

DOES YOUR CHILD KNOW HOW TO PUSH YOUR BUTTONS?

They do this because they are very smart and learn very quickly where the payoff lies. In other words, children take on the behaviors that work for them.

The simplest and most effective way to stop children from pushing your buttons is **to figure out *why* and *what your child does or says to affect you*** in such a way that you lose patience, become frustrated or just flat out give in. When parents stop reacting out of a sense of heightened emotion, children will change their behavior as well.

When your child is pushing your buttons try the following steps:

- 1. Reinforce your decision; by calmly restating your decision to your child.**
- 2. Ignore your child's behavior with great determination.**

If your child is making you angry, when pushing your buttons be sure you:

- 1. Set limits BEFORE you get angry.**
- 2. Make and post a list of acceptable ways to handle anger.**
- 3. Take a five minute break.**
- 4. Listen to your anger, rather than acting on it.**
- 5. Remember that "expressing" your anger to another person can reinforce and escalate it.**
- 6. WAIT before disciplining.**
- 7. Avoid physical force, no matter what.**
- 8. Avoid threats.**
- 9. Monitor your tone and word choice.**
- 10. Consider that you're part of the problem.**
- 11. Still angry?**
- 12. Choose your battles.**
- 13. Keep looking for effective ways to discipline that encourage better behavior.**
- 14. If you frequently struggle with your anger, seek counseling.**

No hitting, No swearing, No calling your child names, or No giving out any punishment while angry. What about screaming? Never at your children, that's a tantrum. If you really need to scream, go into your car with the windows rolled up and scream where no one can hear, and don't use words, because those make you angrier.

If you need some support with this, do not be afraid to ask for help. Call the 24-Hour Crisis Response at 952-891-7171.

Resources:

<http://www.co.dakota.mn.us/HealthFamily/ChildProtection/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://missingsecrettoparenting.com/kids-push>

<http://ahaparenting.com>