



Sphecho

REVERBERATING YOUR NEEDS THROUGH DETERMINATION

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LOVE OUR PRECIOUS ONES



How to Respond to Teasing

Education can be a key way to reduce teasing and bullying for children with special needs. Here are a few things you can say if someone says something negative to or about your child. It might be an adult who says something or a curious child. If you respond kindly and explain the situation, most "bullies" or "teasers" will back down. Feel free to change and adapt these to make them unique to your child.

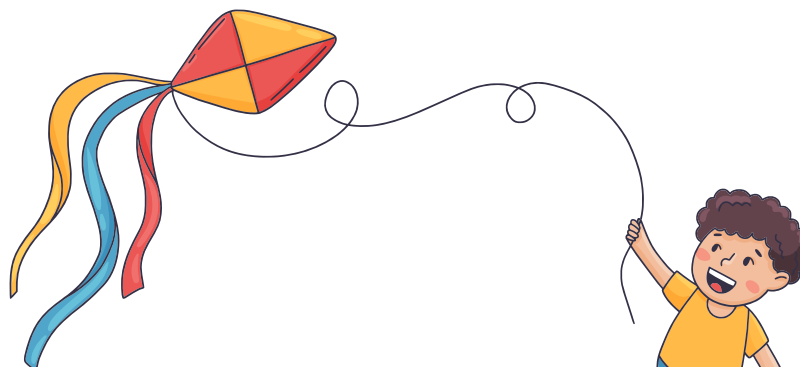
You can also choose to ignore disrespectful comments that are directed at your child. If you do this though, make sure that you talk to your child about what happened once you get to a private place. Your child may understand more than you think and if you don't respond, he may assume that you are ashamed of him. You can use these same steps if you're just talking to your child about what happened.

Explain What's Going On With Your Child:

- › He has autism. That means he learns things differently and sees the world differently. He doesn't always know how to use words to communicate.
- › She has a speech delay. She's still learning how to say some of the sounds.
- › This is her talker. It helps her say things to us.
- › He had an accident when he was a baby. Now he uses this wheelchair to get around instead of his legs.
- › She has apraxia. That means she understands what we're saying but when she tries to speak, the sounds get all mixed up.
- › He has a sensory disorder. That means that certain sounds or touches hurt him.
- › She was born this way. This is exactly how she was meant to be, just like you're exactly how you were meant to be.

Explain How Your Child Does Things Differently:

- › He uses a wheelchair to get around because his legs don't move.
- › She's still learning how to say certain sounds so she uses different sounds in their places.
- › He uses this talker to communicate because sounds don't come out of his mouth.
- › When someone can't understand her, she uses her talker to say it.
- › When he rocks back and forth, he feels good. What kinds of things make you feel good?
- › When she's scared she flaps her hands. What do you do when you get scared?
- › Sometimes he hits when he wants to say "hello" because he's not sure what to say to you.
- › When people touch him, he gets upset. What kinds of things make you upset?
- › Those braces make his legs work really well. They're like superhero shoes!



State Something Your Child Does Well:

- › He's a great artist though! Today he drew me a picture of a turtle!
- › He loves being around other kids. It's making him very happy that you're here!
- › She is great at sports. Her favorite sport is basketball, what's yours?
- › He loves trains. He makes really long trains on the tracks at our house.
- › She is a great big sister and a good helper with the baby.

State Something Your Child Does Well:

- › He would love it if you brought him a toy. You can just set it in his lap.
- › You can say hello to her and ask her name.
- › If he hits you, you can tell him "safe hands" and then tell him "you can say 'hi'". That way you're teaching him how to use his words.
- › I bet she would like to play with you. Would you like to take her hand and take her to the toys?
- › He loves trains, why don't you give him a train?
- › She would love for you to read her a book. Would you like to do that?
- › He likes giving high fives, do you want to give him one?
- › She loves ponies. Why don't you ask her about ponies!

Examples

Comment: **"What's wrong with him, he looks funny"**

Response: "Johnny has autism. That means he learns things differently and sees the world differently. When he's feeling anxious, he flaps his hands like that. That calms him down. Being in a crowded place can be very scary so flapping his hands keeps him calm. What do you do when you're feeling scared? (The last bit only if you're talking to a child) Johnny loves trains though. You can ask him who is favorite train on Thomas is if you'd like."

Comment: **Comment: "That kid sounds funny"**

Response: Let's say you chose to ignore this one because it wasn't directed at you and it wasn't very respectful. Here's what you could say to your child after the fact:

"I know some speech sounds are hard for you to get out and that's not your fault. But you've been working really hard in speech therapy and I am so proud of your hard work! Plus, you're really good at basketball and there are tons of people who have trouble with that. That was not a very nice thing for that man to say which is why we ignored him. Are you ok?"



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Thank You

