



Mom's Translation Guide

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
UNDERSTANDING THE HARD
THINGS KIDS SAY



hello love



Deborah Woods, NCC MOM & COUNSELOR

Hey there! I'm Deborah, counselor, mom, and language expert, with over three decades of experience, helping moms decode the troubling things kids say. I understand the struggles of motherhood and know how frustrating it can be when you can't seem to connect with your child.

That's why I created this Translation Guide For Moms, to help moms like you communicate effectively with their kids. With this guide, you can finally stop feeling like a failure in just 30 minutes! Say goodbye to those mom-shaming moments and hello to confident parenting.

Don't miss what's next.



Kids say dumb things. THEY'RE DOING THE BEST THEY CAN.

Kids say some things; some hard things; some dumb things; sometimes even downright silly things that cause perfectly reasonable moms to overreact. I remember the day a kid told me that I looked stupid. I had gotten my hair cut the day before and I thought it looked good. That kid's mom was embarrassed. Fortunately, I know a little secret that helps me stay calm and confident in those moments. I don't overreact because I know how to understand the language of children's emotions and hang onto your hat because I'm about to share that secret with you.

For what I'm about to say to make sense, I want you to recall a time when you said something you regretted later in the heat of the moment. You know. You've had it happen. And in case you haven't, let me share one of mine with you. There was that time, when I was at my wits end with my husband. Of course, it was all his fault because well, sometimes people do things and say things... things like kids say when they're mad... things that push completely sensible humans like myself to overreact.

Here's what I did... *cringing with embarrassment* ...With tears running down my face, I threw a shoe at my husband and screamed as loud as I could, "I hate you." Childish of me, huh? Yeah, not my proudest moment.

In that moment, I was in an emotionally charged state of mind. Chemicals were surging through my system, confusing my brain and interfering with my ability to think straight. The learning and memory part of my brain was shut down and I was operating completely out of the most primitive, or what you might call the most childish parts of my brain. I was in fight or flight. I was fighting for my life as if I was surrounded by lions, tigers, and bears all at the same time.

Except, there were no life-threatening dangerous animals. There was only one darling husband, who was also emotionally charged and filled with mind-altering stress hormones. Two emotionally charged, irrational human beings fighting with words (and the aforementioned shoe) to protect their sense of identity and integrity. I don't even remember what started the argument. It could have been that he didn't like the way I kept my checkbook register and I didn't like the way he spoke to me. Whatever it was, it spiraled from there. You know. You've seen it. It doesn't matter what started it, what matters is that I reacted childishly.

It happens with husbands and wives. It happens with parents and kids. People get emotionally charged and say things they regret later. Adults may even be aware that they're out of control and saying things that they're going to wish they hadn't said afterwards.

Kids aren't as self-aware. Self-awareness is a function of human development. The ability to reflect or think about the things you said and did, even just a moment ago, requires a level of brain development that hasn't happened yet in young children. That might be why we think of what I did as "childish." We can all agree that it wasn't the most mature thing to do.

With that background, let's look again at the kid who said I looked stupid with my new haircut. Here's what I know about kids who come to see me for play therapy. It is important to them that I'm consistently predictable. They need the security that comes from the sameness I provide them, week after week. No surprises. They count on me being the same Mrs. Deborah every time. It gives them a sense of safety and helps them trust me.

If I show up with a haircut, and that haircut is as noticeable as it was the day I decided to go from hair below my shoulders to above my shoulder, it can be unsettling to a child. If my hair is different, what else is different? Is the playroom the same? Are the toys the same? Do you still care about me and the things on my mind? Really, are you even the same person?

What seems like a simple haircut can in a complex world of emotions, feel quite anxiety producing. In reaction to his anxiety, this little boy blurted out his first thought, "Mrs. Deborah, you look stupid!"

It makes sense to me. I did something that triggered some anxiety for him and I get that to him, that was stupid. He didn't like it at all because it felt terrible to expect to feel pleased to see me and instead to feel anxious and worried. If you look at it from his perspective, you might agree that it was a stupid thing to do.

Okay. Now that you're seeing things from his perspective, you can understand the translation. "Mrs. Deborah, I don't like that you got your haircut because seeing you look different leaves me feeling worried about what else you might have changed. I need you to know I can count on you to stay just as you are. Please don't change."

