

Talk So Your Child Will Listen

Whether you are the father of a toddler or a teen, you feel frustration when your child fails to listen. Listening is a learned behavior. Speaking so others will listen is a skill. *Both take practice.*

Your child will need speaking and listening skills. These pro-social skills help them interact with others in a positive way. You model these skills as you talk and listen to your children.

Try these tips with your child.

- **Use your child's name.** It gets her attention. *"Tara - it is time to go."*
- **Make eye contact.** You can assess his attention. Teach your child to look at a person's face when he talks and listens.
- **Assess your child's feelings.** Is she ready to listen? Is she distracted? If she is upset or angry, she may not be able to act on what you say.
- **State your message in terms your child can understand. Keep it simple.** *"Doug - I need you to take out the trash before 6 p.m."* Parents often use too many words when they give a task to their kids. The kids lose interest and miss the most important points.
- **Ask your child to repeat your request.** Then, you both know the expected outcome.
- **Always use calm, positive and respectful words and tone when you talk to your child.**



Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital to help keep kids safe, healthy and happy.



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.

1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889
10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org

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HSHS St. John's Hospital