

You loved your last book...but what
are you going to read next?

Using our unique guidance tools, Love**reading** will help you find new books to keep you inspired and entertained.

Opening Extract from...

How to Talk So Little Kids Will Listen

A Survival Guide to Life with Children Ages 2-7

Written by
Joanna Faber and Julie King

Published by Piccadilly Press

All text is copyright © of the author

This Opening Extract is exclusive to Love**reading**.
Please print off and read at your leisure.

HOW TO TALK SO LITTLE KIDS WILL LISTEN

**A SURVIVAL GUIDE TO LIFE
WITH CHILDREN AGES 2-7**

Joanna Faber &
Julie King

With a Foreword by Adele Faber

Piccadilly
PRESS

First published in Great Britain in 2017 by
PICCADILLY PRESS
80–81 Wimpole St, London W1G 9RE
www.piccadillypress.co.uk

Copyright © 2017 by Joanna Faber and Julie King

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any
means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise,
without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

The right of Joanna Faber and Julie King to be identified as authors
of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with the
Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-84812-614-5
Also available as an e-book

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Interior design by Kyle Kabel
Printed and bound by Clays Ltd, St Ives



Piccadilly Press is an imprint of Bonnier Zaffre Ltd,
a Bonnier Publishing company
www.bonnierpublishing.com

Contents

Foreword , <i>by</i> Adele Faber	xi
How It All Started , <i>by</i> Julie & Joanna	xv
A Note from the Authors	xxi

PART I

THE ESSENTIAL TOOLBOX	1
-----------------------	---

Chapter One	3
--------------------	---

Tools for Handling Emotions . . . What's All the Fuss about Feelings?

—When kids don't feel right, they can't behave right

Chapter Two	43
--------------------	----

Tools for Engaging Cooperation . . . Feelings Schmeelings, She Has to Brush Her Teeth

—Getting kids to *do* what they have to *do*

Chapter Three	85
----------------------	----

Tools for Resolving Conflict . . . Avoiding Combat on the Home Front

—Replacing punishment with more peaceful, effective solutions

Chapter Four	135
---------------------	-----

Tools for Praise and Appreciation . . . Not All Odes Are Equal

—Ways to praise that will help, not hinder

Contents

Chapter Five	163
Tools for Kids Who Are Differently Wired . . . Will This Work with <i>My Kid</i> ?	
—Modifications for kids with autism and sensory issues	
Chapter Five and a Quarter	203
The Basics . . . You Can't Talk Your Way Out of <i>These</i>	
—Conditions under which the tools won't work	
 PART II	
THE TOOLS IN ACTION	213
1 Food Fights—The Battle at the Kitchen Table	215
2 Morning Madness—Escaping the Intense Gravitational Pull of Your Home	231
3 Sibling Rivalry—Give the Baby Back!	241
4 Shopping with Children—Mayhem at the Market	257
5 Lies—Kids and the Creative Interpretation of Reality	263
6 Parents Have Feelings, Too	275
7 Tattling—Snitches and Whistle-Blowers	283
8 Cleanup—The Dirtiest Word	291
9 Doctor's Orders—Medicine, Shots, Blood Draws, and Other Horrors	301
10 Shy Kids—Fear of Friendly Folks	313
11 Little Runaways—Kids Who Take Off in the Parking Lot and Other Public Places	321

Contents

12 Hitting, Pinching, Poking, Punching, Pushing— I Barely Touched Him!	331
13 Sleep—The Holy Grail	339
14 When Parents Get <i>Angry</i> !	357
15 Troubleshooting—When the Tools Don't Work	369
 THE END?	 385
Acknowledgments	387
Additional Resources	389
Notes	391
Reminder Index	395
Index	397

Foreword

Adele Faber

The first hint I had of the passion that would fuel the creation of this book came when it was my turn to carpool the authors to nursery school.

I put my daughter Joanna in the car, drove around the corner to collect Julie, and then two more blocks to pick up Robbie. Soon all three children were buckled up in the back seat, happily chattering with each other. Suddenly the mood shifted and a heated debate erupted:

Robbie: He had no reason to cry! He wasn't even hurt.

Julie: Maybe his feelings were hurt.

Robbie: So what? Feelings don't matter. You have to have a reason!

Joanna: Feelings *do* matter. They're just as important as reasons.

Robbie: No, they're not! You have to have a good reason.

