



Seven Steps to Getting Your Child to Do What You Say

Modified from The Seven Steps to Earning Instructional Control by Robert Schramm, BCBA & Megan Miller, BCBA

- 1) You are in control of the fun (You decide when and for how long)**
 - a. Your child can earn time with the things and activities he loves when he follows simple instructions and behaves appropriately
 - b. “Clean up” the fun stuff around the house etc. – no free access
- 2) Show your child that YOU are fun!**
 - a. Play with your child with his most fun toys and activities (pairing)
 - b. 75% of your interactions should be fun/reinforcing (not demands)
 - c. Your child’s interactions with his favorite things should include you
- 3) Say what you mean and mean what you say (shows you can be trusted)**
 - a. If you tell your child to do something, don’t let them access reinforcement (the fun stuff) until they have done what you said
 - b. You may have to help/ prompt them through to be successful
 - c. Be clear and consistent in what you ask (“time to sit down” not “do you want to sit down?”)
- 4) Show your child the best way to get fun things is to follow your directions**
 - a. Provide many opportunities to give easy instructions that result in your child accessing fun stuff, your attention, praise- Catch him being good!
 - b. The more opportunities to succeed in following your directions, the faster your child will learn that doing what you ask is the best way to get what he wants
 - c. Set your child up for success (eg. Say “sit down” as he is about to sit down)
- 5) In the beginning, provide reinforcement every time your child does what you ask**
 - a. Your child quickly learns good choices lead to good things!
 - b. Once your child is consistently following your instructions, you can begin to fade the reinforcement (every few times etc.)
- 6) Know your priorities and those of your child**
 - a. Observe and take note of a variety of things your child enjoys
 - b. Rotate rewarding your child with a variety of things they love
 - c. Save your child’s very most favorite things as rewards for the harder things you ask
 - d. What is your goal? What is the most important thing you want to teach right now?
- 7) Ignoring instructions/behaving inappropriately will NOT get him access to the fun stuff**
 - a. Never allow your child to get what he wants when he behaves inappropriately or doesn’t follow your instruction
 - b. Ignore, let him walk away but make sure the fun stuff stays with you (“I guess we are done playing”)
 - c. Try playing with the fun stuff on your own, with siblings, wait for him to come back and when he does, give the instruction again and heavily reinforce when successful
 - d. Redirect and reinforce for an alternative or easier response to build back compliance