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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The English We Speak

### Until you're blue in the face



*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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**Feifei**

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei and joining me today is Rob.... Errr Rob, wake up!

**Rob**

Oh yeah hi everyone.

**Feifei**

What's wrong Rob?

**Rob**

It's the kids. My house is a mess – toys, pencils, paints everywhere - and I've been trying to get them to clear everything up.

**Feifei**

And I guess you haven't been successful?

**Rob**

That's right. I shouted at them until I was blue in the face – but the house is still a mess.

**Feifei**

Rob, you don't look blue to me – just your normal colour.

**Rob**

I know that – what I mean is, I'm wasting my time because it won't happen – whatever I say I won't get the result I want...

**Feifei**

... which is a tidy house. Hmm, so saying something 'until you're blue in the face' means telling someone something is a waste of time because nothing will happen or change. Oh dear Rob, it sounds like you have no control over your kids.

**Rob**

You're probably right. But I'm not alone - let's hear some other people who are 'blue in the face'...

**Examples**

I've told him to get here on time until I'm blue in the face but he still continues to arrive late.

He told her not to break the speed limit on the motorway until he was blue in the face but she still did it and guess what? She got a speeding ticket!

**Feifei**

So saying 'until I'm blue in the face' means even though you keep saying something, nobody will listen to you. I know what that's like Rob.

**Rob**

Really?

**Feifei**

Yes. Every time you make me a coffee I always ask you to put two sugars in it – but you never do!

**Rob**

Err, pardon Feifei? Sorry I wasn't listening. I'm so tired.

**Feifei**

Why are you so tired Rob? All you did was ask the kids to tidy up.

**Rob**

Yes but because they didn't listen to me, I had to tidy everything up.

**Feifei**

Actually I can see that... you really are blue in the face – look you've got blue paint there...and there... and there...

**Rob**

Arghhh! Those damn kids!

**Feifei**

Calm down Rob. Your face is turning red!

**Both**

Bye!