

Giving Effective Directions

Brought to you by your child's primary care pediatrician and the CHKD early childhood consultation.

Do you sometimes feel like your child doesn't listen? Do you get into power struggles when you want your child to do something? A positive relationship is your most important tool for getting your child to listen and follow directions. It is also important to give clear directions that fit your child's age. Good directions can help reduce the chance that your child will forget or misunderstand what you've said. Good directions can help you have positive daily interactions with your child.

Keys to Giving Good Directions

1. Make sure you have your child's attention when you give a direction.
2. Be clear about what you want your child to do and when they need to do it.
3. Ask your child to repeat the direction back to you to make sure they understand.
4. Avoid asking questions when you want your child to do something. Asking a question gives your child the chance to say, "No!"
5. Give one direction at a time.
6. Model good listening skills during special playtime and give your child positive attention for good listening.



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