

THEY'LL LOVE YOU FOR HOLDING THEM ACCOUNTABLE

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Your life and that of your kids can be better if you hold your children accountable for their misdeeds. Many parents want to do this, but hold back out of fear their kids will see them as being mean. Love and Logic[®] offers the secret to holding kids accountable and actually leaving children liking their parents better. You can ease into this with the “**E**’s” of Love and Logic.

The art of becoming a Love and Logic parent is to tap into the two ways children learn best. The first is by copying and modeling after their parents. Here we see the first “**E**” of Love and Logic — **example**. Kids learn more from what they are shown than what they are told.

The next way we learn is through **experience**, the second “**E**” of Love and Logic. Our mistakes become our best teachers. Unfortunately many parents, in the heat of the moment, close their children’s minds to learning through experience by resorting to anger, threats, and lectures. This switches the child’s mind into the “fight or flight” mode of operation.

You can open your child’s mind to learning from experience by using the third “**E**” of Love and Logic — **empathy**. This is the secret to causing your youngster to like you better after you have had to discipline. A heavy dose of empathy before holding children accountable will go a long way to helping them learn from their misdeeds. And it will do wonders for your relationships with them.

Let’s say Junior wrecks the family car. When you learn about the accident, you experience a wide range of emotions: Worry for the child’s safety, anger over his irresponsibility, relief that he’s OK, and stress over the cost of repairs.

During the heat of the moment, parents traditionally respond in ways that actually encourage more irresponsible behavior. Some parents get angry, lecture, and threaten. Some parents rush to the rescue and blame others. Allowing kids to misbehave without logical consequences creates irresponsible children who make bigger and bigger mistakes as they grow older. These kids aren’t much fun to be around.

Love and Logic parents approach a situation such as the wrecked car with a belief that mistakes are great practice for the real world. In the real world of adults, no one will be around to lecture Junior about his irresponsibility. However, there will be responsibilities for the cost of repair and the inconvenience of the loss of transportation.

This is the point at which the Love and Logic parent opens their child’s mind and heart to learn from the consequences. They provide a heavy dose of **empathy** to match the **consequence**.

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“Oh, son, we’re so glad you weren’t hurt. We bet you feel just awful about this. But not to worry, you’ll be driving again some day, just as soon as you get the damage paid for. Now give us a hug.”

Notice the child in this situation is going to have a difficult time seeing his parents as being mean. Junior doesn’t get a chance to be defensive. He can feel his parent’s love. The “bad guy” is his bad decision. His parents are the “good guys.” His mind is now open to learn from his mistakes.

Look for an opportunity to experiment with this Love and Logic technique. You’ll be amazed at the power of this approach.

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