

Cut It Out! – What We Do

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If your answer to your kids questions, “Why should I?” is “Because I said so!” you might want to Cut It Out!

We teach our children values through our style of parenting. Considering our child’s feelings, sharing our own feelings and reflecting on the feelings of others raises our children to a higher level of moral development. It teaches them why the rules are there – to spell out what it means in practice to “treat other people the way you would like them to treat you” (the Golden Rule).

A valuable exercise is to trace your limits back to the Golden Rule. This is a good reality check to make sure you are being reasonable; if you can’t relate the limit to the Golden Rule, rethink its importance. It may be a silly rule that really doesn’t matter.

What We Do is a way to explain: **what** behaviour is required, why **we**, our family, does this, and that we all need to **do** unto others as we would have them do unto us. It describes the limit in terms of the needs of others and supports one of the most important lessons of childhood: *respect for others*. **Try your own example below:**

	Parent Dialogue	Child’s Response
What (request)	Please take out the garbage.	Why?
We (family value)	Because we have agreed that everyone in the family will help with chores and that everyone will get a different chore each week to keep it fair.	Why?
Do (relate limit to the Golden Rule)	Because everyone in this family matters equally, and we must all learn to help each other. It wouldn’t be fair if some people did all the work and others did none. So we help each other out. That is just <i>what we do</i>.	That stinks!