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The bully mom, the bull headed me

Andrea Frazer

posted: January 24, 2009, 12:21 am

 in: [Mom Stories](#)

46 comments

I ran into the mother from hell at the library parking lot today. The bad news – I could have flipped her the bird, told her how to stuff it, then make it an educational lesson for my daughter by borrowing an almanac on all sorts of turkeys and fowl language. The good news? I refrained.

It was raining. It was cold. As always, it was difficult to get a space in their parking area. There happens to be a "turn around" spot for all the big SUVs to maneuver their way out and around. It also happens that it is always, and I mean *always*, used as a parking space. Not saying it's right, but that's just how it is.

Today, with the lot full, and the weather at a freezing 65 degrees (yeah, we L.A. folk are wimps!) did not want to park in the street. I saw the turn around and decided to take it. Next to me was a woman attempting to get her child out of her compact. I looked at her and she looked at me. Perhaps she thought I was putting pressure on her to "move her car" or whatever, as all I could do was wait



until she shut her door. But honestly, she got there first. I smiled. She did not smile back. I should have known what I was in for.

"No big deal," I thought. I'd wait.

As I sat there, mentally going over my day, I heard the very loud noise, **"IT'S NOT A PARKING SPACE!"**

No. That could not be. No one would be so rude as to bellow to me through my wind shield. Um, wrong. **"IT'S NOT A PARKING SPACE!"** I heard once again as I pulled into the turn around.

"Okay, Andrea, deep breath," I thought to myself. Don't say anything. It's not worth it." But then I remembered a rule I had promised myself, borrowed from a friend I walk with on Friday's:

1. Don't be a police officer (like she was being) over things that aren't your concern. Life is too short. Show some grace to others.
2. Speak up if someone's behavior is directly affecting you. If not for you, for your daughter. No one has the right to scream at you over something ridiculous. Inform me politely? Sure. But yell and turn away? Oh no no no no no noooooo. Did I mention I don't go for that?

I got out of the car, with Pip's hand in mine. I walked right next to her, my voice calm as honey. I refuse to show fear or irritation. Show by example how you want to be treated, right?

"Excuse me," I said, "Were you just talking to me?"

No response. Didn't even look up from the shoe she was tying in the back of her SUV. Or perhaps she saw that I was six one and didn't want to chance me squashing her like a bug.

I forged ahead. "Excuse me, were you saying something to me a second ago?"

Angry slit-eyed Mama barked, "I was talking to my daughter." Scowl scowl, frowny frowny, don't look up just look back downy Cranky Mommy went back to the very important task of foot gear. That velcro – it's harder than it looks.

"Oh, I know," I went on cheerily, like a cocky fish that I would not let off the hook. "I'm referring to you screaming at

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BabyCenter
Guest Blogger

December 17,
2014
9:20 am
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The Baby Bump Blogger Contest is coming to a close and now it's your turn to help choose BabyCenter's next pregnancy bloggers. We invited our five finalists to submit either a photo or a video. Please check out those below and refer back to their blog posts. Voting ends December 23 at noon PST. The...
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me through the windshield."

Huff huff, slam slam, you're a cranky cranky mam replied, **"IT'S NOT A PARKING SPACE!"**

"Yeah, you might have mentioned that. And, um, maybe you didn't know this, hence your shouting at me through glass, but I have a name. It's Andrea." Pause as she glares at me. I continued, "So nice to meet you!"

This is where I was so glad I brushed and flossed, because my smile lit up the foggy day like a lighthouse – a beacon in a storm!

Based on her lack of a response, I think she wasn't in the mood for introductions. Which is too bad, because it really was a cute smile I had going for me. Next time.

As we made our way across the parking lot into the library, her son, a full three feet behind her (but hey, I won't say anything, despite the whizzing traffic, because I am *Andrea*, Queen of Sunshine, not Officer Know it All Fussy Pie who gives out Petty Citations for kicks and giggles) I waved a sugary hello to all the other mothers lining up for reading hour – all moms I've known for years through church, school, community functions and now, most likely, through this story which she'd excitedly lavish upon the first available ear for bull-caca. Maybe she could write a childrens book and read it at a story hour next year. As my daughter might say, "Isn't that a great plan??"

