

Effective Parent's Toolkit

Course Name:

Blended Families – When Your Step Children won't Listen to You

Core Material – Reading (Blended Families)



Whether it is your step children, your grand children, or other child in your own special blended family unit, kids know how to find buttons and push them. Often they use the very thing that binds you all together to try to tear you down.

But as the grown up, we have to see beyond the obstinacy, beyond the outbursts and understand the “why.”

Often this behavior is an attempt to get control over situations where

they feel powerless. Therefore, they try to take the power away from you. When your child says, “You’re not my Mom!” “You’re not my Dad!” they are saying you have no power over me.

So, what CAN you do?

When the child uses this argument, “You’re not my Mom” they are trying to diminish your authority. They are trying to push the boundaries and establish some control. By arguing with them, “You will do what I say!” you are allowing a bend in your authoritative boundary, one they will test again and again. If you show them there is no bend or play in the boundary, they will tire of banging their head against it.

It is important to see beyond the outburst, and try to see the bigger picture, do not allow yourself to join the emotional war. This is not the time to put your foot down and demand respect, show them you are boss, etc. Use your safe communication skills (see Creating A Safe Space article here). There is no need to provoke the child, instead, calmly reiterate the rules you have

established, and that these are the rules of the house. Be sure to never use derogatory language regarding their biological parent or family. This will inflame the situation, and hurtful words spoken in anger can't be taken back.

So, remain calm, stay in control, don't feed the outburst, and restate your request, the rule or whatever elicited this response. Keep your remarks focused on the situation, using a calm voice, and unwavering stand.

If you need help with these skills, or need more ideas on how to bring harmony to your blended family, please visit our website at www.parentingmindset.com.

Summary and Review Questions

Action Steps – Putting it All into Action
