

# The Book of Asks

## What is it?

- ❖ A journal or notebook that lives in a common room area
- ❖ A place to write down the “I wants” when you children ask for things that are important to take time to consider
- ❖ Consistency is key, as is the process of slowing things down and shifting out of the childlike approach of demanding things “now.” “Now” means no. If she can only tolerate having an answer right now, it is no. If she can practice patience and allow you to go through this process together, there you might be able to get to a yes.

## Why use it?

- ❖ To help you and your family form a habit of slowing down
- ❖ To validate your child’s interest without brushing them off
- ❖ To engage critical thinking
- ❖ To increase delayed gratification
- ❖ To teach prioritizing and budgeting
- ❖ To have a predictable process that can be interwoven into the fabric of your life which can decrease the stresses of “I want right now”

## How to use it?

- ❖ Make a decision about what type of asks will go into the book, for example:
  - Specific wants, as opposed to needs
  - Items above a certain dollar amount
  - Permission to do something outside of the ordinary (go to a concert, go to prom)

- ❖ Upon being asked, say, “great, let’s put it in the Book of Asks so we remember to think about it.”
- ❖ Agree to a timeline for considering the “ask”. This could be 24 hours if it is time bound or longer if it is not.
- ❖ Develop the guiding questions or requirements for considering the “asks”. For example:
  - Have the asker write down 2-3 pros and 2-3 cons to getting this thing (do not consider if they cannot look at it from both sides)
  - Have the parents write down 2-3 pros and cons
- ❖ As the parent, what do I need to see and over what period of time to get to a yes on this. (This could be respectful communication, consistency with chores etc.)
  - What is the full cost of the ask?
    - Financial, logistical, time
  - What financial commitment is the asker willing to make toward this ask?
  - What financial commitment is the parent willing to give toward it (maybe parents agree to pay for ⅔ AFTER the child earns their third—avoid IOUs and make sure your child does their part in advance, even if there is “a great deal and major sale if we order it RIGHT NOW!!!”)
    - If parents get to yes, what will be the parameters (curfew, for example if it is an event)
- ❖ Parents can agree to review this list weekly and ask the child, prior to parents looking at it, to prioritize the list
- ❖ Let your kids know this is the new plan and see if they have ideas to add to the approach

Here are additional questions for parents to consider through the process:

- ❖ What has gone well in the last week?
- ❖ What struggle areas have there been?
- ❖ When asking for this thing, did he/she/they stop harassing me for it after I asked for time to think or did they keep pushing for it “Now” (now means no)



Often we are talking with families about "wants": such as getting hair dyed, nails done, uber eats when there is plenty of food at home, or any time a child asks for a credit card to purchase something online. The Book of Asks can be used to slow the whole process down and encourage thoughtful decisions.

With all of the tools we teach, consistency is key. That does not mean you need to do this process for every "ask", but you do need to be consistent with the things you choose to use this for.

For questions about the Book of Asks and to work with one of our coaches for parent coaching support, please [contact us](#) or visit our [website](#).

