

How To Get Your Kids to Listen to You The First Time

In this day and age as parents, we are busy people. Whether you work inside the home or out, no matter what your profession - life is busy, and there are a million things to think about in a day.

From the moment our feet hit the ground in the morning until we go to sleep, we are not only constantly going, but we are always thinking about what we should be doing.

For us, as adults, our pre-frontal cortex is well developed. So while we're making breakfast, we're also looking at the clock and constantly scanning the universe for what's next and what we need to be doing.

Our kids are not in the same boat as well as our pre-frontal cortex is not fully developed until the age of 25.

Once we understand it's not because they're being difficult or that they don't care, once we understand it's the brain development, it helps to calm our frustration down. It's very normal - whether they are 2 or 18 - they don't have a lot of executive function at this point.

Our kids live in the moment - they don't think ahead.



THE PEACEFUL PARENT
LISA SMITH • PARENT COACH

Here's the 4-step process to use to get your kids to listen the first time:

1. Gain their attention

The way we gain their attention is with a pattern interrupter. We want to interrupt whatever they're doing in that moment and make sure their eyes are up, and they're listening. Most likely, just say their name.

You: "Hey, Suzie?"

Child: "Yes, mom?"

We need to interrupt their moment by doing a pattern interrupter. We want them to respond to you, so you know they're disconnected from the book, phone, daydream, etc.

2. Make the request

Now that you have their attention, it's time to make the request.

You: "Hey, Suzie?"

Child: "Yes, mom?"

Note, you may have to say their name several times to interrupt the pattern.

You: "Can you get your backpack ready?/Can you get your shoes on? Can you wash your hands for dinner?"

Child: "Yes."

Many parents stop after this step because the child says yes. But here's the thing - we need to make sure the child actually hears the request.

3. Confirm the request

You: "What did I just say?"

Frequently the child will say: "I have no idea."

Repeat step 2 and step 3 until you have them confirm the request.

You: "I need you to....."

You: "What did I just say?"

Child: "Take out the trash, wash my hands, and get ready for dinner."

Ta-dah!

4. Gain commitment

Gain the commitment that the child is going to do what you're going to ask.

You: "Can you do it? / Are you going to do it?"

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