

Character Lesson - Respect

When we've had a little too much "together time," and nerves get a bit frayed, it becomes even more important to treat each other respectfully. Kind voices and polite behaviors should be basic expectations of family life, regardless of the situation (this applies to kids and parents).

Questions To Discuss:

-When is it hard to keep your tone of voice kind? What can you do to help keep your voice under control? Parents, ask your kids about belly breathing, counting to 10, squeezing arms and legs, and other strategies they learn in Character Coaching.

-What have you done in the past week to show your family members respect? Have you done anything that was disrespectful? If so, take time now to apologize, remembering that a good apology includes the name of the person you are apologizing to, the specific action/behavior you are apologizing for, and how things will go differently in the future.

-Students, sometimes siblings annoy or pester one another on purpose when they get bored. What can you do to stay respectful toward your family when you get bored? Brainstorm a list of things you can do to help out or make someone feel good.

Activity - Helper of The Day

Let all family members take turns being the "helper of the day." The helper looks for ways to serve the family throughout the day. This includes things like helping with meals (older kids can make meals for the family), helping a sibling with a chore or with school work, avoiding squabbles with siblings, following directions the first time mom or dad asks, helping keep everyone quiet while parents are working, etc. Your family can brainstorm a list of things the helper can do based on your own needs. At the end of the day, the helper gets to pick what's for dinner and a game for the family to play or a movie to watch together. Being the helper should be treated as an honor, not a punishment. Make it fun! Other family members do not get to "make work" for the helper, or take advantage of that family member. The helper gets to look for ways to contribute to the family rather than being told what to do, and can choose how to help.

Game - On The Level

Have the family gather around a hula hoop (if you don't have a hula hoop, use a large inflated pool float, a long pool noodle, or a broom). Have each family member support the hoop by balancing it on two fingers facing upward under the hoop. Do not hold the hoop! The hoop needs to stay level, so you will need to accommodate the shortest member of your family and adults may need to bend down or play on their knees. Keeping only two fingers under the hoop, and keeping the hoop level, lower it to the floor. When your fingers are on the floor, pull them out at the same time so the whole hoop touches the floor at the same time.

Discuss: What was hard about the game? Did you get frustrated with other players? How did you express your frustration in a respectful way? In what ways does your family communicate well with each other and where is there room for improvement? If you didn't stay respectful, what could you have done differently? Play again using your strategies to stay respectful.