

Speaking Calmly To Get Attention

Don't Bellow

Once upon a time there was a boy named Bellow who yelled all of the time. If Bellow wanted someone to pass him the bread and butter, he yelled. If Bellow wanted the teacher's attention, he yelled. If Bellow wanted to play with a friend he would call him on the phone and yell for him to come over. It got so bad that when anyone saw Bellow coming, the first thing they did was cover their ears.

Bellow's father had tried many times to get Bellow to talk in a quiet and calm voice. He told his son, "People don't like yelling. You can get more attention by just looking at someone directly and talking in a normal voice."

Bellow noticed that people didn't seem to be listening to him, even though he was talking very loudly. Sometimes he'd have to shout the same thing three or more times.

Bellow's father suggested that he practice getting his attention in a normal voice. His dad said, "Now stand in front of me, look me in the eye, and say in a normal voice, 'Let's go out and play catch.'" Bellow tried it. He stood in front of his father, looked him in the eye and said "Let's go out and play catch." It felt good not to yell. "Okay!" his dad said. "Let's do that right now. Do you see how easy it is to get someone's attention?" Bellow's dad asked. "Uh huh," Bellow said, kind of quietly. He was thinking about what had happened. He liked that his father was smiling at him and not holding his hands in front of his ears. Bellow stepped in front of his father and looked him in the eye again. "Can I eat ice cream for dinner instead of what Mom serves?" he asked in a firm, but calm voice. "No," his dad said with a smile, "you can't. But I liked the way you asked without yelling. Now, let's go have a catch."

MORAL: The best way to get someone's attention is to pay attention to them. You can use your body language, as well as your voice, when you want to say something important.

