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Inglés-Español

For Ages 4–7
De 4 a 7 años

Voices Are Not for Yelling La voz no es para gritar

Elizabeth Verdick

Ilustrado por
Marieka Heinlen

free spirit
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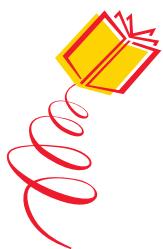
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Ilustrado por Marieka Heinlen
Traducido por Edgar Rojas

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To teachers everywhere,
who make such a big difference
in the lives of little ones.

—E.V.

To my family:
Patrick, Levi, and Nora.

—M.H.

Para los maestros en todas partes
quienes tienen una gran influencia en
la vida de los niños.

—E.V.

Para mi familia:
Patrick, Levi y Nora.

—M.H.



What do you use
your voice for?

¿Para qué utilizas
tu voz?



Talking
Para hablar

"Hi!"

"¡Hola!"

Asking questions
Para hacer preguntas

"How are you?"

"¿Como estas?"



Tips and Activities for Parents and Caregivers

Using indoor voice versus outdoor voice is a skill all children need to learn. Here are some ways to introduce, practice, and reinforce this skill.

Indoor/Outdoor Voice

Demonstrate an outdoor (loud), indoor (normal), quiet (low), and whisper voice. Ask children to try along with you. Give them frequent opportunities to practice during the day.

Silly vs. Serious

Teach children the differences between “silly time” and “serious time.” During silly time, let them be loud with their voices and bodies. Show them how to act during serious time, when they need to be quiet and calm.

Quiet-Time Gestures

Young children can learn the signs that show it's quiet time, such as finger to lips, a countdown from five, and so on. Demonstrate your favorites and use them consistently.

Sound Signals

Use sound signals to show children that it is time to quiet down:

“Shhh”: When you’re shushing children, use a calm, quiet “Shhh.”

Clapping: Try a sequence you can repeat, such as two loud claps followed by three rapid ones. Continue until children settle down.

Attention-getters: Purchase an item that makes a special sound that children learn to associate with quieting down, such as a bell or rain stick. Or flick the lights off and on.

Ever-quieter voice: Lower your own voice, getting quieter and quieter until kids have to listen very closely to hear you.

Balanced Classroom

- Get kids outside, no matter the weather. Outdoor time is important for physical, emotional, and social development.
- Play quiet classical music when children are restless.

- Have a rest time built into each day.
- During group activities, encourage children to raise their hands and take turns talking or use a “talking stick” that is passed from person to person.
- Each day, notice when children model appropriate behavior and then reward them with something special, like additional free time.
- Sometimes children yell to express strong feelings. You can help by identifying the emotions and showing that you understand. If the yelling persists, you might try: “I’m having trouble hearing you when you yell like that. Please quiet your voice so I can hear you better.”
- Practice the “quiet your voice” skill from pages 26–27.

A Word on Yelling

Experts now know that the use of harsh verbal discipline (yelling, swearing, insults) during childhood can have lasting consequences, such as anxiety and depression in later years. Even if parents also provide affection, the affection does *not* balance out the verbal attacks. There are more effective ways to discipline and guide children. Children who are frequently yelled at tend to:

- Tune out or ignore the person who’s yelling
- Yell or become more aggressive themselves
- Have difficulty managing their feelings and behavior

Parenting isn’t easy, and we all lose our cool at times. In the heat of the moment, we may erupt, but that doesn’t mean we can’t stop, calm down, and apologize.

If you want to provide a more positive atmosphere at home, try some of these ideas:

Post the house rules. Make the rules clear and simple. Phrase them positively (what you expect kids to do) instead of negatively (what they can’t do).

State the consequences and offer warnings. Make sure the consequences are age appropriate and have a clear relationship to what occurred. If trouble is brewing, give a warning: “If you grab your friend’s toy, then we will end playtime early.” Follow through.

Use positive reinforcement. Notice when your child is doing *well*, and then offer plenty of praise. Say: “Wow, you’re doing a great job of using your indoor voice!” Children thrive on this kind of positive attention.

Use a firm voice, not a loud one. Instead of yelling, firmly and calmly tell your child what went wrong and what will happen next.

Get down at their level. Kneel or sit so you can communicate with children face to face.

Put yourself in their shoes. Do you get upset, frustrated, or mad when someone yells at you? You probably want to ignore and get away from that person. Children go through all these emotions when they get yelled at, but they also feel fear. To ensure that your child feels safe, avoid yelling to express your feelings or to make your child do as you wish.

Stay calm. Your children learn by watching you. Model healthy ways to handle frustration and anger. Let them see you take deep breaths, use a firm voice, excuse yourself from the room to cool off, and express yourself calmly.

When Yelling Is the Right Thing to Do

There are times when children need to tell others “no.” Make sure children are aware of “good touch,” “bad touch,” and “stranger danger.”

Children who practice saying “no” in a loud, strong, clear voice are more likely to stand up for themselves. Practice a loud “no” at home until your child feels comfortable with this. Role-play how to stand up for yourself or get away from someone who is dangerous.

Note: If you suspect that a child is being abused, contact your local Social Services Department, Child Welfare Department, Police Department, or District Attorney’s Office. If you teach in a school setting, consult first with your school principal or director to learn the established course of action.

What Children Can Do

If There Is Fighting/Yelling at Home

- Go to a safe place when fighting or screaming starts.
- In that safe place, draw, read, or play quietly.
- If you don’t feel safe, use a phone to call 911. Tell the person your name and address and say that there is fighting in your home.
- Find a grown-up you trust, such as a relative, a teacher, a caregiver, or a religious leader, and talk to that person about the fighting. You might say, “There is a lot of yelling and fighting at my home. I’m scared. Can you please help me?”

What Adults Can Do

If There Is Verbal Abuse/Fighting at Home

- Call 911.
- Call a local shelter or a domestic abuse hotline.
- Talk with someone who can help: a doctor, a family counselor, a social worker, a therapist, or a religious leader. Low-cost or free services are often available. Keep looking until you find a person or an organization to help you.
- Stay with friends or relatives while you’re getting the help you need.