



## Parenting Conflict Response Styles and Strategies in Your Home

By Kelly Nault

Conflict is part of life. It is only when we as family members don't have the skills to move through conflict that it becomes a problem.

If you find yourself revisiting the same issues like:

- "Why can't you pick up after yourself?"
- "Why can't you help out more with the kids?"
- "Why can't you two just get along for once?"

you may be living in a cantankerous home environment that has your whole family in the "deep end" of life.

Don't despair: there is a solution.

### Easy-to-Use Parenting Activities for Conflict Resolution Skills Development

My parenting book (*When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You*) contains dozens of easy-to-use tips for developing conflict resolution skills in your children. Here are three of the most effective:

1. **Establish Family Rules For Conflict** – As a family, create a document that each of you can refer to during fights and arguments. Include things like: we are specific when we talk about our problems, we forgive one another, we are honest, we don't yell or put another person down, etc. Create this document when things are going well in your household and commit to referring to it whenever a fight heats up. The more everyone is involved with creating the family rules for conflict, the more members of the family will tend to use it.
2. **Use a "Mom's Timeout"** – Timeouts are often used as punishment when a child misbehaves (for example, putting them in a corner or on a stair for a certain amount of time). This technique meets with varied success. In my parenting book, I spend four pages discussing a "Mom's Timeout." How this activity works is that mom (or dad) takes the timeout—disengaging from the conflict in order to return with a clear head, one of the key requirements to resolving conflict quickly. This strategy works *all the time* when used correctly. Why? Because, although a mom can't control her child all the time, she *can* control herself.

3. **Perform a Parenting "Daring Do Overs"** – We all make mistakes and say things that we wish we could take back. Instead of feeling guilty, use a parenting "Daring Do Over." This activity is like the rewind button for your mistake. It's your "take two" opportunity in which you can do it all over again—only this time, better. This strategy not only decreases conflict, but also helps all members of the family to practice behaving well so there is a much better chance that we *all* do it better next time.

Many of us cringe at the thought of conflict; however, it is an unavoidable part of life. Equip your children with the skills to handle conflict well by using the above activities for conflict resolution. Your family members will not just survive conflict: they will actually thrive as a result of it.

Kelly Nault, MA corporate spokesperson and award winning parenting author of *When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You* inspires moms to put themselves first—for the sake of their children. She shares time-tested tools that motivate children to want to be well behaved, responsible and happy! Sign up for her free online parenting course at [www.UltimateParenting.com](http://www.UltimateParenting.com).

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