

Stop that dreadful whining!

Whining is very irritating and annoying for parents. It is a drawn out, complaining way of speaking, often in an irritating tone of voice, and is an unacceptable way of making requests or comments. Children often whine when they want something, or when they are asked to do something they do not want to do, or when children become frustrated because things do not go the way they expect.

When parents give in to whining, children are being accidentally rewarded. Children may learn that they are more likely to get what they want if they keep whining. Yes, by giving in to the child, the whining will stop, but it is likely to happen again next time they want something.

When your child starts whining, tell them that they need to speak nicely. Then ignore any more whining until they use a nice voice. At first your child's behaviour may get worse when you start to ignore their whining. Some children hit, kick or pinch their parents; others may throw themselves on the floor in a tantrum. You need to consistently remember to ignore them until they use their nice voice. When they do ask nicely or speak nicely to you then remember to give them praise for it.

When children do ask with a nice voice, you need to respond to their request. Sometimes you will need to say "No" even if your child has asked nicely. Learning to accept No is an important part of growing up. If the request is reasonable, praise your child for asking nicely, and give them what they want. If you need to say no, praise your child for asking nicely, then refuse the request in a calm voice giving a reason why they can't have what they are asking for. It is also a good idea to suggest something they could do instead: *"That was really nice asking, but it will be dinner time soon so you cannot have a biscuit. You could go and watch TV until dinner is ready."*

If you would like more information on this or any other parent advice please call Brenda the SKIP Coordinator at the Nelson Kindergarten Association.