Cool Responses ... To Hot Buttons
At the Store

Here are some tips to make shopping a positive experience.

Plan Ahead

Be Realistic
Is your child too tired or hungry to shop?
Are you? If yes, postpone your trip.

Give Responsibility
Let your child push the cart, add up prices on a calculator, cross items off the list, etc.

Review the Rules
Before entering the store, state your expectations. For example, “Stay with me,” “Look with your eyes,” or “Walk in the store.”

Praise
Show appreciation.
“Shopping is a lot more fun when you’re along to help out.”

Take a List
Let your child know what’s on the list and how much you have to spend. This helps with understanding the realities of family budgeting.

Negotiate
If your child is starting to get tired or bored, address those feelings.
“You’re tired and we’re not finished yet. We still have bread, apples, and jam to get. What would you like to do?”
Then be ready to negotiate.

At the Store

Let the Child Help
Ask the child to help you locate items.
“Do you remember where the beans are?”
“Help me find the chicken soup.”
They can also help with reading the list:
“What do we still have to get?”

Add Fun
Stop at the library, museum, or local park for a fun break during shopping.

Read Labels
Teach your child to read labels.
“We need spaghetti sauce. Can you choose one that does not have sugar listed in the first 4 ingredients?”

If all else Fails ...

Respect Limits
If misbehavior persists, it may help to shorten shopping trips and to go when your child isn’t with you.
Trade baby-sitting with friends when you need to shop by yourself.