The award winning shoe tie mama made a bee line to the head librarian's desk where she was either practicing her aerobics exercises or gesticulating wildly about the six one Amazon who tried to kill her with kindness and who, in case you didn't get it the first time, failed to accept the fact that the turn around was **"NOT A PARKING SPACE!"**

And then, to add insult to injury, guess whose son sat right next to my daughter during an inspired rendition of *Chitty Chitty Bam Bam?*

While our children were learning about magic cars, as well as how to sit on the floor without acting like hoards of bees attacking their butts, I thought about how quickly moms assassinate other moms. Why? What for? It makes no sense. Not with the world and the economy as it stands. Not when a kind word or gesture (not the middle finger kind) can make such a difference.

While I concede that everyone has bad days, no one has the excuse to act like a pushy high schooler. I just don't buy it, nor will I stand for it. I can be many things (ask some of my friends) but it's not my nature to jump down someone's throat that I don't know. Unless provoked. And then, I don't care if I've known you for years. (Just ask some of my ex-friends) If I sense attack, like a mama bear, I'll scratch and draw verbal blood. At the very least fart. Because I'm real classy when I'm wrongly accused.

OH COME ON, MOMS OUT THERE, LET'S HELP EACH OTHER OUT! GGGEEEEEEZ!!!!

Thoughts? Even if you thought I was out of line with the turn-around, and I'm not saying I wasn't, do you think you'd have said something or let it go?

* Photo of Pip practicing her somersaults. What I wanted to tell the lady in the parking lot? Like the main section of this photo, "Kiss my booty!" Instead, like the gymnastics was practicing, I rolled with it. You'd have been proud.

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46 Responses to *The bully mom, the bull headed me*

1. *sarah* says:
January 24, 2009 at 12:58 am

I never would have said something. Too chicken, I guess? You just never know what that stranger might come back at you with. I always tend to err on the side of caution.

2. *lindsay.weiss* says:
January 24, 2009 at 1:20 am

Great story Andrea...love the way you handled it. And mostly I love your "Scowl scowl, frowny frowny, don't look up just look back downy" rhymes!

3. *Jen/Blue Mama* says:
January 24, 2009 at 2:23 am


I am so proud of you. I would have probably flipped her off before I could stop myself then fumed/felt ashamed and ruined my trip. It feels good to be the bigger person...I'm working on it. 😊

4. *Amy R.* says:
January 24, 2009 at 2:26 am

Mothers are constantly trying to teach children the difference between right and wrong. I'm assuming that this woman had the most awful morning in the history of all of her mornings to make her actually yell something, but perhaps she was simply trying to stand up for what was right. I think it was big of you to confront her and to be sweet about it, albeit a bit sarcastic. I know ever since I've been pregnant I say a lot more of what is on my mind than I used to. It has created some conflict between my husband and I but I'm glad to stand up for myself. I can't say who is right and wrong in your situation, but I can see both of your points. I like the message you are ultimately sending with your post, that mothers need to be supporting each other and giving each other the benefit of the doubt. We all need to be loved!

5. *Hannah* says:
January 24, 2009 at 5:27 am

I had a similar experience. I was grocery shopping at a small health food store that I like to go to, and there is no cart return, but I always put my cart back near or inside the store (or in the cart return, obviously), since it's one of my pet peeves if people leave them out and allow them to possibly hit someone else's car, but I've never yelled at anyone for it.



Andrea Frazer
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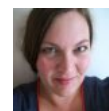
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blogs, as in "moms who sign their kids up for classes to get a leg up" etc. If you were really being nice, you would have said "Excuse me, look, I know I'm not really supposed to park there but...." You were being a bully!

15. [andrea frazer](#) says:
January 24, 2009 at 5:22 pm

Jane, good point. I don't mean to come off condescending. What I was trying to do in the dance class thing was admit my insecurities. I thought I did say over and over that everyone does what they need to do – that perhaps I was the lame one. If that did not come across, I'm sorry.

I see your point about the turnaround also. I should not have parked there in the first place. I didn't see my reaction as bullying her as much as standing up for being screamed at. But given that I did something inappropriate, why should I expect her to be more graceful, right? The truth is, it wasn't an accident. I on purpose tried to save time for myself. I am no better than any other mom, so I should have parked in the street. As Anne said, in the future, all I have to do is not park there in the future to avoid conflict. So you're right there as well.

