

Helping Young children Become Cooperative

1. The little child's tempo is much slower than yours. Give him time to obey, to respond, and to cooperate. Walk slowly beside him, and if you touch him, hold his hand if he is willing.
2. When talking to a little child, stoop down or sit on a low chair, so as to bring your face on a level with his.
3. Give all directions clearly and simply. Have clearly in your mind just what you wish to accomplish.
4. Do not ask a couple of questions at the same time, such as: "Do you want me to help you, or can you manage by yourself?" Ask one question and then, if necessary, the other.
5. In cases where a choice is not involved, have a positive tone in your voice. "It's time to come in and go to the bathroom/potty now" or "One more turn, then come right in."
6. In cases where a choice is involved, show this by your tone. Request, "Would you like to help set the table today?" In matters of routine, give choice of method: "Time for rest. Can you go to bed by yourself? (pause) "Shall I help you?"
7. Never interrupt a child's play unnecessarily. When it is necessary to give a command, have an inward conviction yourself that he will obey; give him time to prepare, and take obedience for granted.
8. Put emphasis on the thing to be done, not on the child doing it. "Water turns on gently." "Door closes quietly."
9. If discipline is necessary, be sure that the child understands clearly why. Have "the punishment fit the crime," and be calm yourself. Be consistent in your requirements and appreciative of efforts in the right direction and of progress. When the incident has been dealt with, it is over. Receive the child affectionately and do not refer to past misdeeds unless absolutely necessary.
10. Listen to children. You will learn many valuable things about how they think and feel.