words we should try to get along without? Well, here's my list. The list is distilled from the over 100 phrases and words my Understanding Violence and Violence in the World of Children classes have mentioned over the years when they were asked to list words or phrases they have heard or used themselves when parents hit children.

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**I. DON'T SAY WORDS to redefine what your doing. It's violence: NEVER SAY IT'S:**

- Spanking
- Discipline
- Corporal Punishment
- Modifying Behavior
- Negative Reinforcement

**II. Don't deny harm you're trying to do to the child. NEVER SAY:**

- It hurts me more than it does you
- It's Tough Love
- I'm doing it because I love you
- It's an attitude adjustment

**III. Don't disguise the purpose of what you're doing. These may be long-term goals, but the purpose of hitting is to inflict pain. So NEVER SAY "hitting will:**

- Help you straighten up
- Build Character
- Teach you right from wrong
- Get your attention

**IV. Don't accept social wisdom. Take responsibility for your behavior. Don't blame society's clichés. NEVER SAY:**

- Spare the rod, spoil the child
- It's for your own good
- It's the parent's job to do this

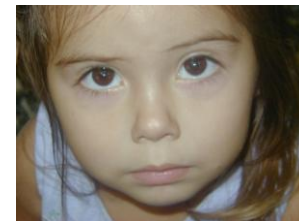
**V. Don't blame your child for YOUR behavior. NEVER SAY.**

- You had it coming
- You brought it on yourself
- You know better
- You made me do this
- You asked for it

**If you don't say these words WHAT WILL HAPPEN?**

As you start paying attention to these words and stop saying them you will probably become confused. You will start asking yourself: "**If I can't say those words, then what am I supposed to do?**" Well. "Substitute words that lead you to try to cause love, not pain!"

**If you never say the WORDS NOT TO LIVE BY** to support hitting your children as the quick, easy solution to an immediate problem, **you will become more creative** in your solutions and **you will be empowered** to find your personal non-violent solutions. **Nothing could be better than this.**



**It's NEVER ok to HIT A CHILD**

# WORDS FOR PARENTS TO LIVE BY

*(These are words to help your children live too!!)*

## ***I. SAY WORDS that help parents engage the world of the child:***

- What's going on? (Need to LISTEN and HEAR the answers)!
- I know you feel angry about...Let's figure out what to do together!
- What does my child's behavior mean to them? (Not to me)

## ***II. SAY WORDS that prevent making mole hills into mountains)***

- How do my child's present actions fit into their long-term development?
- Let's do this (growing up) step by step?

## ***III. SAY WORDS that empowering the children and encourages and promote self-discipline:***

- What do you think we should do about this?
- What do you think we should do to get ready to go?

## ***IV. SAY WORDS that recognize who has the problem so you can take ownership of your behavior).***

- Who is the behavior of the child bothering?
- Am I going to hit my child to make myself feel better? Am I acting "like a parent"?

## ***V. SAY WORDS that help you recognize what you're doing:***

- Do I really want to inflict pain on my child?
- What does this feel like to the child?

## ***VI. SAY WORDS that break the stereotypical response of hitting***

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- Why am I still hitting?
- What does this situation call for? Each situation is different; I've got to analyze!

Saying, thinking and acting on these words may take more thought and work than immediately hitting your child, but they should help make the world safer and more productive for you and your children. Can you find words to describe something better?



**It's ALWAYS ok to HELP A CHILD GROW WITH LOVE!!!**