

FAMILY FOOD FOR BABIES, TODDLERS, ANYONE!

W20¹⁰ \$5.95
PRACTICAL PARENTING ELTHAM/NA
GG 1F 21/04
931339800037005

practical parenting

We're online!
Check out PP's new website

www.practicalparenting.com.au

MAY 2010
\$5.95 (inc GST)
NZ \$6.95 (inc GST)

Australia's favourite parenting magazine

THE MAGIC WORD THAT STOPS tantrums

BABY'S FIRST BOTTLE
made easy

The key to a **positive labour & birth**

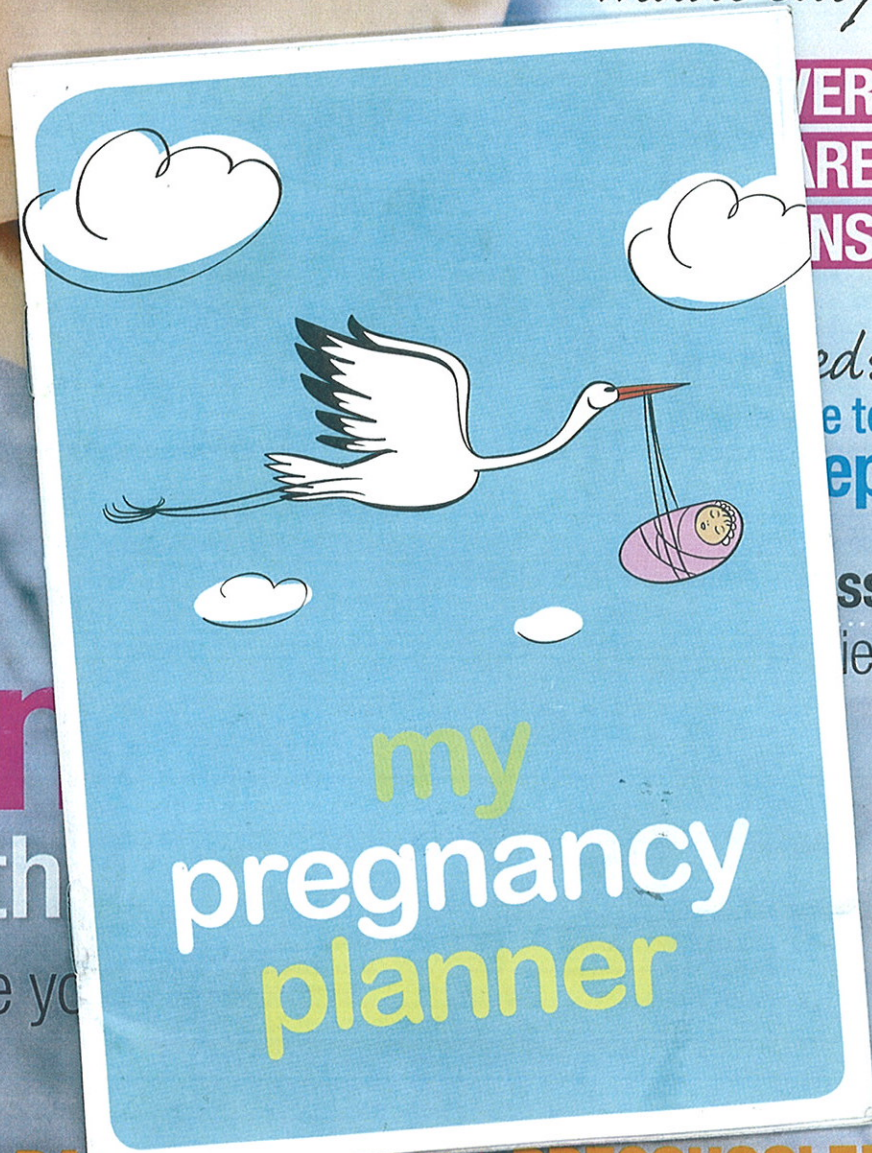
The **FACTS** about **Down syndrome** scans & tests

