

## **Parenting Tip from Nancy Samalin: Don't Bribe for Good Behavior**

How many times have you offered your kids rewards for simple things like eating their vegetables or cleaning their room? This kind of bribery communicates loud and clear, "OK, I give up. I don't believe I can make you do what's right. So, what's it worth to you?"

Bribery may get immediate results, but it can backfire in the long run, especially if you allow this kind of deal making to become a pattern. If kids learn that there's a trade-off (is pay-off better?) for good behavior, they will do the right thing only because they expect a reward, not because they WANT to do the right thing or because they respect your authority.

Instead of a bribe, give a direction. For example, instead of bribing with:

"If you dry the dishes, I'll give you money to buy a comic."

Instead, give clear directions:

"The dishes need drying. I need your help." or "Those dishes are looking for a capable dish-drier and you're it!"

You can still offer rewards for good behavior, but be aware of how you state the reward.. Instead of: "If you brush your teeth, I'll read you a story." try saying "After you brush your teeth, it will be time for a story." A small change in language will take bribery out of your parenting style and help you be more authoritative.

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Adapted from Nancy's new book, "LOVING WITHOUT SPOILING." For Nancy's 99 other tips for avoiding power struggles using positive discipline and much more, you can order a copy of the book from Amazon.com, or look for it in your local bookstore:

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0809295512/nancysamaliparen>