

#AskDrV: Help! My Child Is Testing Limits More Than Ever!

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SUMMARY

Dr. Vanessa Lapointe addresses a mother's concerns about her three-year-old daughter's aggressive behavior, emphasizing that the child is testing boundaries to assess the mother's new approach to discipline. Instead of resorting to traditional consequences, Dr. Lapointe advocates for maintaining a connection and reinforcing understanding of appropriate behavior.

- The child is testing limits to ensure the mother can be trusted with her new disciplinary approach.*
- Past consequences may have led to the child feeling insecure about the mother's reactions.*
- The mother's stern responses may have contributed to the child's aggressive behavior.*
- Maintaining a connection while addressing the behavior is crucial for effective discipline.*
- The child's actions are a way of seeking reassurance about the mother's consistency.*
- Dr. Lapointe encourages patience, as behavior may worsen before it improves.*
- A connected approach to discipline fosters trust and emotional security in children.*

I'm dr. Vanessa Lapointe I'm a registered psychologist parenting educator and mom to two growing boys and this is ask dr. V two-year dr. Vanessa my very intelligent three-year-old daughter has recently started hitting me and sometimes hurting me in other ways such as pinching scratching and hair pulling when she doesn't get what she wants in the past my reaction to this was to give a stern face and tell her strongly that we do not hit in our

family when it continued I would give her consequence like taking away her beloved pacifier recently however when this happens I have been instead maintaining the connection with her whilst saying stuff like that has to stop and then talking with her about it later why we don't hurt other people I feel however that the behavior is getting worse she seems to actually enjoy causing me to be upset and she seems calm and in control in these moments she doesn't appear to be in an

emotional state where she can't control herself should I think professional help am I overreacting please help it sincerely Megan here's the thing Megan if you took away my beloved pacifier at the consequence I would hit you too the real truth is but your daughter is testing the limits and she's testing the limits because she has to do that in order to make sure that you can be trusted with this changed way of responding to her if you imagine that

your life-partner were to have taken things away from you that you really loved or consequence you in other ways when you behaved badly towards him or her you would probably take a little bit of time after a change in

his or her behavior in order to really be able to trust that person that they had changed their ways that they could be trusted in this new way of being and that they were in fact somebody safe for you to lean in

on and so your daughter's in exactly that same position she's not real sure yet if you're the kind of big person that can be counted on to go the distance with this new way of being or if you are the kind of big person who the next time in the next time in the next time she gets a little bit challenging or a lot of bit challenging you're gonna lose your cool again and go back to your old ways her job right now

is to make it be worse before it gets better so that she can really make sure you're the kind of big person who has her back and it's prepared to go the distance and so this likely is because of the history of how you have been consequence in her and sort of responding with what I call a disconnected approaches to discipline rather than connected approaches to discipline she's gotta now test it in order to make sure that the change is

legit and for real and remember you've got this