If only kids could use their words so clearly and directly. Unfortunately, kids are doing the best they can when they blurt out the first thing that comes to them, even if we don't like it. They simply don't have the language and self-reflection to say it any better.

What's a mom to do? That's where you need some help translating. I've prepared some translations for you that you can use to look beyond the garbled messages, the impulsive emotionally charged things kids blurt out when they're in their feelings. On the next page, I've mapped out some things kids say followed by some possible translations. In the dark colored squares, I've included some of those hard things, those dumb things, that kids say when they're overwhelmed by emotions. In the light colored squares, I've offered some possible translations to help you make better sense of their emotional expressions. Follow the arrows to move around the board decoding the things kids say to understand the feelings behind the words.

Start

I HATE YOU.

I'm so furious I don't know what to say.

I feel humiliated.

YOU'RE MEAN.

I'm frustrated because you're stopping me from doing what I want.

I think you're winning & I'm losing. I feel competitive & threatened.

I'm too anxious or scared to do what you want.

I DON'T LOVE YOU ANY MORE.



WHAT KIDS SAY WHAT KIDS MEAN

Because upset kids don't know how to say it nicely.

I'm so frustrated, confused & unhappy that I don't know what to do or say.

YOU CAN'T MAKE ME.

I need you to love me whatever I do.

It's difficult & I'm not sure I can do it.

NO.

I don't see the point of it.

IT'S BORING.

I'm mad.

I noticed something unfamiliar about you today & I'm uncomfortable about that.

YOU'RE STUPID.

I'm not sure what you want & I'm too embarrassed to ask.

I'd rather not right now.



A person is sitting on a rocky shore next to a river. In the background, there are mountains and some trees. The scene is somewhat hazy or misty. The person is wearing dark clothing and boots. The text is overlaid on the image in several white boxes.

note to self:

The world needs you to
show up today.

YOU ARE POWERFUL,

YOU ARE VALUABLE

& WHAT YOU BELIEVE

CHANGES THE WORLD.

BRING IT TO LIFE BLUEPRINT

Key Questions to Answer for Success

Recall a time when someone you know blurted out something in the heat of the moment that they later regretted having said. When you reflect on that moment, how do you think they were feeling?

Recall a time when you blurted out something in the heat of the moment that you later regretted having said. When you reflect on that moment, how do you think you were feeling at the time?

Recall a time when your child said something childish or overly emotional that you think they might have regretted having said. What do you think your child was feeling at the time?

Write down some possible translations of your own for any of the statements you recalled above in the space below.

TRANSLATE LIKE A PRO

Track Your Translation Success

Pause and recognize that your child said something childish that needs to be translated.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take a minute to think about what your child was feeling when he/she said that childish thing.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Find one or two possible alternatives for what he/she might have been thinking or feeling.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Respond to the most likely translation instead of to the childish words.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pause and recognize that your child said something childish that needs to be translated.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take a minute to think about what your child was feeling when he/she said that childish thing.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Find one or two possible alternatives for what he/she might have been thinking or feeling.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Respond to the most likely translation instead of to the childish words.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pause and recognize that your child said something childish that needs to be translated.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Fluent in Translation

THE FINAL STEPS

1

MAKE TRANSLATING A HABIT

Because human beings are always feeling, there's plenty of opportunity to translate the garbled messages and childish things kids (and others) say in an emotionally charge state.

2

TRACK YOUR TRANSLATING SUCCESS

Use the Translate Like a Pro Translation Success Tracker to build a visual image of your success. Having something tangible to encourage you will keep you on track and help you shift your perspective for good.

3

CELEBRATE YOUR TRANSLATING SUCCESS

Look back on your success, whether it's been a day, a week, or a month and notice how often you're able to actively listen to your child's needs rather than reacting to their poorly chosen words. Notice how your child feels understood. Notice how much more calm and confident you find yourself.

Thank you



Thanks for going with me on
this adventure!

LOVE, YOUR DEBORAH

Book a free parent consultation.

I'd love to invite you to book a free parent consultation to chat more about the ways kids communicate and the frustrations that happen when their emotional messages get garbled. Go to <https://calendly.com/deborah-ncc> to book your appointment today.