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What I Wish I Had Known Sooner

Getting My Child to Listen (Without Yelling)

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(Source: *Understood.org* - For Learning & Attention Issues)

My Story

I'm the mother of two daughters. My youngest, Annie, has anxiety and attention issues, which makes it harder for her to follow directions. When she was about 7 years old, she sometimes would refuse to do what I asked.

What I Was Doing

In school, Annie was sweet, compliant and helpful. But at home, my then-7-year-old became stubborn and defiant when asked to do simple chores. A request to put away her toys and brush her teeth would be ignored or met with arguments or tears, or all three.

My husband and I tried everything we could think of.

Logic: "Annie, if you don't put away the Legos, you could lose pieces, and then you wouldn't have that fun game to play with."

Negotiation: "OK, Annie, we agree to 10 more minutes of TV and then you'll clean up."

Threats: "You have 5 seconds to clean up or else. Five... four... three..."

The typical result: An epic one-hour battle of tears, yelling and time-outs.

What I Wish I'd Known Sooner: Keep Commands Simple

My husband and I explained the vicious circle we were in to a psychologist, Linda Reddy, Ph.D. After listening to us, Dr. Reddy explained that we needed to keep our commands simple, with one- or two-step directions. Instructions with more than two steps—

like "Go upstairs, put away your toys, brush your teeth, and pick up your clothes from the floor"—can be too complicated for a child to remember and follow.

We also had to stop negotiating, pleading and threatening.

Dr. Reddy gave us an explicit set of instructions to follow, which entailed the following: Look your child in the eye, calmly say her name, pause, provide the two-step instruction, and end with "now." "**Annie**, go upstairs and brush your teeth **now**."

Dr. Reddy instructed us to pause 15 to 18 seconds and stay within 3 to 5 feet of Annie. If she followed the direction, we were told to briefly praise her for following the direction. If she did not follow the direction, we were told to calmly repeat the instruction.

That night, I tried it: "Annie, go upstairs and brush your teeth now." I silently counted to 18, willing myself to ignore whatever she said or did in between. Then I repeated my instruction. I did this again and again, pausing 15 to 18 seconds between each instruction, worrying that her shouts and pleas might turn to fury. But on the eighth try, something amazing happened. "ALL RIGHT!" she said, irritated, and she went upstairs and brushed her teeth. Pausing 15 to 18 seconds between instructions helped me become less angry and more calm.

Pretty soon, this technique became second nature, and it always worked. In fact, the tactic worked so well that I was tempted to try it on my spouse. "David," I said to my husband one evening, "can you please take out the garbage, **now**?" (He grinned at me, knowingly. Then he grabbed a trash bag!)

WHEN IT IS TOO COLD (OR HOT) FOR OUTSIDE PLAY



Wind-Chill

- 30° is *chilly* and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is *cold*
- 0° to 15° is *very cold*
- -20° to 0° is *bitter cold* with significant risk of *frostbite*
- -20° to -60° is *extreme cold* and *frostbite* is likely
- -60° is *frigid* and exposed *skin will freeze* in 1 minute

		Wind Speed in mph								
		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
Air Temperature	40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27
	30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13
	20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1
	10	10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15
	0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29
	-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43

Heat Index



- 80° or below is considered *comfortable*
- 90° beginning to feel *uncomfortable*
- 100° *uncomfortable* and may be *hazardous*
- 110° considered *dangerous*

		Relative Humidity (Percent)												
		40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
Air Temperature (F)	80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87
	84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103
	90	91	93	95	97	100	103	105	109	113	117	122	127	132
	94	97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135			
	100	109	114	118	124	129	130							
	104	119	124	131	137									

Comfortable for out door play
 Caution
 Danger

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

Source: http://www.daycare.com/news/daycare_and_weather.html

Building the Bonds of Attachment

It's unbelievable how quickly our hearts sing when a child comes into our lives. From a child's perspective, however, it can take some time to hear the song our hearts are trying to share.

Attaching to a new caregiver can be hard for some children who enter foster care or who have been adopted. This may be because of past hurtful or traumatic experiences; or perhaps there was some disconnect with a primary caregiver. At times attachment simply comes slowly. At other times attachment issues can become so intense or attachment is so lacking that there is cause for concern. Understanding attachment can also provide your family with a roadmap toward a stronger relationship and positive solutions.

What Is Attachment?

Children who are securely attached want to be near the people they're attached to, typically their parents or primary caregiver, and they go to those people when they feel afraid or threatened. They see these attachment figures as a "secure base" from which they feel safe enough to branch out and explore their environment.

Furthermore, they show some anxiety when the person or people they're attached to are absent. A child who is not securely attached might also seem distressed when separated from a parent or caregiver but, when the parent returns, the child doesn't seem to be reassured. The child might refuse comfort or even be aggressive toward the parent.

The lack of secure attachment can look different for every child and can be caused by many factors, such as:

- Abuse and/or neglect
- A prolonged absence (e.g., prison, hospital stay)
- Medical conditions for either parent or child
- Mental health issues (e.g., postpartum depression)
- Environmental factors (e.g., poverty, violence, lack of support, multiple moves).

The effects can follow a child no matter how loving and secure the home is that the child is entering. It's important to remember that underlying the child's behaviors is the child's need to feel safe and to protect himself at all costs, even if that means initially rejecting love and support. **CONTINUE READING**