

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Fell Like Your Kids Running the Show?
- Quick Tip: A Deal You Can't Refuse?

**WANT TO USE THESE  
ARTICLES IN YOUR  
NEWSLETTER OR ON  
YOUR WEBSITE?**

Email your requests to  
[custcare@parentmagic.com](mailto:custcare@parentmagic.com)

Not a subscriber?  
**SIGN UP NOW!**

ParentMagic Inc  
800 Roosevelt Rd  
Glen Ellyn IL 60137

[www.parentmagic.com](http://www.parentmagic.com)

## FEEL LIKE YOUR KIDS RUNNING THE SHOW?

One of the unfortunate parts of being a parent is that you cannot give your children everything they want. In addition, you must also ask the kids to do things they *don't want to do* (homework, go to bed) and to stop doing some things they *do want to do* (teasing, whining). If you are really doing your parenting job, therefore, along with being warm, caring and supportive, you must also frustrate your kids on a regular basis.

When you are frustrating your little ones, the children have two choices. First, they can cooperate and tolerate the frustration. Second, however, youngsters can engage in what we call *testing and manipulation*. Testing and manipulation are the efforts of frustrated children to get what they want or avoid discipline by getting their parents emotionally confused.

When trying to “press your buttons” like this, a child has a “choice” of six basic tactics. All parents and teachers recognize the tactics we are about to describe!

### THE SIX BASIC TESTING TACTICS

1. *Badgering*: “Please, please, please, please!” or “Why, why, why?” “Just this once! Just this once!” “Mom! Mom! Mom! Mom! Mom!” There are some children who could have been machine guns during World War II.
2. *Temper*: An aggressive attack or emotional outburst. Younger children, who aren't so good with words, throw themselves on the floor, bang their heads, holler and kick around ferociously. Older kids, whose language skills are more developed, come up with arguments that accuse you of being unjust, illogical or simply a bad parent in general.
3. *Threat*: “I'm going to run away from home!”, “I'll never speak to you again!” and “I'm not eating dinner and I won't do my homework!!”
4. *Martyrdom*: May be kids' all-time favorite! Your daughter indicates that her life has become an incredible burden since you are totally unfair. “No one around here loves me anymore,” “I never get anything” or “You like her more than me!” are examples. Crying, pouting and looking sad or teary can also be effective manipulative devices.
5. *Butter Up*: Here's a switch: Butter up takes an approach that's different from the other testing tactics. Instead of making you feel uncomfortable, the child tries to make



**PARENTING TODDLERS  
TO TEENS COMPLETE  
BOOK & DVD  
LIBRARY**

Be prepared for the challenges of parenting your toddlers, preteens and teens with practical, easy-to-learn, step-by-step guidance.

**SAVE 20%** and get the **1-2-3 MAGIC 4 CD AUDIO SET FREE!**



**BEST VALUE plus FREE GIFT!**

**Order Now**

you feel good. "I think I'll go clean my room. It's been looking kind of messy for the last three weeks. And after that maybe I'll take a look at the garage." Ever heard a parent say, "The only time my son's nice is when he wants something"?

6. *Physical Tactics*: From a parent's perspective, this last form of testing is perhaps the worst. Here the frustrated child may physically attack an adult, break something or run away. Physical methods, of course, are more common in smaller kids.

### WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

Most kids would never be able to describe the underlying mechanics of testing. But we can tell you exactly what's going on. Here's how it works: The child's testing is saying to the parent something like this: "You're making me uncomfortable by not giving me what I want. But now I'm also making you uncomfortable with my badgering, tantrums, ominous statements or feeling sorry for myself. Now that we're both uncomfortable, I'll make you a deal: You call off your dogs and I'll call off mine."

If you do give in and give the child what he wants, you are guaranteed that any testing will stop immediately—in a split second no more hassles. Some people say, "Thank heaven—there's a way of getting rid of testing and manipulation!" There certainly is, but there's a catch. The catch is who's running your house? It isn't you; it's the kids. All they have to do in a conflict is get out their big guns and you are chopped liver.

For many parents being able to enjoy their kids again means being able to manage kids' manipulative behavior quickly and fairly. How do you do that? Recognize manipulation for what it is, never give children what they want when they are testing, and know when it's time to stop talking!

How to manage testing and manipulation, how to enjoy your children, and how to deal with issues from bedtime to whining are thoroughly covered in Dr. Phelan's popular [1-2-3 Magic Parenting Book and DVDs](#). Available at most public libraries and for purchase at our [1-2-3 Magic Store](#), the program is easy to learn, it works!

---

### QUICK TIP: A DEAL YOU CAN'T REFUSE?

Remember that a child who is testing you is offering you a deal: Give me what I want and my badgering, temper tantrum, threat or martyrdom will end—immediately! Does that sound like a deal you can't refuse? Accept it and you're in trouble.



**ParentMagic Inc**  
800 Roosevelt Rd  
Glen Ellyn IL 60137

[www.parentmagic.com](http://www.parentmagic.com)