

Counselor's Corner

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What Kind of Adult Do You Hope Your Child Will Become?

If you think about that question for a minute, it's easy to focus on what you don't want your child to become. As parents we tend to worry about the many things that could go wrong. Instead, give some time to thinking good thoughts about what you'd like to see someday when your child is grown and living on his/her own. Most parents would say they want their kids to grow up to be competent, responsible, caring adults. How will your children get to that point? The answer is . . . only when the adults in a child's life learn how to say no, set limits, and hold them accountable for their actions.

It's human nature for us to want our children to be happy, smiling and cheerful. But, think about this, if our children never get mad at us, or get frustrated, or become disappointed when something doesn't go their way, it might be a sign that we aren't doing our job as parents. In order to do our job as parents, there are going to be times that we won't be "liked" by our children. Being a parent is very different than being our child's friend. How will our children learn to deal with frustration and disappointment if they never have any practice? How will they learn that life doesn't always give us what we would like most? How will they learn self-discipline if we don't teach them? It is a parent's job to teach these important lessons by saying no – no to the fun activities when homework still needs to be completed, no to the video games after they have been disrespectful to someone in the family, no to that new item they are asking for because it is not age appropriate.

If you don't say no, then who will? And if you don't do it now, then when will you? It's up to you to do the right thing. By saying no, you are actually saying yes to all the positive qualities you want to see in your child as an adult.

**thoughts and excerpts summarized from "No, Why Kids – of All Ages – Need to Hear It and Ways Parents Can Say It" by David Walsh.*