

# *Giving Effective Instructions*

1. *Reduce distractions before giving an instruction.* (e.g., shut off TV/stereo.)

2. *Make eye contact.*

3. *Say child's name.*

4. *Use a firm voice.* Sound as if you expect to be listened to; businesslike; not angry or shrill.

5. *Be clear about what you want the child to do.*

Good instruction: "Sally, please pick up your dirty socks."

Bad instruction: "You are such a pig. How can you sleep in a room like that?"

If you give a direct instruction, it's more difficult for your child to ignore you.

6. *State the instruction as an instruction.*

Not a request, favor, or question.

Good instruction: "Please take out the garbage. It's time to go to bed, please put your pajamas on."

Poor instructions: "Will you take out the garbage for me. Don't you think it's time to go to bed now?"

7. *Give only one instruction at a time.*

If you give more than one, you increase the chance that your child will tune you out.

8. *Always praise/reward as soon as your child follows an instruction.*

It makes it more likely that your child will listen to your next instruction & it makes listening more enjoyable for the child.