I listened and marveled at these three little people. It wasn't hard to figure out where each of them was coming from. Robbie's mother was a serious, no-nonsense woman. Julie's mom, a piano teacher, loved talking with me about the discoveries I was making in my parenting workshops with the renowned

Foreword

child psychologist Dr. Haim Ginott. There was always so much for us to think about and try out with our children.

Sometimes bits of our discussions would find their way into the book Elaine Mazlish and I had decided to write together. We had each experienced such profound changes in our own lives and witnessed so many transformations in the lives of others in our group, it seemed wrong not to share our journey with as many parents as possible. Best of all, we had Dr. Ginott's blessing. He read our early drafts and offered his editorial support.

Fast-forward twenty-five years. Our first book, *Liberated Parents/Liberated Children: Your Guide to a Happier Family*, has been published. It wins the Christopher Award for "Literary Achievement Affirming the Highest Values of the Human Spirit." Seven more books soon follow. *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk* and *Siblings Without Rivalry* become best sellers and are published in more than thirty languages.

The little girls I drove to nursery school are grown, married, and each has three children of her own. Each has lived abroad and explored different areas of study. I still have to smile when I remember Julie telling me about an exchange she had at her first internship as a law clerk at a legal aid agency. She was presenting a case for a lawsuit that appeared to be based on a simple misunderstanding.

"Can we get them together to talk? I'm sure if they could listen to each other's point of view they could come to an understanding."

The boss was impatient with her naïveté. "We don't do that. You can't talk to the opposing party."

It was at this point, Julie said, that she started to think she might be in the wrong profession.

Foreword

And I have to smile when I remember a hurried phone call from Joanna after a frustrating day with the special needs children in her classroom.

“The kids won’t stop fighting. It’s chaos. I can’t get through a lesson! What do I do?”

I drew a blank. “Well, you know what I usually do when I’m stuck, but . . .”

“Oh, you mean problem-solving. Okay, thanks. Bye!” and she hung up.

She swung into action the next morning, and we were thrilled to incorporate the amazing results of her new tactic when Elaine and I were writing *How to Talk So Kids Can Learn/At Home and In School*.

Finally, each woman found herself responding to the urgent need for parenting workshops in her part of the world: Joanna on the east coast, Julie on the west. After years of helping parents, many of whom had young children who presented a wide variety of challenges, they decided to join forces and produce a book of their own:

How to Talk So Little Kids Will Listen
A Survival Guide to Life with Children Ages 2 to 7

Elaine and I expect you’ll be delighted and enlightened by all the discoveries you’ll make as you turn its pages.

Happy reading!

How It All Started

Julie

My two-year-old son peed on the carpet under the crib . . . *again!* What to do? My degrees in public policy and law were of no use. I was surprised by how quickly I could be brought to my knees by a small person too young to drive a car—or tie his own shoes.

I didn't plan a career as a parent educator. I figured I'd be a mom on the side as I advanced my professional career. But when I was told that my first child had significant developmental delays, as did my second, I realized that parenting



Julie and Joanna in an earlier collaboration.

was not going to be an “on the side” activity for me. I found myself committed to endless rounds of appointments with medical specialists and physical therapists and advocating for children with neurodevelopmental differences.

Lucky for me, I grew up with a best friend, Joanna, whose mom, Adele Faber, took a parenting workshop with the late, great child psychologist Haim Ginott. Her mom and

How It All Started

mine are also close friends, and they tested out their new parenting strategies on us. Little did I know that these methods would become a lifesaver for me so many years later when I faced the challenges of parenting my own three children.

When the head of the Parent Education committee at my son's preschool was looking for someone to organize an event for parents, I volunteered to lead a workshop based on Adele's book *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen*. My first eight-week group was such a success that everyone insisted I continue to lead the group for another eight weeks, and another . . . and we ended up meeting for four and a half years! Through word of mouth, other people asked me to lead workshops, which snowballed into a career I had never imagined.

Meanwhile, my friendship with Joanna continued. In many ways she and I are quite different. She loves the outdoors and *dogs* (you will find many references to dogs throughout our book), while I love to sit at the piano playing classical music (which is why Joanna's references to pop music often go over my head). Yet I've always felt I can talk to her about anything, and she really listens and understands. Even though we now live on opposite coasts, we've spent the last year writing together and the result is this book.



Joanna and Julie today.

I hope you find this information as life transforming as I have, and I hope you have as many laughs reading it as we had writing it. I'll introduce you to my three kids in chapter five, where you can read more about the experience of parenting and teaching non-neurotypical children.

