

How can I get my kids to listen?



If it feels like your children never listen to you, check out these tips

Make sure you have their attention:

Kids may be focussed on other tasks or thinking about other things when you begin to talk. They won't find it easy to hear you if you are calling out from across the room. Your child needs to have you close by and at their eye level. Try making a connection by commenting on what they are currently doing. Wait till they look up before you start talking.

No need to keep repeating:

Kids need time to process what they hear. If you keep saying it they are likely to switch off. They are more likely to respond if you can show them you understand how they feel..... "I know you're really enjoying this game, but we're all ready to have dinner now."

Stay calm:

If a parent becomes angry and shouts, it can be very upsetting for the child and make them feel unsafe. It can be hard at times to stay calm but children won't be able to pay attention to our message if they are worrying about how upset we are.

Engage their co-operation:

Sometimes you will need to help them get organised if you want to be out the door on time – e.g. help find the missing homework book or tie the difficult shoelace. When everyone is calm you can talk with them about how you can all help each other to get out of the house on time. Regular routines will also help children to know what is expected of them. A list on the wall or a routine schedule with pictures can help your child practise the routine.

Try putting the child in charge and remember to have fun:

"You seem to be in a mood to throw things – what can you find that's safe to throw?"
Play music and dance around while you pack up the toy box. Offer simple choices that are not threatening or punishing – e.g. 'Do you want to jump 3 more times or 5 more times before you get ready for bed?' 'Do you want to wear the red shorts or the green shorts?' 'I see a t-shirt on the floor – it's trying to get into the clothes basket...let's help him get there'. Use your imagination!

For more ideas:

<https://www.ahaparenting.com/Default.aspx?PageID=7652678&A=SearchResult&SearchID=11184501&ObjectID=7652678&ObjectType=1>

"How to Talk So Little Kids Will Listen" by Joanna Faber & Julie King. Piccadilly Press 2017