



The Power of Choices for Children

Children often push back against our requests when they feel the need for some power.

Offering choices gives children some agency while still maintaining boundaries. Choices also allow children to practice and strengthen their decision-making skills, which is important for them as they grow into independent adults.



Examples of choices:

- Would you like to do your homework now, or later this afternoon?
- Carrots or peas for dinner?
- This red shirt, or this blue shirt?
- Which subject would you like to do today, math or history?
- Would you like to stay with us and use your calm voice, or would you prefer to leave for a while and come back when you are calm?

Things to remember when using choices:

- Offer choices that won't create a problem for you or anyone else.
- If your child doesn't make a choice within a specified period of time, he/she has decided to have you make the choice for them.
- Offer choices before your children become resistant, not after.
- Offer two options, either of which is okay with you.
- Choices should not be threats in disguise.

Choices can reduce resistance, provide boundaries, strengthen adult-child relationships, and empower children, helping them mature into more secure adults.