Welcome to Spotlight. I’m Liz Waid. And I’m Bruce Gulland. Spotlight uses a special English method of broadcasting. It is easier for people to understand, no matter where in the world they live. A father and his daughter are washing plates and cups after a meal. They sing together as they work. The father says, “Be careful with that cup.” But the girl is not watching what she is doing. She drops the cup and... it breaks. The father is suddenly angry. He uses a loud voice and yells: “If I told you once, I told you a thousand times! You need to be more careful!” The girl looks down at the ground. She cleans up the pieces of the broken cup. The father and daughter continue washing the dishes. But something has changed. This is a common situation in many homes around the world. Many parents raise their voices, or shout and yell, at their children. They do this because they want their children to listen to them. But when parents yell, there may be more going on than they can see. Today’s Spotlight is on yelling at children. No one enjoys being yelled at. When adults shout at other adults there is usually something very wrong. Most people would probably say yelling is not a good thing. Then why do parents yell at children? Yelling happens in situations of high emotion. Parents yell when they feel angry or afraid or frustrated. This means they are more likely to yell when they are feeling stress at work or home, if they are not sleeping enough, or feeling out of control. Yelling can be a way for parents to get what they want. A person yells to tell the world that he is powerful and in control. And yelling seems to work. When parents yell, they can get children to do what they want them to do. This is important in situations of real danger. If a child is about to step into a busy road, then yelling is a good way to stop them. Parents need to keep their children safe. When the child is safe, a parent can tell the child why he yelled. Yelling can also show children that it is ok to have emotions. It is not good to make children feel shame. George Holden is a psychologist. He studies behavior and mental processes. He says that showing emotions can help children. He says, “A small amount of yelling is good for children. If you are angry at the child, it is sometimes okay to express that emotion. The child can learn to deal with negative emotion in other people.” However, yelling can shape a child in negative ways. Meghan Leah is a parenting teacher. She spoke to the Washington Post about yelling. “If you yell at your child, you either create somebody who yells back at you or somebody who feels shame and backs away. You are either creating conflict or growing shame. These are not things that any parents want in their children.” When parents yell, children may obey. But they are also learning about the world. The things they are learning can be very negative. Dr Deema Sihweil is a psychologist at the Human Relations Institute in Dubai. She told The National, "When a child experiences yelling for a long time, it can result in fear, stress, extreme worrying, and trouble sleeping. It can delay growth. It can cause behavioural problems, problems in school, social difficulties, and emotional problems.” When parents yell, children feel that they are in danger. When people feel they are in danger, their brain works differently. They can fight, run away, or stop in place and not be able to move. When this happens to children, chemicals in their brain make it almost impossible for a child to think clearly. Sihweil explains that this is why yelling does not work. “Shouting does not get the message across to children. Because children are too busy defending themselves from a something they think is a danger or real danger. They are not able to understand what the parent is communicating. Some kids who are yelled at a lot stop even listening at all when yelling starts.” If a parent wants to stop yelling at their children there are a few things they can do. In fact, these methods can work for anyone who wants to stop yelling. First, parents need to make sure they understand their own feelings. Parents can ask themselves questions like: Why am I yelling right now? How am I feeling? Did I have a bad day at work? Am I hungry or tired? What did my mother or father teach me about yelling? By knowing his emotions a parent can better help his children manage their emotions. Second, parents can connect with the child to communicate love. Children listen best when they feel safe and loved. A parent can look into her child’s eyes. Touch him gently on the arm or hand. The parent and child should take a deep breath together. This will let the child know that he did something bad, but that he is not bad. Third, parents should not feel bad for a child’s bad choices. Children break things. They test limits. They need to do these things to understand the world. They need to become their own person. Finally, parents can walk away. There are times when parents need some time alone to calm down. But tell children, “I need to leave for a minute, but I will come back”. Telling a child that you will return tells her that the relationship is not broken. It shows that even when people need space, they will return. Being a parent is a difficult job. No parent is perfect all the time. Most parents want the best for their children. They want to raise children to be good adults. But parents make mistakes. Sometimes parents yell - even when they do not want to yell. Parents can feel shame and embarrassment when they make mistakes. And sometimes parents need to ask for forgiveness from their own children. So yelling may not work well, but love and forgiveness always do. Did you grow up in a home where people yelled? Do you think yelling has affected you? Tell us what you think. You can leave a comment on our website. Or email us at radio@radioenglish.net. You can also comment on Facebook at Facebook.com/spotlightradio. The writer of this program was Adam Navis. The producer was Michio Ozaki. The voices you heard were from the United States and the United Kingdom. All quotes were adapted for this program and voiced by Spotlight. You can listen to this program again, and read it, on the internet at www.radioenglish.net. This program is called, ‘Yelling Is Not Teaching’. Look for our listening app in the Google Play Store and in iTunes. We hope you can join us again for the next Spotlight program. Goodbye.