

# ***DEL CERRO ELEMENTARY PRESENTS: PEARLS OF LOVE AND LOGIC***

***Special Thoughts on Raising Kids***

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## **Meaning Business**

Meaning business does not mean shouting or being mean. Yet countless parents at shopping centers and fast food restaurants shout to their kids, "No, you can't have that, and I **mean** it!" Recently, I heard a mother pleading, "Joycie, please, come on. How many times do I have to tell you!"

### **Summary of Rules for Meaning Business:**

- 1) Avoid saving a child from the naturally occurring consequences of his or her mistakes. This does not mean that we don't care! We care, we simply do not rescue. We say, "How sad you have to stay after school," rather than, "Get your homework done!" There is an exception to this rule. If the child is doing something that is likely to cause danger to life and limb, parents must stop it.
- 2) Parents who mean business do not give warnings. For instance, if the children are misbehaving, wise parents might say, "Will you guys please take it outside" - rather than saying - "If you continue to stuff noodles up your nose I'm going to have to ask you to leave the table."

- 3) Important talk means **quiet** talk. Never, but never, try to out-shout a child. Quiet parent talk might be, "I'm sorry you won't be going with us." Or "I was planning to leave with you at eight o'clock, but now I'm simply planning to leave at eight o'clock." Kids learn at a very young age, "Gee, they're talking soft! I'd better listen."

- 4) Parents who mean business are slow to tell their children what to do but may often comment on their own actions. For instance: "My tendency is to buy more for people in stores when they don't nag." Or, "I'll be eating dinner tonight with people I'm happy with-that may or may not include you."

In short, the rules for "meaning business" with our children are the same rules that are applied to us by businesses in our community. Our banker tends to talk quietly to us. He does not protect us from consequences-if we don't repay the loan, the car is simply repossessed! The real world that our children are entering is a no-nonsense, low-key, no-shouting place with consistent consequences. Parents do well to offer loving concern instead of automatic bail-outs when things go wrong.



***Loving Concern Instead of Shouting  
Matches and Automatic Bail-Outs Work  
Best When Things Go Wrong***