

Ralph Waldo Emerson said *“What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say.”* That sums up the subject of this lesson.

Over 80% of our perception and learning comes through vision, not hearing. In the human brain, neurons devoted to visual processing number in the hundreds of millions and take up about 30% of the brain cortex, as compared with 8% for touch and just 3% for hearing. Our brain is mainly an image processor – not a word processor.

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

The average person speaks approximately 16,000 words per day. The non-verbal part of our communication is not often talked about and yet it is so much more significant in our child’s development. It is important that our children tell us the truth.

Respect

Another area where kids learn through adult’s actions is treating people with respect. Respect is defined by the parent through actions, not words. If the father can do this to the child, the child can do this to others on the playground.

Your Being Watched

Children are watching us more than they listen to us! **We are always teaching them and our actions speak louder than words.** When we teach our values to our children and then we act the opposite way, we are giving our children very conflicting messages. **Our actions need to match our words.** “Honesty isn’t found in the situation, it is found in the person.”

The Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory says people learn by watching others. **Sociologists did a large experiment called the Bobo Doll Experiment.** They didn’t need to go to all that trouble, they could have just asked any mother of little children. **This experiment demonstrated how kids imitate adult behavior.** Researchers discovered that children treated a doll the same way the adults did. If adults lie, cheat or steal, in their everyday life, the chances of children doing the same are very high. Actions are the lessons they will take to heart.

Modeling Good Behavior

Pay attention to your action lessons to your children. Look at areas where your behavior does not line up with your words. Then correct your behavior. **If you do mess up, talk to your child.** We are our children’s first and most important teacher.

No one has or will parent perfectly. Making mistakes is a part of life. We can always start fresh. **Children are resilient. Parents should be too.** Learn all you can about good parenting. Look honestly at yourself and be willing to change for the sake of your child. Admit your mistakes and try again to get it right.