

## CASE STUDY: Your Child Is Mean When Others Touch Their Stuff

### RESPOND Effectively in the Moment

**Scenario:** *My son was looking at a book when his younger sister came up and took one of his toys that he wasn't playing with. He started yelling at his sister that it was his and she needed to let it go.*

#### YOUR STRATEGIES

**What is in NOT in your control?** *How he talks to his sister*  
**What IS in your control?** *How I talk to him*

**What strategy you will use to REGULATE yourself:** *I need to remember that he's a little child, not a little adult... and that he's acting that way because he's feeling out of control and disrespected.*

**External cue if needed:** *I will ask my spouse to give me a signal when I start to lose my cool.*

**What REASON (roadblock) you may have to address in the moment:** *That he's feeling like I don't care about him and that he's feeling out of control*

**How you will address that:** *I will let him know that I care that he doesn't want someone to touch his toy. I will ask him if there is something he is willing to let his sister touch.*

**What you will say to re-state the boundary:** *"We DO need to give her something to hold or touch."*

**What you will do while they are ROUNDING the curve:** *I will focus on my breath so that I can stay calm so that he calms down more quickly. (Because when he does, he's much nicer!)*

**Your "To-don't" list:** *I won't tell him that he's being rude or selfish.*

#### YOUR SCRIPT FOR YOU

**When my child** *is being mean to his sister when she touches his stuff*

**I will** *remember that he isn't a little adult [to help me regulate] and let him know that I care about how he feels and ask if there is something he is willing to let his sister touch [to address the reason].*

**If that doesn't work, I restate the expectation by saying** *"We do need to give her something to hold or touch."* and *I will focus on my breath, not his behavior [while they round the curve].*

**In the moment, I will NOT** *tell him he's being rude or selfish.*