

Have a New Kid by Friday

How to Change Your Child's
Attitude, **B**ehavior & **C**haracter
in **5 Days**

Dr. Kevin Leman



Revell

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Introduction

They're Unionized . . . and Growing Stronger

Your kids have a game plan to drive you bonkers . . . but you don't have to let them call the shots.

I've got news for you. Since the beginning of time, kids have been unionized, and they've got a game plan to drive you bonkers. Don't believe it?

Take a look around. You tell me what you see in malls, stores, restaurants, and even your own living room.

What about the toddler who cries until she wears her mother down and gets to go not only *once* but *three times* on the carousel?

The teenager who yells, "Bleep you!" at his dad and stalks off?

The dad who allows his overweight 12-year-old to fill the grocery cart with Twinkies, Oreos, Coke, and Salerno Butter Cookies, then simply shrugs when the boy downs two packs of Twinkies as they stand in the checkout line?

The 7-year-old who gives his mom the “I dare you to do anything about it here” steely glare as he pushes the broccoli off his plate and watches it fall to the floor at the restaurant?

The 16-year-old who flips off her dad for not giving her money for a movie, then demands the car keys for the evening?

The 14-year-old dressed in all black who has “attitude” written all over her and gives every sign of going the wrong direction?

The 3-year-old who spends his day screaming, to make sure his parents appease his every whim?

It all goes to show that in today’s society, children even shorter than a yardstick are calling the shots. They’re part of the entitlement group—they expect anything and everything good to come their way, with no work on their part, just because they exist. In their eyes, the world *owes them*—and owes them big time. Some hedonistic little suckers of the ankle-biter battalion have even graduated to emeritus status and are holding down the hormone group division. Then there are the already-adult children who return home to your cozy little nest and stay and stay and stay. . . .

You know all about that too. If you picked up this book, you did so for a reason. Have you just about had it? Do you want to see some things—or a lot of things—change in your house? It isn’t always the big things that wear you down. It’s the constant battles with attitudes and behaviors like eye rolling, talking back, fighting with siblings, giving the “silent treatment,” and slamming doors. It’s the statements like, “You can’t make me do it!” and “I hate you!” flung into your face as your child retreats once again to his bedroom. It’s the exhaustion and stress of dealing with children who start swinging from the minute they get up.

Maybe your child’s behavior has embarrassed you (you could have done without your son’s all-out tantrum in the mall or your daughter’s belly button and nose rings, which she revealed for the first time when you had a business associate over for dinner), and you know it’s time to do something. Maybe you’ve been held

hostage from certain activities because of your children's actions ("Well, honey, I don't know if we should go out to dinner with the Olsons; you know how the kids get"). Or maybe you're seeing active signs of disrespect and rebellion, and you're worried about where your child is headed next.

I'll be blunt. You've got a big job to do and a short window in which to do it. I know, because I've raised 5 children—4 daughters and 1 son—with my wife, Sande. The years go far too quickly.

If you believe that you, as a parent, are to be in healthy authority over your child, this book is for you. If you don't believe that you, as a parent, are to be in healthy authority over your child, put this book down right now and buy another. You won't like what I have to say, you won't do it, and you'll complain about me to your friends.

But let me ask you something first: how do you feel after an hour of yelling at your kids to get up in the morning in time to catch the school bus? Could there be a better way?

What if you did something different? What if you *didn't* wake them up this morning? What if you did nothing at all?

"But, Dr. Leman," you're saying, "I can't do that. They'd be late for school. And I'd be late for work."

Now you're catching on.

How do you feel after listening to your children bicker constantly over who gets the bathroom first? Over who wore whose shirt and left it in a heap on the floor?

How do you feel after listening to your children bellyache over what you packed them for lunch?

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down. It's the
constant battles.*

*How do you feel
after an hour of
yelling at your
kids to get up
in the morning
in time to catch
the school bus?*

What if you didn't intercede in the sibling battles? What if you didn't play peacemaker or rush to wash your daughter's favorite shirt in time for her to wear it to school? What if you didn't pack any lunch at all?

Ah, now you're getting it.

There *is* a better way, and you're holding it in your hand.

Did you know that your job as a parent is not to create a happy child? That if your child is temporarily unhappy, when he or she does choose to put a happy face back on, life will be better for all of you?

When your child yells, "You can't make me do it!" he's right. You can't *make* him do something. But if he chooses not to be helpful, you don't have to take him to the Secretary of State to get his driver's license either.

You see, nothing in life is a free ride. The sooner children learn that, the better. Every person is accountable, regardless of age, for what comes out of his mouth. And homes should be based on the cornerstones of mutual respect, love, and accountability. There is no entitlement. If you play the entitlement game in your home, you'll create BratZ—with a capital Z. You'll create children who think they are in the driver's seat of life's car. Who think that their happiness is what's most important in life, and that they are "entitled" to not only what they want but anything and everything they want, when they want it.

