



# Power Struggle SOS

A child cannot have a power struggle by himself: It's OUR emotional response that causes a power struggle, *not* our kid's.

*Our goal is to tolerate, allow for and suspend judgment of our kids' big and unpleasant feelings while simultaneously upholding loving and firm boundaries.*

## Offensive Strategies:

1. **Give choices as often as possible.** *Do you want pretzels or crackers? Do you want your iPad time now or after dinner?*
2. **"Catch" your child "being good."** Use specific concrete praise and attach it to a character trait - "you are being such a great helper," "that was so kind of you to share."
3. **Schedule daily Special Time.** Consistent one-on-one time with your child is the key to decreasing most behavioral issues.
4. **Give your child "the plan."** Get in the habit of giving your child "the plan" throughout the day.
5. **Minimize transitions.** Fewer things on the schedule = fewer things to protest!

## Defensive Strategies:

1. **Disengage.** Stay calm and do not take your child's bait!
2. **Mirror and Validate.** Empathically reflect back what your child is communicating with you.
3. **Give a Choice NOT an Order.** Short and sweet, no lectures, no reasoning, no lengthy explanations.
4. **Repeat the Choice, then Follow Through.** If your child continues to protest, repeat the choice *once* then take action.

## Additional Tips:

- Ask yourself: how can I give my child more power in this situation?
- Be kind AND firm
- Follow through and stay away from threats
- Collaborate and involve your child
- Really listen to your child's side