

Teaching Children to Apologize

I'm Sorry By Sam McBratney

Even best friends fight, and when that happens, it is hard to say, "I'm sorry." Share this book with your child and talk about how to apologize to a friend.

Apologizing may bruise our dignity and pride. That is what makes it so difficult for children (and adults). But if we teach our children to apologize in meaningful ways, we can keep minor squabbles from escalating into major conflicts. Use these tips from social worker, Susan Nichter, to help your child learn to apologize in a meaningful way.

We want children to be able to learn from their mistakes and figure out what they will do differently next time. One way to achieve this goal is to have children apologize using three complete sentences.

- The first sentence should describe what the child did or said that was wrong.
- The second sentence explains why it was wrong.
- The third sentence asks for forgiveness.

An example would be, "I said words to you that were mean and unkind. It was wrong because I hurt your feelings. Will you forgive me?" Using the guideline of three sentences will help children think and express themselves better. This approach is much more effective than a muttered, "I'm sorry."

Adapted with permission from Susan Nichter, LSW, of Greenfield, IN. To find out more about how to help children to take responsibility for their own actions, contact snichter@gcsc.k12.in.us.

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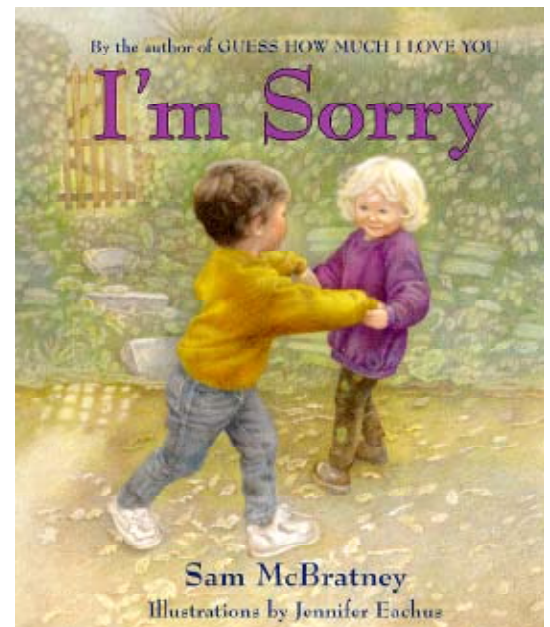
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