

The Interviewer Technique

If you witness the child making a poor choice, say, “*No thank you (child’s name). Please (give direction of what you’d like the child to stop or start doing).*” Here are a few examples:

- No thank you, Maggie. Please leave those coffee cups on the counter.
- No thank you, Jamison. Please keep your hands to yourself.

Then ask the child, “Can you think of any reasons why I want/don’t want you to do that?”

Allow the child to give as many answers as they can think of.

Ask follow up questions, like:

- What would happen then?
- How would that make you/me/them feel?
- Would that be a good thing or a bad thing?

Confirm / acknowledge the answers that the child has given you and thank them for thinking of such important answers to why it was important for you to set that limit.

If the child missed any reasons that you thought of, also point them out.

End the conversation by saying something like, “*So we learned that next time you (details of situation / problem behavior) the best choice is to (desired behavior) so that (list of problem consequences to be avoided).*” For example:

- “*So we learned that next time you see coffee mugs on the table, it’s best to let them sit there so that you don’t accidentally break them and hurt yourself or make their owner sad if they break, and so that you don’t spread all those icky germs. Thanks for helping me figure that out for next time!*”

