



# A WAY OF BEING WITH CHILDREN

## How to Help My Child Listen

Tips to Promote Child Well-Being and Resilience

Resilience describes our ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, or significant stress.

Resilience helps us “bounce back” from the setbacks and disappointments of life. Since life can be full of challenges, teaching children resilience skills is vital to their healthy development, well-being, and ability to thrive.

Parenting can be challenging at times. At one point or another, all parents experience defiance regardless of their child's age.

"How parents and teachers talk tells a child how they feel about him. Their statements affect his self-esteem and self-worth. To a large extent, their language determines his destiny."

- Haim Ginott



### The Power of Encouragement

- Encouragement provides a way for the adult to assist the child in developing a strong sense of self-worth and self-esteem.
- Encouragement teaches children to appreciate their own qualities, to feel capable, and to feel worthwhile just the way they are.

### Tips:

- Be in close proximity and make eye contact
- Be on the same level as child
- Minimize distractions
- Use clear and specific directions
- Use as few words as possible
- Give age-appropriate instructions
- Give instructions one at a time
- Keep explanations simple
- Give kids time to process
- Use visual aids or examples
- Provide time warnings and “what’s next” prompts



# Limit Setting: ACT Model

**1** Acknowledge the Feeling – “You seem angry that Johnny took your toy.”

**2** Communicate the Limit – “But people are not for hitting.”

**3** Target the Alternative – “You can hit this pillow instead.”



## Reflective Listening

Reflections are the basis for limit setting and can often prevent children from acting out. They can be used to validate a child's wishes and desires without necessarily fulfilling them.



- Reflective listening is a tentative statement describing what you think the child may be trying to express in his/her words or actions.
- Reflective listening helps the child to identify the feelings driving his/her behavior and find more appropriate ways to express those feelings.

## The Process of a Good Reflection

### A reflection is brief.

After ten words, children tend not to hear what is being said.  
“You're trying to show me something.”

### State what you think the feeling might be.

Use words that describe feelings like mad, frustrated, happy, or sad.  
“You seem mad.”

### Use statements, not questions.

Statements are a neutral gift to a child who can respond with either a yes, no, maybe, or a non-answer.  
Statements allow the child to feel safe when they respond.  
“Seems like you are angry and upset.” vs. “Are you angry or upset?”

Communication can now begin because the child feels like they have been heard.



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