
GETTING KIDS TO LISTEN BETTER

Parenting from the Heart

1. Set or revisit family rules. Listen to everyone's input and reiterate expectations outside of the heat of the moment.
2. Front-load before an event or transition. For instance, "Hey guys, we have about an hour before swimming lessons. Everyone can have a show and then it's time to get ready." Or, "When we're in the restaurant, we sit on our bums and use inside voices."
3. Give reminders - For instance, "Five more minutes until we need to leave the park!"
4. Connect then direct by appreciating what they're doing. This is especially important if you haven't given warning or front-loaded. For instance, "You're doing such a great job of your Lego. It is time to start your home reading. Once you're done you can come back to it."
5. When timing is optional, ask when they plan on completing a given task. For instance, "I need your room cleaned today. I know you're colouring right now. When do you plan on doing it?" Then remind them if the time comes and goes by saying "It's three now." Remember less is more when discussing missed deadlines/ follow through.
6. If listening isn't happening, don't repeat yourself. Get present, wait for eye contact, and, if need be, ask them to repeat back what you said.
7. Make listening into a game. For instance, race to see who can get done first, use a ridiculous voice to prompt listening, or turn on music and dance your way through chores.
8. Work with them. There are days where even adults could use an extra hand with driving or dinner. Kids feel the same. Working along side them makes tiresome activities less burdensome.

kids not listening?

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ASK YOURSELF:

- * Are they hungry, tired, overstimulated or need attention?

When basic needs aren't met, it's hard to listen.

- Would a change of scenary make things better?

THEN...

1. Get down to their level & wait for a sign they're listening (eye contact, stopping playing, or putting their hands on their heads).
2. Tell them what they can do vs. what they can't - i.e. "You can throw the ball outside," vs. "Don't throw."
3. Direct instead of request - i.e. "It's time to get your PJs on," vs. "Can you get your PJs on?"
Get confirmation they undershooed what you said.

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