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MY CHILD IS NOT REQUIRED TO SHARE WITH YOURS.

As soon as we walked in the park, Carson was approached by at least 6 boys, all at once demanding that he share his transformer, Minecraft figure, and truck. He was visibly overwhelmed and clutched them to his chest as the boys reached for them. He looked at me.

"You can tell them no, Carson," I said. "Just say no. You don't have to say anything else."

Of course, as soon as he said no, the boys ran to tattle to me that he was not sharing. I said, "He doesn't have to share with you. He said no. If he wants to share, he will."

That got me some dirty looks from other parents. Here is the thing though:

If I, an adult, walked into the park eating a sandwich, am I required to share my sandwich with strangers in the park? No!

Would any well-mannered adult, a stranger, reach out to help themselves to my sandwich, and get huffy if I pulled it away? No again.

So really, while you're giving me dirty looks, presumably thinking my son and I are rude, whose manners are lacking here? The person reluctant to give his 3 toys away to 6 strangers, or the 6 strangers demanding to be given something that doesn't belong to them, even when the owner is obviously uncomfortable?

The goal is to teach our children how to function as adults. While I do know some adults who clearly never learned how to share as children, I know far more who don't know how to say no to people, or how to set boundaries, or how to practice self-care. Myself included.

In any case, Carson only brought the toys to share with my friend's little girl, who we were meeting at the park. He only didn't want to share with the greedy boys because he was excited to surprise her with them.

The next time your snowflake runs to you, upset that another child isn't sharing, please remember that we don't live in a world where it's conducive to give up everything you have to anyone just because they said so, and I'm not going to teach my kid that that's the way it works.