



AVOIDING POWER STRUGGLES WITH KIDS

Positive Peaceful Discipline

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OUTCOMES FOR THIS SESSION

Upon completion of this presentation you will..

- ⦿ Know how and why power struggles occur.
- ⦿ Have knowledge of behavior management strategies that do not support power struggles.
- ⦿ Have knowledge of strategies for negotiating and/or diffusing power struggles.

CONSISTENCY AND PREDICTABILITY

- Children need to experience the consistency and predictability of adult responses to their actions early in the relationship with that adult whether it be a parent or a teacher.



POWER STRUGGLES CAN OCCUR FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS

- ◉ Uncertainty of what is expected
- ◉ Emotional needs unmet
- ◉ Physical needs unmet
- ◉ Boundary needs unmet
- ◉ Adults are rushed or tired
- ◉ Timelines/deadlines must be met



COOPERATION VS. CONTROL

- ◉ An act or instance of working or acting together for a common purpose or benefit.
- ◉ To exercise restraint or direction over; dominate; command.



COOPERATION HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH FORCE

Can't...

- *Force a child to comply.
- *Control a child's internal cues.

Can...

- *Win a child's cooperation.
- *Control the child's environment.



COERCIVE POWER

- Coercive power ...
 - judges situation or children as bad.
 - manipulates by use of guilt, threats, punishment, intimidation, humiliation.
 - motivates through fear and allows children to look for outside sources to blame for mistakes.



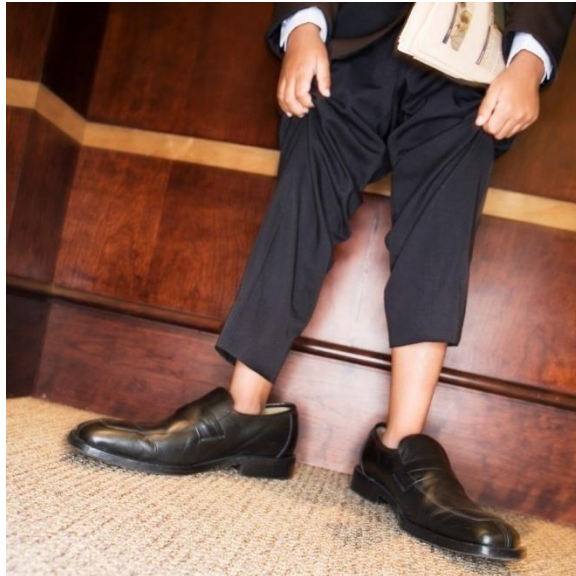
AUTHENTIC POWER

- ⦿ Authentic power ...
 - does not judge situation or child as bad.
 - works to solve problems in ways that unite and bond.
 - builds positive self-concepts and make sure everyone wins.



NORMAL FOR KIDS TO WANT CONTROL

◉ Expectations = Abilities



◉ Guidance



KIDS NEED OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE DECISIONS

- Offer choices



- Meal options

- Dressing for school

- Planning a schedule

- Chore options

A screenshot of a digital worksheet titled "LUNCH CHOICE" for Monday. The worksheet is designed for a classroom and includes a list of student names on the left side. The names are: Thomas, Cristian, Kenzie, Jordan, Aspyr, Karlie, Hunter, Christopher, Qualen, Gracie, Tianna, Bella, Carson, Jordan H., Shelby, Lily, Adam, Santi, Leena, Arianna, and Aidan. The main part of the worksheet is a table with three columns. The first column is labeled "1" and "surf & turf basket" with a small image of a basket of food. The second column is labeled "2" and "pork roast" with a small image of a pork roast. The third column is labeled "lunch box" with a small image of a lunch box. Each column has a large empty box below the header for students to write their choices. The worksheet is displayed in a window titled "Lunch Choices 2012-2013".

ADULTS CAN...

- ◉ control the environment.
- ◉ alter situations.
- ◉ provide appropriate incentives and allow natural consequences.



POWER STRUGGLES RESULT FROM UNMET NEEDS

- To reduce the occurrence of power struggles be sure your interactions with children allow them to:
 - Feel supported
 - Feel they're progressing towards goals
 - Feel comfortable sharing concerns
 - Have choices



ARGUING - PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

- ◉ Winning arguments with young children is easy but the task becomes harder as they get older. Don't practice this skill!



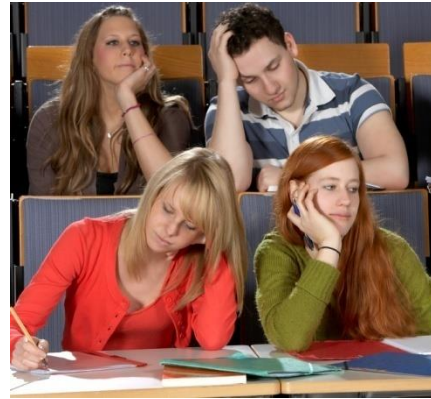
EMPHASIZE COOPERATION RATHER THAN CONTROL

- ◉ State expectations clearly and firmly.
- ◉ Tell child what you want them to do, when they should do it and what the consequences of doing it will be as well as of not doing it.
- ◉ Express appreciation for their cooperation.
- ◉ Walk away calmly with the expectation that it will be done.



