

# Behavior Management Tips

**Attention is your greatest tool.** If you do not pay attention to, point out, and praise the good behavior, you will never get MORE good behavior. Give love, hugs, pats, praise, privileges, and rewards for those good behaviors when you see them. Give your child special 1-on-1 time” each day, even if short.

**Stop the talking: warnings, reminders, explanations, reasoning, asking “why.”** Focus on acting and doing. “Actions speak louder than words.” Learning comes from cause-and-effect, actions, and repetition. Words can be helpful and you need to talk to your child, but not in that critical moment.

**Give effective commands.** Provide 1-step instructions. Wait 10 seconds, then guide your child through compliance. Praise “first time listening.”

**For whining, repeated questions, or “little” misbehaviors:**  
Ignore whining, but remind your child you will listen to real words.  
Manage interruptions by requiring a “polite interruption.”  
Be a boring ‘broken record’ for repeated questions or arguments.

**Don’t forget nonverbal strategies!** Positive attention (touch), ignoring instead of arguing (for minor things), etc.

**Remember to teach the skill that your child should be learning.**  
Don’t just stop after discipline or correction. Instead, have your child practice the opposite, positive skill outside of the heated moment.

**Time-out:** Time out works best when it is short. You can “time out” toys, like the tablet or TV. Take the toy away, and let the child’s good behavior earn it back after a period of time, like 10 minutes to a few hours to a day, depending on the misbehavior. Or, put your child in time out for a bit, letting them out as soon as they are calm. This way, you can continue using time-out across the day. If you currently remove toys for long periods, consider changing your strategy.

**Keep Calm.** Your child will get louder and madder if you get loud and mad.

**Rewards are Key.** Any time you want a behavior to change, you have to find rewards they WANT, remind your child about them, and reward immediately and often. Rewards can be small, frequent privileges – they don’t need to cost.

**And... Practice EVERYTHING outside of the ‘critical moment.’**

**With any change in parenting, expect:** 1) “burst” of the old behavior (testing limits), and 2) “recovery” or re-trying the old behavior after a few weeks (last effort to see if the old stuff works). Stay consistent, and these will pass.