

## PEDAGOGICAL INPUT

# *for the adventure of family life*



## 29\_The childish frustration of a "no"

When children discover their own will, they have many wishes and ask for them to be fulfilled. When the adult says no, every sane child begins to fight for their wishes, and that varies greatly by temperament. Some cry softly and some throw themselves on the ground and roar like crazy. This fight is important and healthy. The clearer and more relaxed, not sweetly, the adults stick to their no, the faster the child will calm down again. Long explanations often unnecessarily prolong the situation.

### **How should one behave towards the child's reaction to a no?**

You have to take it seriously. Under no circumstances should it be ridiculed or criticized. The children need this reaction to regain their balance. Only if one gets the time to say goodbye to the wish can one calm down afterwards.

Important: Don't put the child down for wanting something and fighting according to its temperament. Otherwise, it gets the feeling that it is wrong to wish for something. Don't criticize it for screaming. The more you intervene in the process, the more you prolong the situation. If you can't stand the shouting, go to another room and do other things. The child simply needs time to say goodbye to his or her wish.

### **Frequent sequence of events in a conflict**

The child has a big wish, e.g. it wants to watch TV, eat an ice cream, get a new toy. At that moment, you should think twice about answering yes or no.

If you have the feeling that it is only a half-hearted no and the child only has to beg or scream long enough for the no to become a yes, it is better to say yes right from the start with a clear conscience and be happy with your child. If you are not sure, you can also say: "I'll have to think it over first." In this way you are giving yourself time and aren't deciding under pressure.

### **Now, if you've decided to say no, there's bound to be a fight!**

Most parents are afraid of that and for this reason say yes at some point so the child doesn't start screaming again. Depending on the child's temperament, this fight will be more or less dramatic. It is a good sign if your child can stand up for something that is important to him. It will always be needed in life. Remain calm and clear with your no!

After the first strong reaction, the child often withdraws - into a corner, under the table or into a room and wants to be left alone. Don't make the mistake of trying to lure the child out again as quickly as possible. The child needs time to say goodbye to his or her wish. It goes through a period of mourning.

Brain research has shown the child learns a lot during this phase: The brain learns frustration tolerance! Hormones are released in the brain and allow the frontal lobe to mature, the child becomes more empathetic. Then, in a wondrous way, peace often returns. The child engages in a game alone, reads, and then emerges from hiding and is surprisingly stable.

### **It is often the adults who start the power struggle.**

If you know that children's reactions are completely normal and it is important to take them seriously, you can also relax when such a conflict situation arises. The child is not wrong or spoiled. It is the natural development process. It is also important not to take the child's screaming personally. The child does not want to engage in a power struggle. That's not in his nature. Adults start the power struggle when they don't give the child the space to deal with its frustration and want to stop its behaviour. That never works. The more often the child experiences that adults remain calm when it fights and that its wishes are taken seriously, the shorter the fights will become.

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