

PLEASE SPARE THE SILVER SPOON

Parents can teach the value of hard work to today's kids

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Parents can raise responsible kids who grow up to be responsible and independent adults. That is, only if they don't give them everything they want!

Today, more parents than ever before are able to give their children more of what they ask for. What's the result? More and more ungrateful youngsters who never learn the value of hard work and the struggle to succeed — youngsters who remain financially and emotionally dependent upon their parents well into adulthood.

Nobody sits down and plans to spoil their kids. Nevertheless, it's darned easy to feel guilty and give in when they say things like, "I really need these sneakers. All the other kids at school have them." That's why Love and Logic® offers five easy-to-learn steps for parents who need off the "hot seat" when their kids ask — or beg — for things they really don't need:

Step 1: Show your child you understand his or her desires.

This understanding is essential for maintaining a loving parent-child relationship. The next time your child wants something, make sure you provide plenty of empathy. For example:

Child: *"Dad, I need that new video game. All of my friends already have it."*

Father: *"That is such a cool game! I can understand a kid wanting that one."*

Step 2: Instead of giving in or saying "No," gently ask how they plan to pay for the item.

Child: *"It is cool. You need to get it for me today. I need time to practice."*

Father: *"How are you going to pay for it?"*

Step 3: When your child reacts, ask, "Would you like some ideas?"

Child: *"What? I don't have any money. Why won't you buy it for me?"*

Father: *"Would you like some ideas about how to pay for it?"*

Step 4: Give your child two or three possible options.

Child: *"I guess."*

Father: *"Some kids decide to do extra chores to earn the money. How would that work?"*

Child: *"Awe."*

Father: *"Other kids decide to sell some of their old things to earn the money. How would that work?"*

Spare the Silver Spoon/Page Two

Child: *“Why won’t you just buy it for me?”*

Step 5: Wish your child luck and don’t get sucked into an argument.

Father: *“I really hope you can find a way to earn that game.”*

Child: *“This is so stupid. Why won’t you just buy it?”*

Father: *“I love you too much to argue. I’ll be happy to listen when your voice sounds calm.”*

At The Love and Logic Institute, we’ve received letter after letter describing how these five steps have changed parents’ lives with their children. A mother noted that her kids were raised with this approach and as adults, all three are very thrifty shoppers! Love and Logic is easy to learn and can change *your* life too. The sooner you start, the more time you’ll have to enjoy your kids, and they’ll have to learn the value of hard work.

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Dr. Charles Fay is a parent, nationally known speaker, and school psychologist with the Love and Logic Institute® in Golden, Colo. His latest books, *Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood* and *Love and Logic Magic: When Your Kids Leave You Speechless*, are now available. For more information about Love and Logic parenting and teaching techniques, call **1-800-LUV-LOGIC** or visit www.loveandlogic.com.