BOUNDARIES:

HELPING OUR CHILD COOPERATE

- Being in a mindset of: **my child & me are facing the challenge together** rather than me against my child. *We are on the same team!*
- **Validate** our child's wants & offer **empathy**. Let kids express how they feel & reset boundary again.

Examples:
Our child says: "**You never let me do that**!"
We can reply: "**I hear how hard this is for you.**"
Rather than saying: "**That's not true, I let you do ....**"
because this invalidates what our child is telling us.

Our child says: "**You don't care about me!**"
We can reply: "**That must be really hard for you to feel that way**."
Rather than saying: "**Yes, I do care about you!**" because this invalidates what our child is telling us.

Our child says: "**Why! Why do I have to!?**"
As much as possible it's beneficial for children to have an understanding of our reasoning behind our boundaries so that they understand our values, however sometimes when they are in an emotional state it's not the time to have such a discussion.

BOUNDARIES:
HELPING OUR CHILD COOPERATE

When we feel we can have a discussion with our child, then we can share. At times when we feel it's not the time t**o discuss we can simply answer:**
"I see how hard this is for you & how much you wish you didn't have to..."
Rather than saying: "**Because I said so!**"

- **Provide as many choices within our limit.**

Examples: "I can't let you have this, do you want to put it back in it's place or do you need my help?"
"We are leaving the park. Do you want to slide down the slide or go on the swing before leaving?"

- **Giving what our child wants in an imaginative way**. Discussing what it would be like imagining their desire would come to life.
- **The "no" being sandwiched by validation first & then a "yes" that is possible (or choices they can choose from)**.

Example: "I see how much fun it is to spray water everywhere! I can't let you spray water all over the house. Do you want to continue spraying outside or in the bathtub?"
"I see how much you want to go to your friend's house right now. We can't go right now. Do you want to see if they can come here?"

BOUNDARIES:

HELPING OUR CHILD COOPERATE

- **Meet the unmet need** of our child that is getting in the way of having their cooperation. Needs such as hunger & lack of connection. Oftentimes, **connection is lacking** & we tend to not cooperate with individuals we don't feel connected to. At times, our child might have lingering feelings that need to be expressed. We see this when our child has a huge emotional reaction to our "no", when the day before in the same situation they didn't react in that way. This is a sign that they have **emotions that need to be released** & that may have nothing to do with the boundary (children after a day in school tend to have an emotional release right after school due to them keeping in their emotions through out their day).
- **Emotionally prepare our child for the boundary**. This can sound like this:

"We are about to go to the store. I know there's going to be lots of things that you like! it's a really fun store. You can choose one item that you like & we will buy it."

BOUNDARIES:

HELPING OUR CHILD COOPERATE

"I have something to share with you that might be really challenging. I will be going out this evening & (babysitter's name or family member) will be staying with you." We then can listen & offer empathy while still holding our boundaries.

- **Create boundaries together**. Make them part of the process & show them how to make a boundary.

Examples: "How often do you think we need to wash our body?" Create a plan of how many days a week showers will be taken.

"How many hours of sleep do you think our body needs? What do you think is an ideal bedtime for you?" Share sleep charts & calculate the hours their body needs of rest according to the time they wake up in the morning.

"What are the things we do every morning?" Perhaps your child would benefit from a routine chart to visually see the things that need to get done.

"Let's talk about watching TV. How much time do you think is a good amount of time to watch TV?"