WHEN THE CHILD ASKS WHY...

- 10 seconds rule
- Ask them to explain their perspective.
- Listen and don't interrupt.
- "I understand. Is there anything else you want to say?"



- "I understand. I'd don't agree."
Restate expectations and walk away.

STATE EXPECTATIONS CLEARLY

“I want you to complete your reading assignment and then you can take a five minute break.”



AVOIDING CONFLICT

- ❖ Make a specific request.

*“I want you to....”

Do not use “I need....”

- ❖ Be certain child understands the request.
- ❖ Turn and walk away with the expectation that it will be done.



STRATEGY: DISTRACTION (REDIRECTION) FOR YOUNGSTERS

Draw attention to another interest...

- ⦿ “I want to play outside!”
- ⦿ Parent/teacher walks to the other room near TV and calls back, “Hey Susy, your favorite show is on...let’s watch it together.”



DISTRACTION (REDIRECTION)

- ◉ Student - “I don’t want to do math now!”
(screaming, running around the room)
- ◉ Teacher - “John, I have your favorite book in the listening center. Come on over and I’ll turn on the tape for you.”



PREPARE FOR WHAT'S COMING..

- ⦿ Talk about expectations before you arrive at a destination or begin an activity
- ⦿ Have the child repeat for understanding
- ⦿ Remind what both the positive and negative consequences will be
- ⦿ Thank him/her in advance for cooperating.



STRATEGY - SETTING LIMITS FOR TEENS

- ◉ Each child is unique.
- ◉ Let the child be part of the discussion about expectations and consequences.
- ◉ Use Visuals/schedules/calendars.
- ◉ Offer options/choices.
- ◉ Reinforce (Reward).
- ◉ Pick your battles.
- ◉ “Don’t push your luck.”

-Susan Carney, School Counselor



DEFIANCE - WHAT TO DO WHEN IT REARS ITS UGLY HEAD

- ⦿ Think first, respond second.
- ⦿ Determine emotional state.
- ⦿ Remove your emotion.
- ⦿ Have discussions about the consequences for defiance BEFORE those situations happen.
- ⦿ “You have a choice and you know there are consequences.”

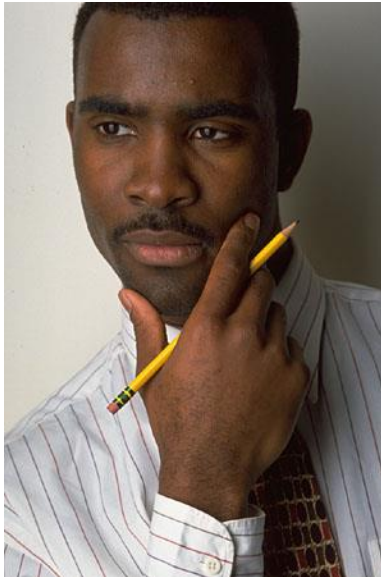


10 KEYS TO MANAGING POWER STRUGGLES



KEY # 1

- ◉ Think in advance about behavior expectations.



KEY #2

- ⦿ Talk to children about those expectations in advance.



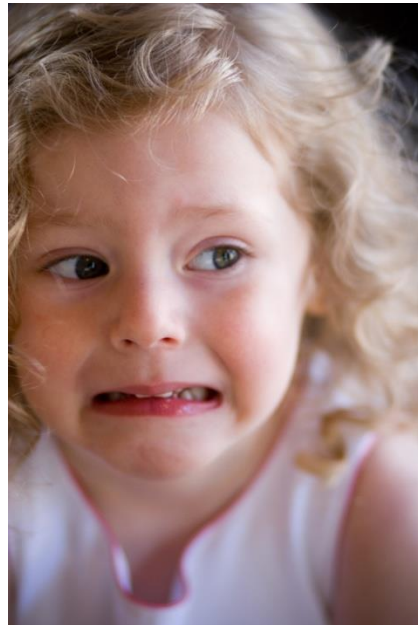
KEY #3

- Maintain adult control while allowing the child to make appropriate choices of their own.
 - Remain calm.
 - Show no visible signs of anger or upset.
 - Do not intimidate.



KEY #4

- Recognize emotional state early so that you can intervene.



KEY #5

- Avoid being “hooked”.



KEY #6

- If possible, move to a private rather than public place.



KEY #7

- Validate feelings and concerns.



KEY #8

- ◉ Calmly acknowledge power struggle and ask how this can end up as a win-win for everyone.



