

Active Listening Skills

Skill	Reason	Examples
<p style="text-align: center;">Specific Praise</p> <p style="text-align: center;">tell your child exactly what you like about their behavior</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases the behavior that is praised • Shows approval • Improves child's self-esteem • Make child feel good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Good job building that tower." • "I like how you are sitting next to me." • "Thank you for sharing."
<p style="text-align: center;">Behavior Descriptions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Describe what your child is doing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows interest • Models good speech and vocabulary • Teaches concepts • Holds child's attention on the task • Organized child's thoughts about the activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You're grabbing a toy from the box." • "You drew a square on the paper." • "You put the girl inside the fire truck."
<p style="text-align: center;">Imitation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Copy your child's appropriate behaviors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows child you approve of his/her game • Increases the child's imitation of the things that you do • Teaches your child how to play with others and take turns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child: "I put a nose on the potato head." Parent: I'm putting a nose on Mr. Potato Head too • Child: (drawing circles on a piece of paper) • Parent: "I'm drawing circles on my paper just like you."
<p style="text-align: center;">Reflections</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Repeat or paraphrase what your child says</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's child lead the conversation • Shows interest • Demonstrates acceptance and understanding • Improves child's speech • Increases verbal communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child: "I drew a tree." Parent: "Yes, you made a tree." • Child: "I like to play with blocks." Parent: "You're having fun with the blocks." • Child: "I like to play with blocks." Parent: "You're having fun with the blocks."
<p style="text-align: center;">Enjoy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">when you play with your child</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's your child know that you are enjoying the time you are spending together. • Adds warmth to play • Increases closeness between you and your child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child: (carefully placing a blue Lego on a tower) • Parent: (gently touching the child's back) "You are REALLY being gentle with the toys!"

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Avoid	Reason	Examples
<p style="text-align: center;">Commands tell your child to do something</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes the lead away from child • Can cause conflict 	<p>Indirect Commands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let’s play with the Legos next.” • “Can you tell me what animal this is?” • “[Child’s name]?” <p>Direct Commands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Give me the block.” • “Please sit down next to me.” • “Look at this.”
<p style="text-align: center;">Questions Expects your child to give an answer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads the conversation • Many questions are commands and require an answer • May seem like you are not listening or that you disagree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We’re building a tower, aren’t we?” • “What sound does the cow make?” • “It’s a what?” • “Do you want to play with the train?” • “You’re drawing it red?”
<p style="text-align: center;">Criticism or Sarcasm Expresses disapproval of your child</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives attention negative behavior • Lowers your child’s self-esteem • Causes angry feelings between you and your child • Teaches your child negative social behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “That wasn’t very smart.” • “I don’t like your attitude.” • “Don’t color the sky pink.” • “Stop it!” • “Your tower isn’t straight enough.” • “No sweetie, that’s not where it goes.” • “Can you do anything right?”
<p style="text-align: center;">Ignore Minor Misbehavior Ignoring means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look away • Show no expression or reaction • Say nothing to child <p style="text-align: center;">Look for positive behavior to praise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps your child to notice the difference between your responses to positive and negative behaviors • Although the ignored behavior may get worse at first, consistent ignoring reduces misbehavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child: (coloring carefully) “My picture’s better than your ugly picture.” • Parent: (ignores rude talk) “I like how carefully you are coloring.” • Child: (throws block in the air while crying) • Parent: (Ignores throwing and crying) • Child: (starts taking dep breaths to calm down) • Parent: “Nice job taking deep breaths to calm down on your own!”