



## How to Give Helpful Instructions to Your Child with ADHD

### Step 1: Preview what you expect.

- Describe what you want the child to do.
- Explain what the child will get for doing what you require.
- State the consequence (usually the loss of a privilege) if the child will not do it.

### Step 2: Explain the behavior you want.

- Make sure that you have the child's attention
  - ❑ Get close (within 4 feet.)
  - ❑ Use the child's name.
  - ❑ Make eye contact.
- Describe the behavior clearly.
- State that the child must do the behavior now, not later.
- Include the reasons for the behavior.
- Explain that the behavior is required, not requested.

### Step 3: Wait silently.

- Wait for 5-10 seconds.
- Stay close, but don't look or stare angrily.
- If the child asks a reasonable question, respond.

### Step 4: As soon as the child does the required behavior, give praise that works.

- State the specific behavior that you appreciate.

- Use positive body language and tone.



### Step 5: Note immediately if the child does not do the expected behavior.

- Scold firmly but don't yell.
- Make the scolding short and clear.
- State the directions again.
- Warn again about the consequence.

### Step 6: If needed, use timeout to

- Stop the child and adult from arguing and yelling.
- Separate the child and adult for a while during a stressful situation.

### Step 7: If the child refuses to do a timeout, apply a backup consequence immediately.

- The consequence should be logical, not too harsh, and tailored to the child.
- It is usually the loss of a privilege.

