

Laugh & Learn™



Don't Behave Like You Live in a Cave



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Elizabeth Verdick • Illustrated by Steve Mark

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Dedication

For Zach: My sweet boy, who works hard even when his days are hard, and brightens my days with his made-up, one-of-a-kind jokes.

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Oh, Behave!

- Do other kids often give you the “What is *up* with you” look?



- Do people ever ask, “Were you born in a BARN?”

- Do adults say you “act up” or “act out”?
- Do they yell, “Why do you act like this?!” while pulling out their hair?



Maybe you tell them:

It's no "act."
It's just how I am!
I can't HELP it!

And maybe you secretly wonder:

Am I, like, a
PROBLEM CHILD?



Well, no. You're a great kid in many, many ways. But maybe you need to make smarter choices about how you behave at home and school. Why? So . . .

1. You don't get in as much trouble. (That means more time for FUN.)
2. You feel good about yourself and your choices.
3. You get along better with family, friends, classmates, and teachers—and get along better in the world.

You wouldn't be the first kid who needs this kind of help, and you won't be the last. *Lots* of people have difficulty with their behavior at some point in life, for different reasons—adults included. You're not alone!

Chapter 1

What's the Big Deal?

This book isn't about turning you into a "perfect" person, a goody-goody, the teacher's pet, or some kind of **robot-kid**. Instead, it can help you take a look at how you act and how other people *react*. Do your actions help you—or do they hurt you? Keep reading to find out.



A Really Stupid Story



"There," said Cave Girl. "I'm all ready."

Cave Boy took one look at her and burst out laughing. *What was she wearing?* Her new animal-hide outfit looked stupid.

If there was one thing Cave Girl couldn't stand, it was people laughing at her. She screamed "Wedgie!" and gave Cave Boy's loincloth a yank.

Bang, bang, bang! Their cave-guests were at the cave-door. Soon they were all seated around a big stone table, their wooden clubs resting nearby. Cave Boy plunked down a plate of delicious cooked meat and said, "Dig in."

Cave Girl grabbed the biggest piece and stuffed her face. Cave Boy started laughing at her again.

"Cave Girl," he said, "you eat like a *Daeodon*."*

"Are you calling me a stinky old hog?" she asked. She tossed the meat bone in the corner and glared.

"What if I am?" said Cave Boy.

Cave Girl lifted her club. "Shut up, or I'll smash you!"

"I'll smash you right back!" He grabbed his club.

The other cave-kids kept eating. That meat was really good.

Cave Boy and Cave Girl jumped up from the table, clubs raised. They chased each other out the door, yelling threats at the top of their lungs.



* A giant, monstrous prehistoric pig

No one in the cave made a move to stop them because, to be honest, things were easier without those two around.

Cave Girl and Cave Boy were so busy yelling insults at each other that they didn't notice BIG trouble just around the corner . . .

The End

(in more ways than one)



Quick Quiz

And the moral of that cave story is?

- (A) Watch out for hungry saber-toothed tigers.
- (B) Get yourself a really big club.
- (C) Don't behave like you live in a cave.

Answer: C. Easiest quiz ever.



What do Cave Boy and Cave Girl have to do with a modern kid like you? Glad you asked.

Cave Girl was big on wedgies and hitting people with her club. Cave Boy was always taunting people and making a pest of himself. What can you expect? They were Cave Kids—they hadn't evolved much.

You, on the other hand, are evolving quite nicely. But, like any kid, you sometimes do things that make adults go **ARRRRGH!** Soon, they're watching your every move (like hungry saber-toothed tigers). You don't need *that*.

You want the people in your life—grown-ups and kids alike—to look at you and think, "That is one cool kid." Right?

Right.

Sound Familiar?

Uh-oh. You got caught doing something you weren't supposed to do.

Or, you got caught *not* doing something you *were* supposed to do. Either way, it's trouble.



Trouble-makers

Using a whoopee cushion in class

Toilet-papering someone's house

Imitating the teacher

Writing rude jokes on the bathroom wall

Tripping kids in the hall

Farting on your sister

Making your brother eat a bug

Teasing someone in a mean way, then saying "Just kidding"

Making prank phone calls

Aw, I was just messing around.



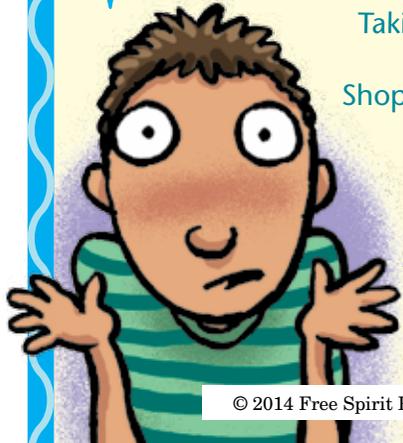
But I
was MAD!

Hitting
Kicking
Punching
Pushing
Screaming
Poking
Slamming doors
Swearing
Making threats
Hurting animals
Damaging property (your own or someone else's)



So? What's
the big deal?

Skipping chores
Avoiding homework
"Borrowing" money from parents without asking
Taking a friend's stuff without permission
Shoplifting candy or gum
Cleaning your room by shoving everything under the bed
Telling rude & crude jokes
Criticizing
Complaining
Mouthing off



Inappropriate is a big word used to describe a bunch of different behaviors—some worse than others. Looking at the lists on pages 9 and 10, you can probably guess that hitting will lead to more trouble than teasing or blowing off a chore. But what if some of the things on the list seem “harmless” to you? Like, is it really so bad to fart on people or tell your parents their meatloaf tastes like barf?

It's true that “bad” behaviors can range from mildly annoying to **YOU'RE GONNA BE SORRY YOU DID THAT**. Some of them hurt others. But no matter how big or small the behaviors may be, they're getting you something called *negative attention*.

Negative attention focuses on what you do wrong, or on what people think you *might* do wrong. That means a lot of:

No!

Stop it!

I'm
warning you!

How many
times do I have
to TELL you?!

Negative attention can come in the form of corrections, threats, and punishments. After a while, you might be so used to that kind of attention you almost forget about the other kind: **positive attention**.

What does **positive attention** look like?

a smile
 a thank you
 praise
 high fives
 hugs
 compliments
 pats on the back

At least, that's what positive attention looks like on the outside. Inside, positive attention can look like pride, confidence, and self-respect.

Throughout this book, you'll learn positive ways to behave. Positive *behavior* often leads to positive *attention*, which then leads to positive *feelings* inside.

a positive + a positive = a **POSITIVE**

Positive attention feels great. Pretty soon, friends might want to spend more time with you. Classmates might notice the *good* things you do. Younger kids might look up to you. Even your cat might start to think you're as cool as canned sardines.

Plus, the adults in your life (maybe the one who handed you this book) will have warm-and-fuzzy thoughts like, "What a *delightful* young man" or "That girl is a real peach."



Most importantly: You'll feel good about YOU.