

Behavior Management Techniques

Tough Kid Tool Box by Jenson, Rhode and Reavis

Use a Clear Directive, Not a Question

Do not use such statements as “Would you stop teasing?” Instead make the request a polite command, such as, “Please hang up your coat.”

Shorten the Distance

Move closer to your child. The optimal distance for giving a command is approximately 3 feet.

Use a Soft, but Firm Voice

When giving a command, give it in a quiet voice, up close, with eye contact.

Make Eye Contact

Look directly at your child as you give an instruction. Say your child’s name. When your eyes meet, contact has been made, and the chance for compliance increases.

Time: Wait 5 seconds

Allow your child a bit of time to comply after making a request. Just wait. Do not talk with the child, do not argue or respond to excuses.

Only Twice

Tell your child what you require only two times. Force yourself to simply wait 5 to 10 seconds between each request. Avoid interrupting the child with further instructions.

Demand the Possible

Be certain the request is something your child is able to accomplish. You may want to divide a large job into “baby steps.” Plan for success!

Give descriptive Directions

Some directions are confusing for your child. Your child may truly not understand your expectations when you say “Clean your room.”

Remain Calm

An emotional response from the parent will actually reduce compliance. Exercise self-control. Remember to “breathe easy.”

Say “Start” Instead of “Stop”

Tell your child to start an appropriate behavior such as “Please start picking up the blocks.” Make fewer stop demands such as, “Don’t argue with me!”

Reinforce Compliance

Recognize your child’s efforts! It is too easy to request a behavior from a child, and then ignore the positive result. If you want more cooperation, then praise your child often.