



WHY IT DOESN'T WORK TO MAKE KIDS SAY THEY'RE SORRY

It happens every day. Our child hurts another child by snatching a toy, hitting, shoving, or calling names, and we step in and say, "Tell him you're sorry." We ask children to apologize because we want them to learn important lessons, to be socially appropriate, to be accountable for their actions, to show respect, to get along, to have and keep friends. We also experience pressure from other parents who expect us to make our kids say, "I'm sorry." It's the response we've seen modeled most often.

"I'm sorry" can also come from our sense of discomfort and embarrassment at what our children have done. We want to hurry on to the completion of the painful episode, and in our mind, we hope "I'm sorry" ends it. But does it?

We often ask kids to say they're sorry before the children figure out what actually happened. Two-

year old Jody hits her friend Amy, and Amy starts to cry. Jody is surprised and upset by Amy's tears, but has no idea that Amy was hurt or that she had anything to do with that hurt. Because Jody doesn't understand this basic progression of events, she has no basis on which to feel sorry. Making her say, "I'm sorry" doesn't give her any useful information about what happened.

It's more useful to bring Amy and Jody together and to go over the situation with them: "You were playing together and you hit Amy and now Amy is crying. Let's find out what you were trying to tell Amy and see if we can do something to help her feel better."

When you insist on "I'm sorry," you may actually interfere with a real resolution of the problem and keep children from figuring out their own compassionate response.

Children who are given the opportunity to participate in helping the other child feel better often do amazing things: bring their blanket (or the other child's), get ice, or volunteer a hug. When children aren't pressured into making a pat response, they watch intently, learn about the child's hurt, and if given the opportunity, in their own time, find ways to express their caring and concern.

While apologizing can sometimes help a child get out of a situation, kids don't learn compassion by saying "I'm sorry." They do, however, learn sequencing fairly readily, and can learn that saying "I'm sorry" goes with certain actions. They can kick another child, say "Sorry," and go on to another activity. This may mislead kids into thinking the interaction is done, that saying the words "I'm sorry" resolves the situation.

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DID YOU KNOW?

As a student registered at North Seattle Community College, co-op parents have access to a range of student benefits, including:

- Student discounts
- NSCC email and computer lab access
- Campus services including counseling
- Check out materials from the library
- Wellness Center access (small fee)

Details at www.tinyurl.com/9hr8voy

DONATE USED CHILDREN'S BOOKS

PAC will be holding a book sale at the free parent seminar on November 8 to raise funds for PAC scholarships. Bring donations of gently used kids' books to the lecture, or drop them off with your class's PAC rep by November 4.

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Calendar

October

8 PAC Meeting

November

3 Parent Coordinator Training

5 PAC Meeting

8 Free Seminar: Are You and Your Child Ready for Kindergarten?

22 Thanksgiving Day (No School 22nd or 23rd)

December

7 PAC Scholarship Deadline

10 PAC Meeting

CO-OP Openings!

Infants

North Seattle (Tue & Wed)

Toddlers

Broadview

Cedar Park

Northeast

Northgate (Sat)

Olympic

Pre 3's

Broadview

Latona

Meadowbrook

Northwest

Sandhurst

University-Ravenna

Victory Heights

Wedgwood

3-5's

Broadview

Crown Hill

Latona

Meadowbrook

University-Ravenna

Victory Heights

Multi-Age & 5's

Meadowbrook 5's

Northgate 2-5's

Help spread the word about our NSCC Co-ops!

Separation Survival Tips *By Cesily M. Crowser, Parent Education Instructor*

We have all been there. Those tearful and clingy “good byes” that tear at your heart and make you want to pick up your child and never let them go. The truth is that children need to learn how to separate from you. For some it comes easy. For some it is hard to let go of the comfort and security of mom or dad. Some seem to be doing just great and then out of nowhere parting becomes difficult. The reasons for this are as varied as there are people. Sometimes it is developmental, sometimes it is temperament, and yes sometimes it is even that you the parent are having a hard time and they sense that. Whatever the reason the 6 tips below should help things go a little smoother.

1. **Prepare your child for the changes ahead.** Make sure your child knows what to expect. Talk with them about school (what is the teacher’s name, what will they be doing, are any of the old friends going to be there, etc.) This is also the time when you start to prepare them for the fact they you will be leaving.
2. **Create a “Good-bye” ritual.** Decide, with your child, how you will be saying goodbye – and stick with it. Will it be one kiss, one hug and a high-five? My son and I did one kiss, one BIG squeeze and an extra kiss for each of our pockets. Then I left. Knowing that we had this ritual and needed to be consistent with it was helpful on those days when one or both of us wanted to delay.
3. **Give your child something from home to keep at school.** A family picture is great. It is a wonderful conversation starter for the teacher and others in the class who are trying to comfort your child. Some parents even get a second of their child’s favorite snuggle object to keep in their cubby.
4. **Tell them when you will be back.** “I am going to do errands now, but I will be back to get you after the goodbye circle.” Make sure you put it in terms your child can relate to. For many young children telling them you will be back at 12:00 or in a few hours does not make much sense, the concept of time is too abstract. Instead put in terms of which part of their daily routine you will arrive – then be on time. Little minds will remember waiting, if you are late, and will be less relaxed the next time you leave and promise to return.
5. **Arrange a carpool with a classmate.** This can be a miracle cure. Arrange to have your child picked up by a friend and the “good bye” takes place in a familiar surrounding. They get excited about riding with someone they know and school is now no longer a part of the separation equation.
6. **Remember to have patience.** Find the tips that work for you, remain consistent and trust that in time things will work themselves out.

Contact Us

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However, it's the feelings behind the words and the child's ability to alter his behavior that we're really interested in.

Ultimately, we make rules about conduct because we want our children to be compassionate, and we're not sure that compassion evolves naturally. But with support, it does. By bringing children together to talk and listen to each other, and by modeling respect for people's feelings, we give them the message that we eventually expect them to be able to care about other people. In doing so, we assist them in becoming responsive, empathetic people.

Excerpted from *Becoming the Parent You Want to Be, A Sourcebook of Strategies for the First Five Years*

By Laura Davis and Janis Keyser
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Thursday, November 8, 2012, 7-9pm
Faith Lutheran Church
8208 18th Ave. NE, Seattle

Are you and your child

Ready for Kindergarten?

Do you have questions regarding your child's readiness for kindergarten?

- **How do I know if my child is ready?**
- **What do teachers expect of my child?**
- **How can I better prepare my kids to thrive in their new school?**

Come ask your questions to our panel of experienced teachers and parents.

The Panel

- ✧ **Andrea Baumgarten** – Parent Educator in the Child and Family division of the North Seattle Community College and parent of school aged children
- ✧ **Sarah Bailey** – Teacher for the Meadowbrook Fives Cooperative Preschool
- ✧ **Jen Anderson** – Seattle Public Schools Kindergarten Teacher from Laurelhurst Elementary School
- ✧ **Susan Sasnett** – Kindergarten teacher at KapKa Cooperative School, Kindergarten – 3rd grade

This event is free and open to the public.

<http://coops.northseattle.edu/>