How It All Started

Joanna

I have a confession to make. I was raised by a mother who wrote best-selling books about parenting. My two brothers and I grew up in a family where my mother and father used a language of respect for their children's ideas and emotions. Even our most ferocious conflicts were resolved by problem-solving rather than punishment.

So parenting for me should be a snap. I have no excuses! Then again, I didn't think I would need any. Not only had I been raised by practically ideal parents, I had plenty of experience of my own. I have read and studied extensively in the field of child development and psychology. I have a degree in special education and ten years of experience working with both native English speakers and bilingual children in West Harlem as a teacher in the New York City school system. I was going to be a natural with my own kids.

I remember taking my first little baby to the supermarket, talking and singing sweetly to him about the apples and bananas. A fellow shopper leaned in and generously offered me some advice. "Enjoy him now, before he learns to talk." What an awful woman! I couldn't wait for my little darling to express his amazing thoughts to me in words.

Fast-forward a few years and there I was, back in the

How It All Started

grocery store. I now had three young children in tow, and on this day they were being particularly well behaved. The two younger ones were riding in the cart and the older one was helping me get items off the shelf. A grandfatherly man stopped, looked at these adorable kids, and said, “You are so good. I’ll bet your mother never yells at you!”

It was a golden moment. My oldest looked at him wide-eyed and said, “No, she yells at us all the time . . . for no reason!”

What happened here? Who were these less-than-perfect creatures? And where was that ideal mom who would never “yell for no reason,” no less, “*all the time!*”

What I discovered as a parent was that there is a certain twenty-four-hours-a-day relentlessness to caring for young children that makes it hard to think straight. Even though I thought I would be a natural, when it comes to handling all those constant needs and emotions day after day, night after night, there is no such thing as easy or perfect. Sometimes simple survival is a good goal.

As a new mom I certainly did not feel that I had much wisdom to share about raising children. I didn’t even feel particularly competent. As a matter of fact, it seemed best to keep quiet about my own parentage. I kept a low profile and neglected to mention to the other moms in my social circle that my mother was a famous author. When my children were wailing, whimpering, or whacking each other, I preferred to deal with the situation without having to wonder if anyone was watching me and thinking, “Hmph, *her* mother wrote a book on parenting?”

It turns out that at least one person was watching and noticing. One day at a playgroup, my friend Cathy said to me, “Joanna, I have this book that you would love. It’s just

How It All Started

your style. It really reminds me of the way you talk to your kids. It's called *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk*."

At that point I figured it would be fruitless to feign ignorance. I admitted that my mother wrote the book. Cathy was delighted. She called out to the group of mothers, "Hey, guys, Joanna's mother wrote this great book and she never told us!"

And so I was outed, my secret identity revealed.

Soon after that, Cathy told me that she was in charge of organizing a lecture series for her church group, and she asked me if I would give a presentation about my experience growing up as the daughter of Adele Faber. As the date approached I began to hope for some disaster at the church. Nothing that would hurt anybody, just a little flooding or perhaps a well-timed power outage. What was I going to say to these people? I felt woefully inadequate to represent myself as a paragon of parenting. I didn't even want to think about it!

But they were expecting me to say something up there. The forecast looked good, no hurricanes or blizzards on the horizon. I was getting desperate. Finally it struck me that I did have something to offer. Cathy had noticed it when she commented on my style. I'm not the perfect parent; I get into plenty of conflicts with my children. But I do have skills to help get us through those conflicts, and I use them every day.

I gave my talk at the church. Afterward there was great enthusiasm among the parishioners about forming a parenting group. I found myself leading parenting workshops, and then giving more lectures, and eventually traveling across the country, giving presentations to parents, teachers, social workers, and health care providers.

The book you hold in your hand is the result of many requests by parents for more examples and strategies to use with

How It All Started

very young children. Terrible two-year-olds, truculent three-year-olds, ferocious four-year-olds, foolhardy five-year-olds, self-centered six-year-olds, and the occasional semi-civilized seven-year-old. This work represents my re-immersion into the pool of knowledge that I grew up with and additional insights about making our way as parents in the twenty-first century. Part of this process included collaborating with my childhood friend Julie King, who encouraged me to lead when I felt like I was just finding my own way. The following work contains the very hands-on insights of Julie and myself and all the parents and teachers who trusted us and shared their stories.

