



Words in a Toothpaste Tube

We are learning about caring. We are learning that poor choices cannot always be undone.

Here are some things you can do at home:

- **Words in a tube.** This is an activity we did in our program. You need toothpaste, a plate, and a popsicle stick.
 - You and your child first think of things that people say that make you sad. For each thing that has made you sad, gently squeeze a small glob of toothpaste on the plate.
 - Tell your child, “Saying unkind things is like squeezing the toothpaste out of the tube.” Ask what you both can do if you have said something that is hurtful or you do not mean. (You are looking for the answers “Say I am sorry.” or “Use kind words.”)
 - As your child starts to say kind things, try to put the toothpaste back into the tube with the popsicle stick. It will not work very well. Say something like “Oh no! We cannot put the toothpaste back in with kind words!”
 - Ask your child if it is good to say unkind things. Let your child know it is better to use kind words and show caring than to have to clean up a mess!
 - When your child is not choosing kind words, remind them of the toothpaste lesson. Tell them we want to care about their friends’ feelings, just as if we want to keep the toothpaste in the tube.

- **Paper Crumple:**
 - Have your child crumple a piece of paper into a ball. Tell them that when they say mean things and do mean things to others it makes their feelings hurt and crumpled like this piece of paper.
 - After the paper has been crumpled, open it back up and ask your child to smooth out the paper again. As hard as your child tries, the paper will never be as smooth as it was before it was crumpled up.

(continued on back)

- Explain that the piece of paper is like them. No matter how sorry they are when they make a friend feel bad, it is hard to make friends feel all better after their feelings are hurt.
- You can try this activity with a heart-shaped piece of paper. Cut a heart out of a piece of paper or a newspaper. Crumple the heart and go through the steps above and talk about how it is not possible to get the heart as smooth as it was in the beginning.
- When your child says something that makes someone else sad, remind them of the toothpaste or the crumpled paper. You could do the toothpaste activity or the crumpled paper again to help your child remember that it is hard to undo bad choices.
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