



Parenting Tips

Where a Bad Attitude Comes From

Sometimes children obey but they do it with a bad attitude. Honor is the solution. It's important to teach children what honor looks like in very practical terms. One mom defined attitude as "the heart of how you do something." Obedience is revealed in actions.

Honor is revealed in the attitude that goes along with those actions.

Often a bad attitude comes from an angry heart. Imagine an onion with various layers. As you peel off one layer you see another and another until you get to the center of the onion. Anger is like that. The most obvious signs of anger are physical violence. Hitting, slamming, kicking, and biting are all ways that anger is demonstrated.

As children learn to control their physical reactions, they peel off that layer revealing the next one: hurtful words through sarcasm, teasing, and cynical remarks. These less physical but deadly weapons are another symptom of anger.

Layer after layer of angry responses can be removed until you come to a very significant one: the bad attitude. Children don't want to go to bed, clean up their rooms, leave the computer, or get on their shoes. You're interrupting their lives by giving an instruction or by correcting or by saying no. Thus you get anger revealed in a bad attitude.

By recognizing this you will take the first important step toward change—you'll see the problem. You won't be content to get a job done with a bad attitude because now you'll see the importance of addressing the attitude as well as the behavior. You might say to your son, "Wait a minute. Your attitude here is a problem. I'd like you to sit down for a bit and settle down and then let's look for a better way to respond. When you're ready to try a different response then we'll continue."

Explain to your children the value of a good attitude and the danger of a negative attitude on the job or at school. A good attitude is important and your interaction at home is a great place to start working on it.

For more ideas on teaching honor in your family, you'll want to consider the book, [Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes, In You and Your Kids](#) by Dr Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller RN, BSN.