

Do you ever think about the impact of what you say to your children? When I was parenting I tried to use techniques that were healthy and promoted good communication with my children. I did not feel that I bribed the children to do things. I felt that I gave them choices and let them pick the option that they wanted. My son, who is now twenty years old, was telling his new girlfriend that I used to bribe him to stay at the mall shopping.

My son brought his girlfriend to the house to meet us. They were sitting at the kitchen counter visiting with me as I was making lunch for us. I took out a new platter that I had bought recently and my son commented that he had not seen it before. I explained that I had recently bought it. He explained to his new friend that I love to shop. He went on to tell her that I used to bribe him to stay at the mall longer with Mrs. Fields cookies. Of course I denied ever doing this. The funny thing was that I had a box of fresh baked Mrs. Fields cookies that I had went to the mall to buy because I knew that my son liked them. My memory of shopping with him was that he would always be good and go from store to store because he knew that he would get to pick a treat. His memory was that he had to be good in order to get a Mrs. Fields cookie.

My son laughed when I showed him the familiar red box with his favorite white chocolate with macadamia nuts cookies in it. He promised to clean his plate at lunch so he could have one of the treats. After they left I was talking to my husband about this as we were cleaning up the dishes. I told him that I honestly did not think I used bribery to get the children to behave. He could not understand why I thought this was such a big deal. Both of our children turned out great with few problems and bright futures. They have pleasant personalities and seem to make and keep friends easily. My husband's feel is that what ever we did seemed to have worked. Our children also like to come home and spend time with us and seem to value any advice that we can give them. He laughed and told me that when we go shopping he tries not to complain so that we can stop and get Mrs. Fields cookies. His favorite are the double chocolate chunk cookies. At least now I know why my son and husband seem to be such good shoppers.