

Say This... Not That

When Your Child Is Mean When Others Touch Their Stuff



Instead of Saying...

Stop being so mean to your brother! He just wanted to look at that!

You're being so selfish. You can't be like that in life!

Oh come on... You want to use other people's stuff all the time! Now you can't let them use yours?!

Say This to Yourself...

When I say that to him, I'm basically telling him that his brother's feelings matter more than his do.

Telling my daughter how horrible she is probably won't motivate her to be more thoughtful to others.

If he uses other people's things but doesn't want others to use his things, there must be a reason. Helping him figure out that reason will probably be more effective in this situation.

Say This To Your Child...

You really didn't want your brother to touch your stuff, did you? I think he wanted to look at it... Can you let him do that when you're ready?

Sometimes we don't want other people to touch our stuff. If that hurts their feelings, what do you think we can do about that?

If you don't want your sister to touch that, there must be a reason. Can I help you figure out why? And maybe we can find a solution that works for both of you.

KEY TAKEAWAY: When children get mean when others touch their stuff, it's because they're struggling. When we help them through their struggle, they're usually more open to being generous than when we tell them how awful they're being.