



## Parenting Tips

### The Most Common Parenting Question

The question we're probably asked the most often in our parenting seminars and radio interviews is, "*What do I do when my kids act out in the grocery store?*" We all have stories from our own families and we've observed other children throw tantrums, run away,

whine, complain, or disobey in the store. We may write a booklet someday called, "How to Parent in Public." Then we could all carry around these booklets and hand them out to frustrated parents in public places.

At least part of the answer is that you don't practice your discipline strategies in the grocery store. That's the final exam! You practice in the kitchen, bedroom, laundry room, and backyard. Children need to learn how to handle disappointment at home so they can accept a no answer in the check out line.

Our kids need to learn to come when they're called so that they'll respond in public. Children who haven't learned how to accept correction at home without a bad attitude will miserably fail the test when they have an audience.

Look for ways to reproduce the grocery store situations at home, at the park, and in other places so that children can learn positive routines to use in public. Talk about how to act at the bank, the library, and the store. Teach your children the "No Touch Rule" and the "Don't be Wild Rule" and practice them often.

It won't be long before you'll be able to take your young children into the Hallmark store with all those dangerously beautiful things waiting to be broken. If you've practiced, then your kids will do fine and people will say, "*Oh what nice children you have.*" Of course those people don't realize how much work you've done to help your kids develop the character to handle these temptations.

Then the grocery store will be easier. That doesn't mean you won't ever have a problem. In those times you have to do the best you can, get what you need, and get out of there, but the difficult times will be far fewer than the successful ones when you take time to practice at home.

*This parenting tip is from the book [Home Improvement: The Parenting Book You Can Read to Your Kids](#) by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN.*