Blogs are hard to write, because to make them effective, I have to really put my heart on a plate – warts and all. I suck sometimes. I admit it. But how am I, or anyone else going to be a better person, if we don't open ourselves to criticism?

In closing, is it possible for moms, such as myself, to make a mistake, and then move on? I might not have said sorry to the lady in the parking lot right there, and Lord knows she was not about to apologize to me.

But in the future, say we see each other, can we just move past it? Or shall I be forever a stroller mafia mom?

Well, I'm off to spend time with my kids. I'm also a maid in addition to my other duties. And clearly, I don't clean the house well either.

Thanks everyone for support, as well as pointing out where I need to change. Points well taken.

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16. [Jane](#) says:
January 24, 2009 at 5:33 pm

I didn't think your previous blog was bullying, I thought your tone with the car mom was bullying, especially since you were standing over her. Look, I know that it sucks when someone yells at us, it throws us off and stresses us out, especially when it's in front of our kids. But when you're the one that's wrong, you're the one that has to make nice. Maybe she was pissed because she waited a long time for her spot in an effort to do the right thing. You probably scared her daughter and embarrassed the mom by being so physically confrontational, without softening your words to express that, yes, what you did wasn't right. I don't agree with the stance that calling other people out for what they're doing makes us all petty police officers. I can respect it if someone wants to tell someone who throws trash on the sidewalk that what they're doing is wrong. I know you felt justified to park there because everyone else does it but, you have to admit, it's not the cool thing to do and it inconveniences other people. BTW, you can say whatever the heck you want in your blog. I'm not insecure with what I do with my kid, it's two different lifestyles. I live in a place where we think 65 degrees is downright balmy and I've hoofed it from many a far parking space with my kid when it was 5 below with the windchill. Anyway, when you put something up in this kind of a forum, it's assumed you want feedback. Yeah, it does feel like you criticize other moms sometimes, I imagine it would be hard to write something that is supposed to come from a personal viewpoint without doing that. The bad thing about this kind of a forum is people sometimes criticize you back (hopefully constructively). The good thing is that sometimes there's a reality check that's valuable. Anyway, I gotta go with my original feeling, you were the one that contributed to the bad vibe here (though she could have phrased it in a more constructive way)

17. [Jane](#) says:
January 24, 2009 at 5:35 pm

Ok, somehow I didn't see your entire previous post back to me, disregard what I said, and don't worry about how you come off (I imagine that's got to be hard when you put so much of your life out there) If every writer got as much feedback as you probably do it would make them INSANE. Chalk it up to a bad day for everyone all around. Guys are better off sometimes, their emotionally challenged side would give the other person the finger and then forget about it INSTANTLY. We go back and forth in our heads about how everyone feels until we're sick about it! Have a good day!

18. [9ndhouse](#) says:
January 24, 2009 at 6:16 pm

I don't know, sounds like you made a choice and she should have let the library handle the problems created by not having enough space. I drive a large van because of our large family and having a turn around spot in the library parking lot would be great, but if I found the parking lot packed and a vehicle parked there, it wouldn't fry my day! I've always had the mind set that if you got something to say to me, say it to my face. I would have done the same and asked her what she said too. I don't feel that is being a bully, it is standing up to someone who wanted to be a bully. Two wrongs never make a right and all that jazz! 😊 Mom of 7

19. [Emily](#) says:
January 25, 2009 at 2:57 am

I'm not really sure how I feel about your situation the other day so I won't comment on that. But I do have to say before I was a mom I was pretty impatient with moms. If you're child screamed in a store I'd think (not speak) "get control over your kid". Now I am more understanding since I have my own child. Overall people are just mean to other people. Especially in big cities.

20. [Marcy](#) says:
January 25, 2009 at 10:39 am



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posted December 17, 2014, 3:00 am
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Lindsay Weiss

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"At the very least fart. Because I'm real classy..."

You crack me up. Thanks for that!

