



Parenting Quick Tips

Winning the Whining War

Whining occurs mostly when children are tired, hungry, bored or when it is a firmly established habit. Whining is normal, especially in children ages 2-4, and often manifests when parents are fixing dinner and children are hungry. How can you modify the tone at your house?

- ◆ Be aware of how you respond to whining. Does it work for your children? It will escalate if you cater to and reinforce it.
- ◆ Intervene before whining occurs, e.g. give a snack if your child seems hungry.
- ◆ Hire a young “babysitter in training” to entertain the children from 4-6 PM.
- ◆ Does your child need more attention? Children prefer negative attention to no attention!
- ◆ Is someone else in your child’s world modeling whining behaviors?
- ◆ Ignore it. After you are sure your child knows what you mean by whining, tell her you will be ignoring her when she whines.
- ◆ Make children aware when they are whining and offer a second chance: “You are whining, I will listen when you talk in a regular voice.”
- ◆ Be prepared to outlast your child and to be consistent for many weeks, even months!