VER
RE
NS

ed?
e to
ep

SS
iet

Stay in
with
(while yo



Pacific magazines
931339810003701
PRINT POST APPROVED PP255003/08794

PREGNANCY ★ BIRTH ★ BABY ★ TODDLER ★ PRESCHOOLER

Turn NO into YES

If you want to avoid the meltdown that comes with saying 'no' to your toddler, then you just need to be creative, says **Lou Harvey-Zahra**



Say the word 'no' to a persistent toddler and you can almost guarantee a tantrum will follow! According to author Lou Harvey-Zahra, how you respond to your toddler can be worded in such a way as to avoid meltdowns while still keeping the boundaries. In this extract from her book, Lou shows you how to do it.

Getting creative

Did you know that there are many ways to say the word 'no'? A little creativity can definitely avoid a tantrum. Play a game with yourself; try not to say the word 'no' to your toddler today. Save the word for dangerous or unhealthy situations (definitely shout 'no' when your child is about to run onto the road!).

Avoiding the word 'no' does not mean allowing your child to do whatever they please; most definitely not. This can

be a misunderstood tool; it does not mean to cave in to avoid a scene, or to say 'yes' when your better judgement is 'no'. 'No' often means not now, I am busy, or not in that way. A child's requests are often fine if reconsidered in a modified form, or if given a suitable timeslot later in the day or week. Saying 'no' a different way so that your child feels heard, his request acknowledged, provides a win-win situation for everyone, even though the outcome is still in your hands.

Often as parents, we say 'no' when it could be 'yes' with a little creativity. Explain to your child in a fun and reassuring way when her request can happen, or offer another interesting choice or activity instead. If the child still asks for the first thing, stand your ground and repeat your creative answer [see *Talk the Talk*, right]. If our children keep repeating their original request,

my husband sometimes pipes up (with a grin), 'I am the boss, you are not the boss, I am the boss!'

No means no

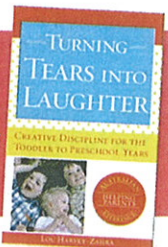
Of course, some things are a definite 'no', especially if they're related to danger or unhealthy habits. Every family has their own personal boundaries over specific activities, food choices and so on. If you know that the request will never be granted, then after saying 'no' (and offering an appropriate alternative if deemed suitable), provide a short, age-appropriate explanation as to why. This teaches the young child appropriate choices for the future. If the child knows that the activities or food choice will never be given, or will only be allowed in a specific weekly rhythm, this can ease a child's pestering. Consistency is the key.

Often, when parents are in a hurry



they say 'no' as an immediate response. If the word is creatively changed for small, everyday requests, everyone will be smiling. 'We'll see' is a good phrase to have up your sleeve, as you make your mind up, or as a neutral response instead for 'No'. For older children, 'no' (combined with a short explanation) can be used more frequently, as the child develops stronger reasoning skills. If a young child expresses a desire, finding a creative way to meet that desire generally results in a happier child. It also teaches good skills for life as they learn to fulfil your requests, and other people's, creatively too! **PP**

Extracted from *Turning Tears Into Laughter: Creative Discipline for the Toddler to Preschool Years* by Lou Harvey-Zahra, Five Mile Press, rrp \$12.95



Talk the talk

The following are some examples of how to avoid overuse of the 'N' word:

Child: I want a fizzy drink, icy pole, lollies!

Parent: Let's make icy poles at home. We'll squeeze the oranges and freeze the juice in our icy-pole containers together. You can put the sticks in.

Child: Can I have a biscuit? (it is breakfast time).

Parent: Yes, darling – you can have a biscuit for morning tea. Let's rest it here on the plate so that we remember, and get teddy to watch over it.



Child: I want you to read me a story (you are busy with something).

Parent: Yes, look through all the pages to find your favourite picture. Remember to look at them all. We will look at it together when I finish washing up, or come and help me with the washing up; we can read a story later.

Child: I want to balance on the wall to the shops (you are in a hurry for an appointment).

Parent: Another day, let's race to the lights now: ready, steady, go, let's run!



