

1. Establish priorities. Clearly define expectations. Announce consequences in advance. Follow through with action, not just words. Use consequences that are immediate and short-lived. Specify time limits for demands. Praise even the slightest progress. Be carefully consistent in rules and discipline.
2. Have a very clear routine. Such structure will be reassuring until she/he is able to more fully develop her own routine.
3. Avoid a negative approach: “Stop” – “Don’t” – “No” – “Quit”. State expectations in a more positive manner (State what you want your child to do RATHER than what you want him/her to quit).
4. When giving instructions, gain her/his full attention by lightly touching her arm, hand, shoulder, etc. Establish eye contact, then give no more than two-part instructions (“pick up your shoes and take them to your room”). Have your child repeat the instruction.
5. Find a separate room or part of a room for schoolwork. Avoid brilliant colors or complex patterns in décor. Simplicity, solid colors, minimal clutter, and a worktable facing a blank wall away from distractions assist concentration.
6. Do one thing at a time: clear the table of everything else when working on a project; turn off the TV when she is doing homework. Multiple stimuli prevent concentration from focusing on the primary task.
7. Give her/him responsibility, which is essential for growth. The task should be within her/his capacity, although the assignment may need much supervision.
8. Transition may be difficult. Keep these to a minimum and provide additional structure when transitions occur. This is particularly important when moving from an unstructured to a relatively more structured environment.
9. Encourage your child to interrupt impulsive behavior by “talking to yourself.” This may help her/him slow down enough to consider other alternatives.
10. Decide if a behavior is a result of incompetence or noncompliance. Behavior that is a result of lack of ability clearly must be dealt with in a fashion that is different from behavior that is a result of unwillingness.
11. Help him/her to learn planning and organization skills. Teach your child how to “think ahead” during ordinary daily activities. You can do this either overtly and directly or covertly by “thinking aloud” to yourself.