

## Behavior Management Techniques That Work

1. **Use a Clear Directive, Not a Question**  
Do not use such statements as “Would you stop teasing?” or “Will you take out the trash?” Instead make the request a polite command, such as “Please hang up your coat.” or “You need to brush your teeth now.”
2. **Shorten the Distance**  
Move close to your child. The optimal distance for giving a command is approximately three feet.
3. **Use a Soft, but Firm Voice**  
When giving a command, give it in a quiet voice, up close, with eye contact.
4. **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.
5. **Time: Wait Five 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.
6. **Only Twice**  
Tell your child what you require only two times. Force yourself to simply wait five to ten seconds between and after each request. Avoid interrupting the child with further instructions.
7. **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!
8. **Give Descriptive Directions**  
Some directions are confusing to your child. Your child may truly not understand your expectations when you say, “Clean your room.”
9. **Remain Calm**  
An emotional response from the parent will actually reduce compliance. Exercise self-control. Remember to “breathe easy.”
10. **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!”
11. **Reinforce Compliance**  
Recognize your child’s efforts! It is too easy to request a behavior from a child, then ignore the positive result. If you want more cooperation, then praise your child often.