21. Pingback: [BabyCenter: MOMformation » Blog Archive » An L.E.D. light for Mom's short fuse?](#)

22. *Celeste* says:
January 25, 2009 at 5:18 pm

on the one hand, it does irritate me when people park in places they aren't supposed to. mostly when people decide to park in the exit area at the hospital when im already running 15 mins late for my prenatal appointment and theres nowhere to park and the only way to continue on to the next row is either going thru the exit area or drive backwards for 500 feet and try to avoid everyone else behind me, or at target when people decide they dont want to drive around looking for a space and just go ahead and park in that place thats filled in with the sidewaysish yellow lines... HOWEVER, i just let it go. i figure ok well if they are gonna do that they will probably get towed and thats their own fault, it really doesnt affect me any other than to be a mild annoyance. i guess my point is while it wasnt very nice of you to park there, as long as you arent preventing someone from driving safely thru the lot, its your own choice, moral or not, and you know what consequences are possible, so at the end of the day, its no one's deal b ut your own, and anyone who thinks otherwise is only making themself miserable for no reason because theres nothing they can do about it. why stress about something you have no control over? i do, however, applaud you for the way you handled her yelling at you. it doesnt matter if youre in the right or in th wrong, being yelled at is never fun, and its never very happy making. we do need to teach our kids not to be so mean to each other.

23. *Lisa* says:
January 26, 2009 at 12:08 am

Hmm, sounds like you both were in the wrong to me. Should of just let it go, she was probably having a bad day and was just blowing off steam, besides, she didn't say it to your face. She shouldn't have said it, but you shouldn't have approached her about it either, it was rude. Still, life goes on... 😊

24. *Abby* says:
January 26, 2009 at 2:00 pm

Andrea,
great post, it certainly got everyone thinking. I agree that it was a difficult situation and you could've handled the confrontation much worse. It also seems that you are very reflective of yourself and your behaviour that day. You don't need a tongue lashing about how you were in the wrong, you obviously understand that. I am proud of you for keeping your composure and not letting it ruin your entire day.

25. *Kirsten* says:
January 26, 2009 at 4:10 pm

You're 6'1". It's a fact. I don't think you were trying to be intimidating- you were just adding personification to your blog. People were picking up on your description of your self and took it as trying to be big and bullying. I'm sure you weren't. You have the biggest balls I have ever heard of. I say, good for you! I would have seen red, lost all control of my words and (most likely) gotten my a\$\$ kicked. She wasn't expecting you to get out of your car and call her on her own behavior. She didn't even have the backbone to cop to the "warning" until you called her on it. Carry on with your (big) bad self. 😊

26. *Jellybean* says:
January 26, 2009 at 10:14 pm

It may have not been the right thing to park where you did Andrea, but the angry response given to you by the mother was certainly not warranted. Anger comes from within ourselves-we do not MAKE another person angry. We always have a choice in how to behave, no matter how much a person's words or actions offend us.

I think it was honourable that you did not yell back at the woman, although I do not think it was honourable of you to speak to her in a sarcastic tone and assume yourself a better person because of her outburst. Most of us are blind to our own flaws and it is easy to jump on others when they put their flaws on display like this. It is worthwhile sometimes to remind ourselves sometimes that we too are capable of the most offensive outbursts.... unless we truly are like buddha!

I think the best way to respond would be to go up to the woman and apologise sincerely, and then simply move your car. By doing this, you will be pouring water on her flame, instead of adding fuel to the fire. She will sense your kindness and feel remorseful for her outburst of anger, and without fear of judgement- she may even gather the strength to apologise for the way she spoke to you.

A little bit of humility can go a long way.

I heard a saying recently- "Be kinder than necessary, as everyone is fighting some kind of battle".

Something we need to remind ourselves of often, I think.

27. *Andrea Frazer* says:
January 26, 2009 at 11:02 pm

Thanks to the later commenters.

A special thanks to Jellybean for the quote at the end, and an insight from Kirsten I might not have thought of. No, I didn't meant the 6'1 thing as a bully thing. It was meant to add flavor to the blog. But yes, I can see why I would be a bully. Do my 36DD's count also? Double weapons, I tell ya.

Anyway, I'm tired of all this. I'm simply going to to put it to bed now. When I see the mom, I'll apologize.

28. *Shelley* says:
January 27, 2009 at 11:57 am

Sorry, but I disagree with the way you both handled the situation. You knew that was not a parking space then you should've done the right thing and not parked there even if the weather was bad. Mom #2 was wrong because she used anger to state a fact.

Things like that space are done for a reason and when we take it upon ourselves to break rules whether written or unwritten then we do another type of injustice to our children by teaching them to disregard those rules and do whatever they want and that's just as wrong as yelling and cussing at others.

