

## Should I threaten a child with jail?

The recent uproar over parents telling their kid she's going to jail has caused quite a stir in the political correctness circles who say threats are dangerous to kids' sense of well being.

**"Should I threaten my child with jail?" is a question you'll have to answer for yourself.**

However, as [this video portrays](#), sometimes a well-placed threat seems to be just what the doctor ordered to scare them straight.

**"Your daddy is right, and on Monday you're going to the police station and you're going to tell them what you did. And you're going to jail." – Parents**

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Blogger, [Thomas Van](#), has a lot to say about this type of parenting, specifically that it's dangerous for their well-being:

**Coercion not only is a terrible parenting philosophy but it causes a lot of emotional and mental damage that lingers into adulthood. – Thomas Van**

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But there's another [contingency](#) out there who disagrees with this mentality entirely:

***So whenever we're thinking about steps like calling the police, I think the important thing is to understand that kids make choices—your child made the choice to hit you, take drugs or destroy your neighbor's property. And I believe you should hold him accountable for that by using whatever appropriate means you have at your disposal. – [James Lehman, MSW](#)***

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### Follow Through is Key

What few experts disagree on is the willingness to follow through with the threat made on the youngster. By teasing a child or telling a child that he or she will face XYZ, then you're setting that

child up for expectations. If an expectation is not delivered, that child will be less likely to believe you next time you practice the coercion tactic.

The classic example, quoted here in its entirety, is "The Boy Who Cried Wolf", a story that should be applied equally to parents:

There was a boy who was bored on the hillside watching his sheep. For fun he cried out, "Wolf! Wolf! The Wolf is coming for the sheep!" The townsfolk ran to him as the boy cried louder and louder, then the boy claimed that he was driving the wolf away. But when the townsfolk came to the top of the hill there was no wolf, and the boy laughed at the sight of their faces, angry and confounded that a boy would make such claims. "Don't cry wolf," the people said. "If there's no wolf!" And they went back down the hill into town and continued their tasks.

Later, the boy screamed out again, "Wolf! Wolf! The wolf is chasing the sheep!" and he laughed naughtily when the townsfolk came to the top of the hill and found him once again without the threat of the wolf under him.

When they saw that there was no wolf, they rebuked the boy, "Don't cry wolf when there are none!" they said. And they all returned down the hill to continue at their tasks.

Later, the little boy saw a REAL wolf coming around him, and he was scared. He raised the alarm just as he had before, crying out, "Wolf! Wolf!" and with a fervant cry he beckoned to the townsfolk to come save he and the sheep.

But the townsfolk thought he was fool of baloney this time and they didn't come at all.

Eventually, they went up the hill to find out why the boy hadn't come home in the evening. But they found the little boy crying.

"There was a wolf here and the flock ran away," the boy said. "He has come up here and eaten my sheep and bitten my leg!"

But the townfolks told him they didn't believe him and rebuked him for calling out before, when there was no wolf at all.

"Nobody believes a liar...even when he is telling the truth!"

And here's the moral of the story if you threaten a child with jail. If you're going to coerce, then make sure you follow through.