We are presenting this work to you in two parts. Part one lays out the basic equipment you'll be glad to have in your toolbox when a youngster goes haywire. Part two addresses the specific challenges that we've found to be the most common themes of early childhood—eat, get dressed, get out the door, stop hitting, go to sleep!—and shows how the parents in our groups used these tools in various creative and unusual ways. We hope this book will provide you with a deep well of ideas that you can dip into and pull up by the cool, refreshing bucketful when you feel you've run dry!



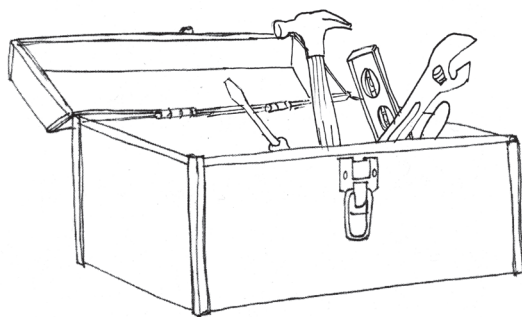
A Note from the Authors

We struggled with the question of whose voice to use as a narrator. It quickly became clear that writing “I, Joanna . . .” and “I, Julie . . .” would not work. We tried to create a composite character with composite children, but it didn’t feel authentic. We wanted to use real stories from our own families. As you’ll see, while we collaborated on the entire book, we settled on writing in our individual voices. You will see the name Joanna or Julie under each chapter heading to let you know who is narrating that section.

All the stories told by characters in our book actually happened. Names and other identifying details have been changed, but in all cases real live children and real live parents and professionals really did say and do these things.

PART I

THE ESSENTIAL TOOLBOX



Chapter One

Tools for Handling Emotions . . .

What's All the Fuss about Feelings?

—When kids don't feel right, they can't behave right

Joanna

Most of the parents in my workshops have been pretty impatient with this first topic: helping children deal with difficult feelings. They'd like to move right on to the second session: how to get your kids to do what you tell them to do! Not that we don't care about how our kids feel. It's just not generally the first priority for a frazzled parent. Let's face it, if they did as they were told, things would go so smoothly we'd *all* feel great!

The problem is, there's just no good shortcut to getting a cooperative kid. You can try, but you will likely end up knee-deep in a bog of conflict.

Think of those times when you're very glad you're not being filmed for reality television. The times when you're screaming at a kid so hard your throat aches; you've just told him for the hundredth time not to shove his little sister near the stove, or pull the elderly dog's ears—“*He will BITE YOU! And you will DESERVE IT!!*”—and your child remains oblivious.



How to Talk So Little Kids Will Listen

I'm guessing those were times when you were feeling tired, stressed, or upset about something else entirely. If the same incident had occurred when you were feeling more cheerful, you would have shown grace under pressure. Maybe scooped up the little sister or the long-suffering dog, with a quick kiss or a scratch under the chin, and redirected your young savage with an understanding chuckle.

So what's the point of all this? The point is that we can't *behave* right when we don't *feel* right. And kids can't behave right when they don't feel right. If we don't take care of their feelings first, we have little chance of engaging their cooperation. All we'll have left going for us is our ability to use greater force. And since we'd like to reserve brute force for emergencies such as yanking children out of traffic, we've got to face this feelings thing head-on. So let's dig in!

Most of us don't have too much trouble accepting our children's positive feelings. That's pretty easy. *Gosh, Jimmy is your best friend in the world? You love Daddy's pancakes? You're excited about the new baby? How nice. Glad to hear it.*

It's when our children express a negative feeling that we run into trouble.

"What? You hate Jimmy? But he's your best friend!"

"You plan to punch him in the nose? Don't you *dare*!"

"How can you be sick of pancakes? They're your favorite."

"You want me to give the baby *back*? That is a *terrible* thing to say! Don't *ever* let me hear something like that come out of your mouth again!"

We don't want to accept negative feelings because they're so . . . well . . . negative. We don't want to give them any power. We want to correct them, diminish them, or preferably make them disappear altogether. Our intuition tells us to push

Tools for Handling Emotions

those feelings away as fast and hard as possible. But this is one instance in which our intuition is leading us astray.

My mother always tells me, “If you aren’t sure what’s right, try it out on yourself.” Let’s do that. Consider your reaction to this situation:

Imagine you wake up feeling lousy. You didn’t get enough sleep last night and you can feel a headache coming on. You stop to get some coffee before going to work at the preschool and run into a coworker. You say to her, “Boy, I don’t want to go into work today and face all those loud, quarrelsome kids. I just want to go back home, take some Tylenol and spend the day in bed!”

What would your reaction be if your friend:

... denied your feelings and scolded you for your lousy attitude?

