



AIM: FOCUSED ATTENTION

OUR TARGET: The point of this lesson is to get to know our kids more by learning how to listen to them. If we improve even a little, we will learn more about what is going on in their lives when they are not home. Let's try to get rid of distractions and really focus on listening to our kids.



A good listener:

- Looks at the speaker.
- Never talks when a speaker is talking.
- Tries not to distract the speaker.
- Shows attention with body language (smiles, frowns and other reactions).
- Thinks about what is being said.

20 to 30 percent of school-aged kids remembers what they hear better than what they see or feel.

When a teacher says, "You're not listening to me," they really mean, "You're not thinking along with me."

Steady background noises, like classical music, can drown out other noise, helping you focus better and ignore distractions.

Targeting More Meaningful Parental Involvement

Leaps Correlations:
Self Control & Confidence |
Paying Attention: Listening |
Distractions | Self-Control:
What it Means for Beginners



TEAM UP! Try these simple ideas to make your child want to talk.

Figure out a good time to get rid of your distractions. Silence your phone and maybe even leave it in another room so that you're not tempted to pay attention to it. Find your child and turn up a radio or TV that's close by to a really loud volume. Start talking to your son or daughter over the loudness and try to ask them how their day was. You should be almost yelling and it will become silly to you and your child. Once you have their attention, turn down the volume and sit down together. Now that you have gotten rid of something in the way of you two talking try to make sure that nothing else gets in the way.

TALKING TIPS to help you sit down and start the conversation...

LISTENING IS THE FIRST STEP TO LEARNING.

It's going to be pretty hard teaching our kids a lesson about listening if we can't do it ourselves as their parents. It will take time and practice talking and listening to your kid if you want to learn how to talk to each other... and actually learn things about each other. The worst thing we can do (and teach our kids to do) is hear them talking and not actually listen to them at all. If you learn nothing about your child after they have told you something, you missed an opportunity. Stop wasting time and opportunities to grow together by listening to your child.

Ask your child about friends of theirs that you know. If they shy away from any specific topics or friends by shrugging their shoulders or looking away, keep asking. Your child may want to talk about something but they could be unsure of how much you care to listen. Make sure they know you want to spend the time listening.

SELF-CONTROL means being able to stop and honestly describe how you feel. If you and your child can see that you are both acting angry or frustrated, it will take some work to make it stop. Both of you have to focus on acting and feeling the right way to have a healthy relationship. It will take time and practice for you to stay patient with one another but being able to stop and see that something is wrong with how you're feeling or acting is the first step to self-control.

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DECISION TIME: You and your child now have to CHOOSE together to try harder at listening to one another.

- Stay focused on your new tips for listening, keeping away from distractions & staying in control of your emotions. It is easy for adults to use their age or job as an excuse to keep doing lots of things at once. When you're doing lots of things at once it is really hard to do one thing well. Let go of your distractions while you are trying to become better listeners and then your child will know that you are serious about improving also.
- Be patient with your child. Your child will learn from you whether you think you are teaching them or not. It could be a very sad experience for you to witness your child lose self-control and you can see that it is the way they have learned to react... simply because that's what you do.

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GIVE IT A TRY! A chance to practice the target skills together at home:



Make a Meal Together

Finding time to talk can be hard with a busy house and busy schedules, but eating is something you have to do. Use the time you already use to prepare a meal and have your child help you. This way, you have very few distractions and you can easily see if you and your child are listening to each other by how well (or badly) the recipe turns out! Here's a recipe that is simple and delicious if you need a little help finding one:

Pasta & Garlic Bread

You'll Need:

- 1 package penne pasta
- 1 jar or can of tomato/spaghetti sauce
- 1 Tablespoon of vegetable oil
- 1 Onion, chopped
- 1 Bell Pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 Can of Sliced Black Olives, drained
- 1 Loaf of French Bread
- 4 Tablespoons butter or margarine
- 2 Tablespoons of Garlic Powder
- Parmesan cheese (optional)

Preheat your oven to 350-degrees. Cook the pasta as the box or bag it came in tells you, and drain it in a colander. While the pasta is cooking, put the oil in a skillet, and heat it for a minute on medium heat. Add the chopped onion and bell pepper to the skillet and let it cook for 5-7 minutes, until they become softer. Add the jar or can of tomato/spaghetti sauce to the skillet and cook for another 3-4 minutes, until all heated through. In a large bowl, combine the drained pasta, the sauce and vegetable mixture and the drained black olives. Stir all until combined evenly. Top with Parmesan cheese (optional).

Cut the loaf of French bread in half long-ways so that it looks like a huge sub sandwich roll. Open the halves and spread them both with the butter or margarine. Sprinkle the garlic powder evenly over the two halves, place them both on one cookie sheet, then put the cookie sheet in the preheated oven. Bake at 350-degrees for 10-12 minutes until the edges are browning and the butter is melted. Cut into equal portions and serve with the pasta.*

Enjoy!

Stay On Target

Tips to help keep your child's new skills in action at home and school.

- Ask your child about their school days as much as you can during the week.
- Even if you and your child both have work to do at home, try to do your activities in the same room in case one of you wants to start up a conversation. If you start talking, practice your new skill of focusing and putting the distractions away for a minute so that you can both really listen to each other.

Instructions that are bold could be done by your child!