

FRC Winter News



New Year's Resolution: No More Yelling (from zerotothree.org)

By Rebecca Parlakian and Sarah S. MacLaughlin

About 40% of parents told us they wished they could do a better job of not yelling or raising their voice so quickly with their children.

“Even if I yell, my kids don’t listen.” “The only way my kids listen is if I yell.” Either way, it’s no fun. If you’re looking for a better way to be heard this year, you are not alone. [Our national parent survey, *Tuning In*](#), found that almost 60% of parents said they struggle with figuring out the most effective way to discipline. And about 40% of parents told us they wished they could do a better job of not yelling or raising their voice so quickly with their children. The truth is that many of us yell, even though we know it’s not the best way to shape our children’s behavior.

What to do in the moment when you’re about to lose it?

Many of us go from “0 to 60” with our kids way too fast. And as much as we want them to change, the only behavior we can truly control is our *own*. First, make the decision to stop yelling and commit to it. Write it down or post it on your refrigerator; anything that will help you remember your commitment. Then, make a plan to help you follow through, because behavior change is hard and only you know what will help. Maybe it will take some experimenting—for some it’s a [mindfulness](#) practice, meditation, or yoga. Opening up to friends who know what it’s like to raise little ones, or trading childcare so you can get a break, can also really help.

When your toddler is losing it and you feel like you might too, try one of these approaches:

- 1. Double-check that your expectations are reasonable.** Our *Tuning In* survey found that parents of young children have an “[expectation gap](#)” that leads them to thinking that toddlers have more self-regulation than is actually possible at age 2. Remember that toddlers still need a LOT of help with sharing, calming down, and expressing their feelings appropriately. Trust that they will get there and do your best to model the behavior you want to see.
- 2. Be specific.** Keep instructions specific and clear: “You have two more minutes to play. I will set the timer on my phone.” Try, “Put the blocks in the basket” instead of, “time to clean up.”
- 3. Tell children what they *can* do, not just what they *can’t*.** *You can walk or hop inside* (instead of “no running”). *You can choose what you want to eat on your plate* (instead of “no more snacks”).
- 4. Make eye contact and use loving touch.** Kneel down to your child’s level. Make eye contact and gently touch their shoulder or arm to get their attention. Then say: *We are leaving the park now. Please hop into your stroller.*

5. Offer choices. When toddlers are upset, choices can sometimes be calming. But be sure to offer choices that still work for you as a parent. If your toddler wants to wear a sundress in January, you might (calmly) say: *You have choices about what to wear. You can choose the long-sleeve dinosaur shirt or the long-sleeve striped shirt.* Or you can look for a compromise: *You can wear a long shirt under your sundress. Which one would you like?*

6. Get quiet instead of loud. Whispering can be attention-getting. You can even add an element of imaginative play: *Let's see if we can put the toys away really quietly so your stuffed animals don't wake up!*

7. Do something silly. Young children *love* silliness. Anything that gets the laughter flowing will be helpful during tough moments—try a silly robot voice or hop like kangaroos while walking to the car. Pretend to put a sock on their nose while getting dressed. Use a fun moment to break the tension.

8. Don't be afraid to take a time-out (for you!). Everybody gets pushed to the edge once in a while. It's okay to tell your toddler, "I feel very frustrated right now. I need a break so I can do some good thinking. I'll be back in two minutes." And then go to the bathroom or your bedroom and take a few deep breaths before you return.

Be kind to yourself.

Making changes is hard, so be kind to yourself. There will be times when you mess up. That's okay. Holding yourself accountable in a kind, firm way is great modeling for your child: "Oops, Daddy didn't mean to yell. What I meant to say was, you need to put your cars in the bin now or we won't have time for a story before bath." These moments of reconnection help to build a strong bond between you and your little one, even during the tough times.



Important reminders for parents!

The weather is getting colder, but we will still be taking the children outside. Please have your child dress appropriately for outside play. Coats, hats, and mittens help to keep them warm.

Please remember to wear your mask when you are picking up or dropping off children.

Registration for the 2021-2022 school year is open for current FRC families. See website for forms.

Program News:

Playgroups & Parent Education:

We are still offering outside playgroups on the Tolland Rec Center playground on Mondays and Tuesday. Soon we will start exploring some trails in town! Please email Karen Bradford (kbradford@tolland.k12.ct.us) for schedule details and to receive the online registration link.

Free child development screenings are available for all children age 2 months-5 years old. Please contact Karen Bradford for more information.

Preschool:

The preschool began the New Year remotely. Thank you to Mrs. Morse for doing an excellent job with Google Meet. When the children return to in person learning the week of January 18, the 3-year-old classroom will continue with their color themes. Children are encouraged to wear the color of the week on Thursdays. The 4-year-old classroom will continue with Letter Days. Children are encouraged to share something that begins with the letter of the day.

School Age:

Prior to winter break and remote learning, our SAC children were enjoying great outdoor time, projects, and free play. We created a wall size menorah as a whole group with our PM children and learned about the celebration of Hanukkah. Unfortunately, we were not able to complete the wall size, whole group Christmas tree created from each child's individual tree creation. We hope you enjoyed the cinnamon and glitter ornaments the children made.

We cannot wait to get back to Birch Grove and our 'normal' schedule. Please continue to send your children with winter coats, hats, and gloves. If we ever have snow on the ground, boots and snow pants will also be necessary. Looking forward to seeing the children on the 19th!

Please remember to call or email if your child will not be attending the FRC.

Preschool: 860-870-6750 x 5 (Mrs. Morse)

BGP SAC 860-870-6750 X 6 or TIS 860-870-6885 x 3 or email tollandFRC@tolland.k12.ct.us

TERAC:

Please consider joining the Tolland Early Readiness Advisory Council. Our next remote meeting is Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 7:00pm. If you are interested in joining please let us know. We will also meet in May. This is your opportunity to express your concerns or help celebrate our accomplishments.

Special Events:

Typically, each January the FRC hosts a Preschool & Childcare Fair where parents can come meet staff and learn about the different programs available in Tolland. Due to COVID-19, this year we have decided to put together a virtual fair. Please click on the link below to view the fair.

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/16eywaPJaGQic8ms8c95VMc7SVB5bpl8pSTd-vJkRNp4/edit?usp=sharing>

Dates to Remember:

Monday, February 1, 2021 School Age Care registration opens to the public for 2021-2022 school year.

Wednesday, March 3, 2021 Virtual parent information night, Birch Grove 2021-2022 Kindergarten registration

Tuesday, March 9, 2021 Virtual TERAC meeting, 7:00pm

Please let us know how we can support you and your family.

Thank you for sharing your children with us.

Carol Hiller

Tolland Family Resource Center Coordinator