“Hey, stop complaining. The kids aren’t that bad. You shouldn’t talk about them that way. Anyway, you know you’ll have a good time once you get there. Come on, let me see that smile.”

... or gave you some advice?

“Look, you’ve got to pull yourself together. You know you need this job. What you should do is get rid of that coffee, drink some soothing herbal tea, and meditate in the car before school starts.”

... or perhaps a gentle philosophical lecture.

“Hey, no job is perfect. That’s just life. There’s no use complaining about it. Dwelling on the negative is not productive.”

... How about if she compared you with another teacher?

“Look at Liz. She’s always cheerful about going to work. And do you know why? Because she is ultra-prepared. She always has really great lesson plans ready, weeks ahead of time.”

How to Talk So Little Kids Will Listen

... Would questions be helpful?

“Are you getting enough sleep? What time did you get to bed last night? Do you think you might be getting a cold? Are you taking vitamin C? Have you been using those Sani-Wipes they have available at the school so you won’t catch germs from the kids?”

Here are some of the reactions we get when we present this kind of scenario in our group:

“I’m never talking to YOU again!” “This is no friend of mine!” “You have NO CLUE!” “I hate you! Go to hell!” “Blah, blah, blah.” “SHUT UP!” “I’ll never talk to you about my problems again; I’m sticking to topics like the weather from now on!” “I feel guilty for making such a big deal about this.” “I wonder why I can’t handle the kids.” “I feel pitiful.” “I hate Liz.” “I feel like I’m being interrogated.” “I feel judged; you must think I’m stupid.” “I can’t say it out loud but I’ll tell you the initials . . . F-you!”

That last response perfectly expresses the intensity of hostility that we sometimes experience when someone denies our negative feelings. We can go quickly from unhappiness to rage when talked to this way, and *so can our children*.

So what *would* be helpful to hear in a situation like this? My guess is that some of your misery would be soothed if someone simply acknowledged and accepted your feelings.

“Ugh. It’s awful to have to go to work when you don’t feel well. Especially when you work with kids. What we need is a nice snowstorm, or maybe a very small hurricane that would shut the school down for just one day.”

Tools for Handling Emotions

When their feelings are acknowledged, people feel relieved: *She understands me. I feel better. Maybe it's not so bad. Maybe I can handle it.*

Do we actually talk to our kids this way—correcting them, scolding them, interrogating them, and lecturing them when they express a negative feeling? The group has no trouble coming up with examples. Here are some of the most common.

Denial of feelings:

“You don’t really hate school. You’ll have fun once you get there. You know you like playing with the blocks.”

Has any child ever responded, “Oh yeah, you’re right. You just reminded me that I *do* love school!”

Philosophy:

“Look, kiddo, life isn’t fair! You’ve got to stop it with the ‘He got more, hers is better.’”

How likely is it that your child will reply, “Gee whiz, I was all upset, but now that you explained to me that life isn’t fair, I feel so much better. Thanks, Dad!”

Questions:

“Why did you throw sand when I just told you not to?”

What child says, “Hmm, why did I? I guess there’s no good reason. Thanks for pointing that out. It won’t happen again.”

Comparison:

“Look at how Olivia is sitting quietly and waiting her turn!”

How to Talk So Little Kids Will Listen

Whose child would say, “Oh gosh, I will try to be more like Olivia!” It’s more likely she’ll feel like giving Olivia a bonk on the head.

Lecture:

“Why do you always want a toy as soon as your brother starts playing with it? You had no interest in it a minute ago. You just want to take it away from him. That’s not very nice. Anyway, that’s a toy for babies and you’re a big girl now. You should be more patient with your little brother.”

And where is the child who responds, “Do go on, dear mother. I’m learning so much from this speech. Let me just jot down a few notes on my iPad so I can go over these points later.”

Okay, okay, I hear you say. But it’s easy to be empathic with a grown-up friend. Grown-ups are civilized! Little kids aren’t like that. They are way less logical. My friends don’t keep me up at night. At least not most of them. I don’t have to get my friends to go to school, or brush their teeth, or stop hitting their siblings. Pretending my child is an adult is not going to cut it. If an adult friend behaved like my child, she would not be my friend for long.

All right, I get it. We can’t treat our children like we treat our adult friends. But if we want their willing cooperation instead of their hostility, we need to find a way to use the same principle of acknowledging feelings when a person is in distress.

Let’s peer into our toolbox and see how we can modify our stockpile for use with the younger set.