

# Come To Order®

...simplifying lives one space at a time

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## Strategies to Neutralize Arguments with your Kids

By Kathy Jenkins, CPO®, CFMC®

Kids seem to be extremely adept at luring their parents into no-win arguments. They are determined and persistent when it comes to things they want (or don't want) to have or buy or do. And the more they carry on and push to get their way, the more we as adults feel like we have to dig in our heels and take a stand. We are the parents after all!

Well, as you're surely aware, arguing leads to more arguing which leads to more arguing, and before you know it, you're in a full blown yelling match, complete with ultimatums, tears, tantrums, and hurt feelings.

There's a better solution, an approach that can help defuse the frustration and anger, and maybe, just maybe, leave your kids speechless!

Ok, maybe that's too much to ask for, but with a few simple strategies, you can turn a potential argument into a civilized conversation that will result in calm, not chaos.

1. **First and foremost, stop!** Before you lose control of your emotions, stop yourself from talking. If you aren't talking then you can't be yelling, threatening or losing control!
2. **Now, breathe & tell yourself and your child "no problem".** Take a deep breath! Then neutralize the anger you might be feeling by saying "no problem" out loud. It is the trigger to yourself that there is no need to allow this to escalate. It is also the trigger to your child that they have pushed too far and that there will be consequences for their poor decision.
3. **Give yourself permission to decide on a consequence later.** So many parenting philosophies today suggest that a consequence or punishment must come immediately after the infraction – as if our children are not smart enough to link the two if time passes. Charles Fay of the Love & Logic Institute suggests that this is simply not true.
4. **Go dumb until you can think clearly of the appropriate consequence.** I recommend this Love and Logic phrase, "I care about you too much to argue with you." Even if your child continues to push buttons ("you don't love me", "my friends don't have to do that", "that is unfair") you simply restate what you are willing to do... "I love you too much to argue with you". When you kid sees that their strategy isn't work they will eventually give up.

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*This strategy helps you keep (or regain) your composure and accept that you cannot control what others do. You can only control your own actions. Your child may continue to argue, cry, yell, and throw a fit, but by walking away to keep your cool, you've modeled a healthy way to handle conflict..*

## **About the Author**

As a Certified Professional Organizer and Certified Family Manager coach, Kathy Jenkins can help you run a more organized, efficient, and happy household and raise happy, healthy, responsible, and well-mannered children! Visit <http://www.cometoorderva.com> to learn more about her professional organizing services and one-on-one family manager coaching sessions. You can also follow her tips, advice, and recommendations by liking Come To Order on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/cometoorder>

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