

Tips for Improving Child Behavior: Transitions and Good Directions

Transitions

- Use signals or cues to help your child accept transitions
 - Tell your child how many minutes they have left of something.
 - Use visual cues to show how much time is left—like a sand timer or timer on a smart phone.
 - Get creative! You can sing a certain song when it's time to move on to the next activity. Example: The Clean up Song.

Giving Good Directions

- Giving a good direction will increase the chance that your child will follow it.
- **PRACTICE** giving good directions:
 - **P = positively** state the direction. Tell your child **what to do** rather than what not to do. This makes it easier to focus on positive behaviors.
 - **R = give a reason** before the direction or after . Your child may listen better if they know why it is important for them to do what they are asked. For example, "Please sit so I can put on your shoes."
 - **A = give an age-appropriate** direction. Your child can't follow a direction they don't understand.
 - **C = be calm and courteous.** Be polite, but firm. This also models how to be calm to your child.
 - **T = tell**, not ask. This makes it clear the direction is not optional. Using "please" can be helpful . For example, say, "Please pick up your toys" rather than "Will you pick up your toys?"
 - **I = give one individual direction.** Start with one-step directions rather than many at once.
 - **C = make your direction clear.** It should be easy to judge if the direction has been followed.
 - **E = enough** directions. Use directions when needed and limit directions during activities that are child-led.

References:

Pelzel, K. (2020) *Episode 7: Stacking the Deck So Everyone Wins*. [Byte-sized Brain]. <https://bytesizedbrain.buzzsprout.com/1252778/5986906-episode-7-stacking-the-deck-so-everyone-wins>