29. *Wade's Mommy* says:



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Stacy-Ann Gooden

posted November 14, 2014, 4:17 pm
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Stacy-Ann Gooden

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Stacy-Ann Gooden

posted September 30, 2014, 3:54 pm
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January 27, 2009 at 3:54 pm

I've had situations like that. I never say anything. I'm the Queen of Ignoring People. I just have a gift for appearing oblivious to people. Honestly, once I get started I don't trust myself to keep it civil, so it's really better that way.

On another note, good for you for flossing!

30. *Jules* says:
January 27, 2009 at 5:53 pm

I don't think its necessary to apologize. It probably wasn't the best idea to park in the turn around but what makes the other mom decide its ok to yell at you through the windsheid then pretend like she didn't say anything? She could've been a little more tactful about it and waited until you got out of the car and nicely said "I don't think you're supposed to park there." Then maybe you might've moved your car and that would be the end of it. I do think its great that you didn't yell at the other mom, I know I might've done something I'd regret later.

31. *Jenn* says:
January 27, 2009 at 11:16 pm

Hmm. I teach my daughter to ignore rude people. It is also important to follow the rules. If its not a parking space, the lesson of the day would be patience. Its just not a good idea to confront people with kids in tow... you just never know nowadays.

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31. *Kate731* says:
January 27, 2009 at 11:33 pm

I have my faults, but I wouldn't have parked in a non-parking space. I hate that. I can't say how I would have reacted if I was yelled at through my windshield, but as adults we know what is right. You could have just explained to your daughter why you disapproved of the woman's actions. Entertaining read, though. I can totally picture it.

32. *southerngirl* says:
January 28, 2009 at 2:44 am

I don't think she was being a bully. She stood up for herself and don't let people walk all over her. If someone yelled that at me i would have probably flipped out. I know your not suppose to park there but if there's no where else to park then i would. First off i hate reading and library's so i wouldn't be there anyways but i don't care how bad of a day your having keep it to yourself. Like in Bambi if you can't say something nice don't say nothing at all. We all need to think about that!

33. *Amy* says:
January 28, 2009 at 2:46 pm

I agree with Anne. You were parking illegally. You were setting a bad example for her child and your own. I don't care if "everyone does it". That doesn't matter.

No, she shouldn't have yelled at you, but she had every right to tap on your window and ask you if you realized that you were parked illegally. That would have let her conscience be free but it also would have taught YOUR child a lesson – that you (mom) are not above the law... just because other people ignore it.

34. *Karen S* says:
January 28, 2009 at 5:09 pm

This was a funny read, and I appreciate the warts-and-all perspective. I will just point out that while perhaps it isn't fair that you get perceived as being threatening, as a small woman myself, when some big person starts confronting me (deserved or not, fake smile or not), I start wondering where my knife is. You should keep that in mind, that you are not only being a little bit of a jerk yourself, but you also may be putting yourself in danger. Especially in L.A., confrontation over little things is not worth the risk. Finally, I will point out that the woman was struggling to get her own child out of a small car, and your car was close enough that you couldn't get out until she shut her door. Perhaps that is why she yelled at you — you were crowding her while she was performing a difficult task, when if everyone had parked legally she would have had plenty of room. (Thus she would have been doing exactly what Rule 2 says: standing up for herself when someone's actions directly affected her.) And the fact that she first spoke up before you pulled in is also telling; she wouldn't have been able to tap on a moving windshield. The only graceful way you could have dealt with this would have been to park in a legal spot instead; the runner-up solution would have been to apologize for parking illegally, then just walk into the library. Confronting her repeatedly in front of both of your children just added to whatever drama and accomplished little.

35. Pingback: [BabyCenter: MOMformation » Blog Archive » The post that refused to die - just say sorry](#)

36. *Shelly* says:
January 28, 2009 at 10:40 pm

You were wrong for parking where you parked. Its one of my biggest pet peeves when people park in places that are not meant to be parking spots. Its funny because I live in Minnesota, so 65 degrees to us is like bikini weather, especially considering we had a winter of -35 degrees. So for me, that is warm weather and I would have parked around the block. If I was her, I would have said the same thing to you.

37. *Julie* says:

January 29, 2009 at 12:19 am

I definitely would have said something.