KEY #9

- ◉ Acknowledge child is in control of his/her behavioral choices.
- ◉ Frame your response so that they understand that they are free to comply or not but that there are two consequences- one negative and one positive.



KEY #10

- Don't dwell on the behavior; put your emotional energy into constructive matters.

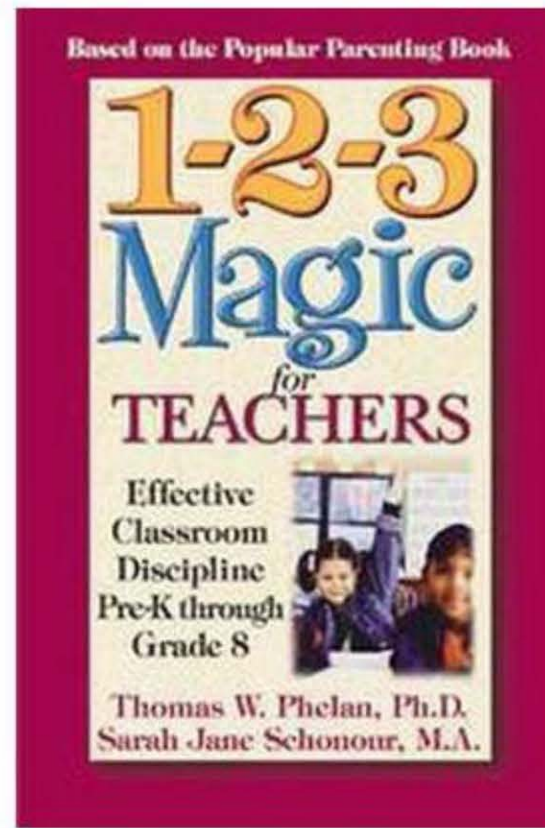
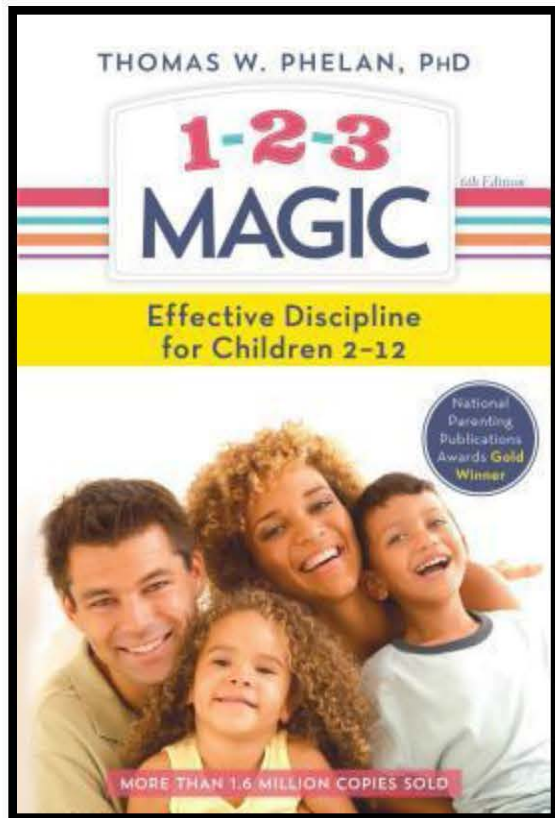


CONFLICT REQUIRES TWO PEOPLE

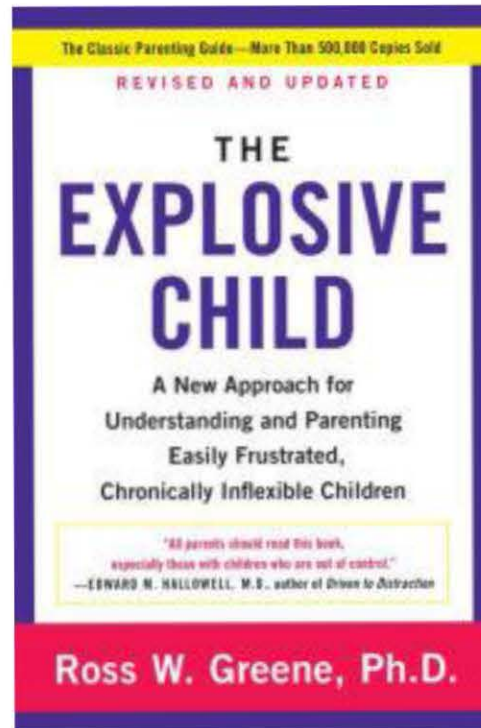
- ◉ Don't choose to be a part of it.
- ◉ Remember that the child's misbehavior is a means of communicating a need.
- ◉ Once the conflict has been resolved and time has passed for everyone to calm down, talk about why it happened and how it can be avoided the next time.
- ◉ Once it's over, it's over.



RESOURCES



RESOURCES





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