Child: I want to watch TV.

Parent: Let's create a den for you instead; it is a great day to play. TV day is Saturday.

Child: I want to make a cake (you are just going out the door).

Parent: Good idea, we can bake a cake after lunch, ready to take to Nanny's tomorrow.

Child: I want... from the toyshop.

Parent: What a great idea, let's put it on your Christmas list; let me write it down now. Children have usually forgotten by Christmas time, or asked for another five things!

Child: I want to play for longer in the park!

Parent: Five more minutes, one minute, thirty seconds, one more turn, three more pushes on the swing (any little amount of time to a child is better than saying 'no').

Child: I would like more cake.

Parent: A tiny piece and that is all.

Top tips

It will take time for this tool to become a habit, to create alternatives to the word 'no' while still holding the boundaries. Here are a few ideas from my parent group to help with creative answers:

- 'Yes, when we have finished with...' Explain when it can happen, if the request cannot happen right away.
- 'Yes, how about this...' Give an alternative choice that is more in keeping with your boundaries.

- 'That's a great idea, how about we do it...' Suggest an alternative time.
- 'Let me place it here (place food or activity somewhere) so we remember for later.'
- 'Okay, what about ...' Give an alternative choice or later time.
- 'I would love to, how about we do it...' Again, explain a suitable time, or alternative choice.
- 'One more and that's it,' when responding to requests for play.
- 'A little bit and that's all,' when responding to requests for food.



Warrandyte's Lou Harvey-Zahra has written a book to share parenting strategies.

N38DT164

Creative child-changer

WARRANDYTE'S Lou Harvey-Zahra is Australia's answer to television parenting saviour *Supernanny*.

She has more than 15 years experience working with children and is now sharing her secrets for successful parenting with the world.

The primary school teacher, playgroup and manager, parenting class teacher and mother of two has written a book to give parents some child-raising strategies.

The book - *Turning Tears into Laughter: Creative Discipline during the Toddler and Preschool Years* - is Harvey-Zahra's first and provides practical advice and hints on being a positive role model and parent.

She said while she didn't consider herself the "perfect parent", she believed there were some simple ways to transform diffi-

cult behaviour by thinking creatively.

"This book is about giving parents ideas on how to change behaviour in a positive and fun way," she said. "Every time a child is misbehaving, a parent has a choice on how to manage behaviour."

"Sometimes parents just run out of ideas and this book provides some creative and practical strategies for achieving positive behaviour."

Harvey-Zahra said the book was designed to be easy for busy parents to read.

"The book contains real-life stories from real-life mums so people feel like they are not alone," she said.

Turning Tears into Laughter: Creative Discipline during the Toddler and Preschool Years is available at bookstores. Details: www.skiptonmylouparenting.com

Author's book could save a lot of anguish

Local author Lou Harvey-Zahra is convinced that "creative discipline" can be a most useful tool when dealing with bad behaviour—such as tantrums—among young children.

So convinced that she has written a book, *Turning Tears Into Laughter—creative discipline for the toddler to pre-school years*.

Ms Harvey-Zahra is a primary and special needs teacher who lives in Warrandyte with her husband, two children "and an array of furry friends".

For the past 10 years she has been leading playgroups and facilitating parenting classes, supporting families with pre-school-aged children.

"Young children have not yet developed strong social, reasoning and communication skills," Ms Harvey-Zahra explains. "Is their behaviour explorative behaviour, not misbehaviour? Merely punishing a toddler who hasn't yet learned these things will not go to the root of the behaviour or teach new skills for life."

"Using creative discipline to teach children appropriate behaviours can actually mean that no restrictive (harsher) methods are required."

What is "creative discipline" and how does it work? You'll have to buy Lou's book to find out. It's published by The Five Mile Press, recommended price \$12.95. Go to www.fivemile.com.au.

—TURNING—
TEARS INTO
LAUGHTER

CREATIVE DISCIPLINE FOR THE
TODDLER TO PRESCHOOL YEARS



LOU HARVEY-ZAHRA