However, you need to find a parking spot, just like the rest of us. No one likes cold weather (not that 65 is cold, I too live in CA). I detest people finding the easy way out. She was probably just sick of people like you.

38. *Marie* says:

January 29, 2009 at 10:06 am

I thought the story was hilarious. Maybe you shouldn't have parked there, but if she wasn't willing to say anything about it nicely – or admit to the fact that she yelled at you she does NOT need an apology. Please don't let everyone on here guilt you into it. I'm sure everyone on here, myself included have taken an "easy way out" when we've needed to for any number of reasons. We shouldn't get so worked up one someone else does it too.

39. *Jennifer* says:

January 29, 2009 at 12:14 pm

Some of the people who are commenting on this are just like the mother who wouldn't admit yelling at you. I don't think that you necessarily need to apologize to the other mother, because she wasn't exactly in the right by yelling at you either. Moral of the story; think about what you're doing and saying. Everyone has bad days and makes choices that they may look back and think badly about. if you didn't feel bad about it at all; then I might think you would really need to apologize – but I doubt that the other mom is agonizing over her decision that day.

40. *elijah* says:

January 29, 2009 at 3:03 pm

well why did you park in a non-space? i think secretly you wanted a confrontation. maybe you felt like being a rebel for the day. i understand. i get bored too being at home all the time.

41. *Ashley* says:

January 29, 2009 at 5:12 pm

First off, I'd like to point out that ALL mothers have cut corners at some point in some way to shorten a long day. Your way was parking in the turn around. Seeing someone else parked in the turn around spot when I purposely didn't take it and parked twice as far away is frustrating, but it was my choice to park further away, so I can't get too angry. I also live in a freezing part of the country, so if you were to ask my opinion, I would have told you to park in the street. But seeing as you didn't ask for anyone's opinion and you weren't hurting anyone, no opinion should have been given. Also, I don't think you were all that sarcastic with the lady. I can't think of something you could have said that wouldn't have sounded sarcastic in some way in that situation. And yes, if the lady yells at you, you always have a right to say something. I think you handled it pretty well, and it's obvious to me that the other lady was the one with the bad attitude. (Come on people, she stormed off and left her kid, not old enough to tie her own shoes, running after her across the parking lot...) Even if that mom was having a bad day, I guarantee her daughter was having a worse day. Poor girl...

42. *Renee* says:

January 29, 2009 at 8:04 pm

Well I think she was right to say something and you were wrong. And what were you trying to teach your daughter? To always be nice and never yell? But it is okay to break the law or rules when everyone else does it? Then you intimidated her....your kindness wasn't taken as kindness to her. I can understand that womans frustration because people.....especially in Big SUV's always seem to think they can do whatever they want....be it hug your bumper because you're not going fast enough at 70mph or take up 2 parking spots or park in a turnaround or many other things like that and it gets annoying. It always from my point of view seems like there is never a cop around to ticket them either. It is a dog eat dog world and if you don't say something then it just continues to happen. Just my opinion. Oh and BTW moms are not perfect people....they're just people like everyone else with flaws and tempers and bad moods!!

43. *leahb* says:

January 29, 2009 at 8:30 pm

No, you were not right to park there. I am one of "those people" that drive a big SUV, but I am always aware of my kids in the back seat, and try to give them good examples to live life by. If I don't, who will. It really pisses me off to see small cars parked in overheight parking at parking garages and the such, so I may have freaked out too. However, I would have had the guts to do so to your face, not hiding behind my kids.

44. *Heather* says:

January 29, 2009 at 11:02 pm

oh man i loved reading this!! lol i would have done everything exactly the same!! the turn around may not have been a parking spot but who the heck cares who is she to be so rude to you and to police you like some hall monitor?? I mean come on there are bigger fish to fry in the world lol. Great job sticking up for yourself and i really think it set a great example for your daughter, at least she knows its not okay to be bullied and she knows its the right thing to do to stand up for yourself 😊

45. *kayla* says:

January 30, 2009 at 1:44 am

i think that i would have done the same thing i believe that some people live in like this world where rules arent bent and broken and if there wasnt a sign there what really gave her the right? i mean i can understand having a bad day but wow lady get a life i mean seriously but hey it is what it is chalk it up to being sumthing you can pass on at a get together meeting etc. i thought it was funny.

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