

FAMILY RESOURCE

CONNECTION

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Young children often experiment with language, frequently as a way of finding out what their limits are.



When a Child Uses Offensive Words

Yes, it happens. A child, just as cute as can be, will open her mouth and you cannot believe the bad words that come out. Other children may follow her lead, and say the same words or add other bad words they have heard. Pretty soon the children have begun to develop some bad language habits. What is a parent or teacher to do?

It might be helpful to sort out the types of "bad" words the children are using. You may want to respond differently if the children are using toileting words, or if the words are sex-related, or offensive to someone's religion.

Toileting Language: Young children, especially around the age of four, are discovering and exploring more and more intriguing things about themselves, including, of course, body parts and "products." At the same time, they are experimenting with the limits of their "powers" and seem to be saying, "How far can I go with this? What can I say and get away with before grownups draw the line?" In many ways (not just in the bad-word department) four-year-olds frequently push us to our limits in an effort to find out exactly where those limits are.

To make matters worse, normally developing four-year-olds express themselves quite clearly at times and delight in playing with words: "Hi Pee-Pee Head", "You're a poopie. You're Snoopy the Poopie."

In situations like this, it is best to ignore the words as much as possible to help avoid the shock value that allows children to think they are really on to something. If that is ineffective, explain to the children that those words are slang words and do not sound very pretty. Tell them the proper names for toileting words and remind them to avoid ugly words such as those they have chosen. Another effective method is to invite the children to create other nonsense words that have nothing to do with toileting. For example: "Tootie-Ta-Ta" or "Do-Re-Me" to allow them some fun with nonsensical words, quenching the need for mischievous humor.

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Mission

To open "New Horizons" of self-esteem and potential for the little people entrusted to our care, their families, and our employees by providing and continuously improving the best child development on the planet!



Language With Sexual References: If a child uses this type of language, it's very likely he has no idea what he's talking about. Try to pretend not to have heard rather than give the child the attention he's probably seeking.

Because everyone wants friends and to be admired, it is important that people of all ages connect with others. The use of bad language is often simply attention-getting behavior. Help the child find other constructive ways to connect with his peers, parents, and teachers. Invite the child to be a helper, organize a game, or assign him a buddy for the day.

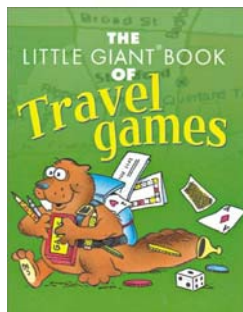
Language Offensive to Someone's Religion: Try to respond to children who use offensive language in reference to God by converting the moment into an empathy lesson. "You may not know this, but those words are very hurtful to some people. If we say those words, we are hurting their feelings." Suggest the child discuss this with his family to find out what they think and how they feel.

People do not all feel the same way about children saying bad words, and they don't all agree about which words, specifically, are bad. But the bottom line is, that through our actions and choice of words we use, children, parents, and teachers must be thoughtful of others. This includes not saying or doing things that can be hurtful to others.

Take a Book on the Road

Summer is here and the time is right for vacations, beaches, road trips, and reading. So pack the suitcases, gather the children, and do not forget an armload of books to keep everyone entertained on those long drives. Here are some books to kick off your summer travel.

The Little Giant Book of Travel Games by Sheila Anne Barry, illustrated by Jeff Sinclair, Sterling Publishing Co., \$6.95; ages 6 and up.

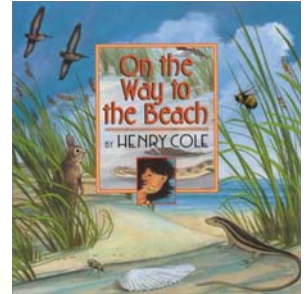


This small paperback will not take up much space in any suitcase. The book is divided into ten chapters and has a key to let you know which activities work best for traveling. Others can be used while waiting in restaurants.

On the Way to the Beach by Henry Cole, Greenwillow Books, \$15.95; ages 4-8.

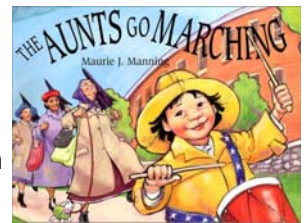
Sometime during a vacation you need quiet time to just sit and look around at whatever you find. Cole shows four areas: woods, marsh, dunes, and beach.

In each of the double-folded pages, the reader searches to find the creatures listed for each area.



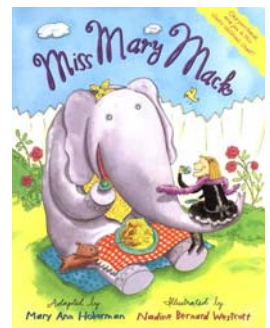
The Aunts Go Marching by Maurie J. Manning, Boyds Mills Press, \$15.95; ages 2-6.

The play on words will catch your attention. If you are going to sing about ants, you might as well sing about aunts as well. A little girl plays her drum, and the aunts go marching in the rain, in their raincoats. Older children will enjoy the word play and understand the multiplying of the aunts.



Sing-Along Stories: Miss Mary Mack by Mary Ann Hoberman, illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott, Little, Brown and Co., \$5.99; ages 3-6.

If you like to sing in the car, *Miss Mary Mack* is a good book to take along. This book is one from a series of seven. The author has included music for the song as well as instructions for the hand clapping game that goes with it.



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