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Many of us have unwittingly done this to our kids. We've spent far too much time snowplowing our child's road in life—making far too many decisions for her, giving him too many choices, letting him off the hook or making excuses when he's irresponsible, ignoring the little and big ways she disses us. After all, you want your child to like you, don't you? No wonder kids think they're in charge, and parental threats and cajoling don't work!

Many moms in particular tell me they feel like slave dogs, doing whatever their kids want them to do. And they're exhausted by the end of the day. (If you're saying, "Amen, brother!" read on.)

There are all sorts of experts who talk about boosting a child's self-esteem. They promise that if you praise your child for this and that and smooth his road in life, you'll land in the wonderful world of Oz and live happily ever after. But I'm here to tell you, after nearly 4 decades of helping families—as well as parenting 5 kids with my lovely wife—that often the opposite is true with that approach. Far too many families have landed on a stretch of road where they wish they had never gone.

You want your child to emerge as a healthy, contributing member of your family and society, right? *Have a New Kid by Friday* is a game plan guaranteed to work. *Every time*. It'll help to produce the responsible adult you'll be proud to call your son or daughter now and down the road. It'll ratchet down the stress level in your home and give you freedom you've never experienced before in your parenting. It'll even provide some chuckles along the way. (Just wait until Fun Day! More on that later.)

If you're thinking, *This sounds too good to be true. There's got to be a catch*, you're right. There *is* a catch—you. *You* are the key to changing your child's thinking and actions. For this to work, it requires you to become the kind of parent you want to be. It requires your decision to stand up and be a parent rather than a pushover. So give me 1 week to change *your* thinking and actions, and you'll be amazed at the results!

There will be times in this book when you're going to squirm because you're not going to like the suggestions. But I can offer you a 100 percent guarantee: if you follow the simple strategies in *Have a New Kid by Friday*, in just 5 days you'll have a good kid on your hands. A kid who has figured out that life isn't all about him. That other people do count in life. A kid who says thank you for the things you do for him. You'll have a new atmosphere of mutual respect, love, and accountability in your home. And you

just might find a smile creeping onto your face far more often than you could have imagined.

How can I guarantee that your relationship with your child can change so dramatically in just 5 days? Because I've seen this transformation in hundreds of thousands of families *every time* these strategies are followed!

Have a New Kid by Friday isn't just any old book. It's a game plan that *really works*. Even better, anyone can do it. It doesn't take

a PhD in rocket science. Want to have a great kid? Want to be a great parent? Take the Leman 5-day challenge.

If you're thinking, This sounds too good to be true. There's got to be a catch, you're right.

On Monday, I'll reveal what your kid's life strategy really is—and why he continues to do the things that drive you bonkers.

On Tuesday, we'll talk about the 3 most important things every parent wants for their child—and how to teach them in a way the child will never forget.

On Wednesday, we'll take a look down the road. Who do you want your child to be? What kind of parent do you want to be? You can get there with my time-tested "3 Simple Strategies for Success."

On Thursday, we'll identify the 3 pillars of true self-worth and learn how to develop them in your child.

Want to have a great kid? Want to be a great parent? Take the Leman 5-day challenge.

On Friday, you get to be the shrink. We'll review the principles and the action plan you've been developing since Monday and get ready to launch it upon your unsuspecting children.

The "Ask Dr. Leman" section provides practical advice on over 100 of the hottest topics in parenting. Read it straight through A to Z or use the index in the

back of the book for a quick find.

Then there's what I call "Fun Day." It's my favorite day of all. After launching your plan, you get to sit back and watch the fun . . . and the confusion on your child's face. It's a parent's best entertainment.

If you don't give up, I guarantee you're going to hit payday. I know. I've seen those benefits in my relationship with my own children, who span the ages of 15 to 35. Sande and I are proud of them. They've all done well in school and life in general. Unlike me, they haven't been to traffic court and driving school. The interesting and wonderful thing is that they really love each other. They all make tremendous sacrifices to be together. And check this out: they love and respect Sande and me. They even like hanging out with us. Even our 15-year-old daughter's friends acknowledged to her the other day that her parents were "cool."

In *Have a New Kid by Friday*, I've taken nearly 4 decades of marriage and parenting experience—including my clinical experience as a psychologist, my personal experience as a father of 5, and the many stories I've heard as I've traveled around the country, bringing wit and wisdom to family relationships—and combined it all into one little book. I've done this because I care about *your family*. I want to see you have the kind of satisfying relationships in your family that I see in my own. I want you to experience a home where all family members love and respect each other.

Your children deserve that.

You deserve that.

And nothing would make me happier than to see it come to pass.

After launching your plan, you get to sit back and watch the fun . . . and the confusion on your child's face. It's a parent's best entertainment.