# How to Get Kids to Listen And Respect You

Do your kids listen to you the first time you ask them to do something? If not, then you may have to keep reading. Kids will truly listen when there is mutual respect between you and them. They will listen to you when they know that when you say something, you mean it.

Here are ten tips on how to get your kids to listen and respect you.

## 1. Show Mutual Respect

You can get kids to listen by demanding authority and ruling with an iron fist, but at what cost? You can yell and scream your kids into submission and obedience, but at what cost? The cost will be your relationship with your child in the long run, as resentments will form in them

If you don’t show respect for your kids, it is going to be hard to get them to listen to you. They may obey, but if you act as a tyrant who demands that kids do what you say because you are the one in charge, then you are fighting a losing battle. The basis of your relationship must begin with respect. [Mutual respect](https://www.lifehack.org/531971/the-key-that-makes-relationship-last-not-attraction-communication-but-respect) is the foundation for any relationship, including the parent-child relationship.

## 2. Avoid Yelling

## When yelling and dominance are the themes of the relationship, then an undercurrent of resentment will develop in the child. Nobody wants to feel dominated, nor do they want to feel that they are of less value than another person.

Let your child know that you value them through respectful interactions. You are still the parent, but you can parent and get your kids to listen through respectful interaction. When you use demanding, [authoritarian parenting methods](https://www.lifehack.org/856816/authoritarian-parenting), you are undermining your relationship with the child and resentments are likely to form.

Avoid yelling to gain respect from your child. If you fall back to yelling, screaming, and making demands, then you are undermining your ability to gain your child’s respect in the long run.

## 3. Use the Golden Rule

Respect is founded on the golden rule: treat others as you want to be treated. If you want your child to respect you, you must also treat them with respect. This means talking to your child in a tone that is kind, genuine, and considerate. Granted, this is not easy when your four-year-old is having a meltdown in aisle 5 of the grocery store and you have many more errands to run, work to do, and no extra time on hand. It takes practice to parent without yelling and heightened emotions.

We are still people and get mad at our kids. However, we have to keep in mind that they are learning and we have far more years of practice at these things. We must keep our cool and maintain authority while parenting.

How do you want to be talked to when you are having a bad day and feel like melting down? That is how you should talk to your child who is having a meltdown and is obviously having a bad day. Kindness, love, and respect, when paired with authority, will create a relationship where your child will listen and respect you. Treat them as you want to be treated.

## 4. Ensure that Your Words Have Consequences

We know that mutual respect is the first step to getting our kids to listen. This respect will help them be open to what we have to say. If they feel that they matter because you respect them, then they will develop respect for you. This will help when it comes to [disciplining your child](https://www.lifehack.org/686658/how-to-discipline-a-child-at-different-age).

The second step is ensuring that our words have consequences. When it comes to discipline, your words must have weight. If you say you are going to do something, you must do it.

For example, if you ask your child to stop hitting the couch while you are typing an article for Lifehack and they keep hitting it, then let them know that if they don’t stop, they get a five-minute time-out. True story, this just happened. He stopped. Why did he stop? Because he knew I meant what I said. If he didn’t stop, he knew it would mean an immediate time out, not an additional warning and more time to carry on with the behavior that I asked him to stop.

I asked in a calm voice while looking into his eyes, letting him know I was serious. He also knows that I mean what I say because he is now seven years old and has experienced consistent follow-through with punishments for years. I don’t ask the same thing several times. I also don’t make threats. I follow through with reasonable punishments when the instructions and requests are not followed by my child.

## 5. Avoid Big Threats

I have seen parents make big threats, thinking that the bigger the threat, the more the child is likely to stop the behavior. This is not reasonable, nor is it a good idea. Big threats that you don’t follow through with make your words meaningless.

For example, if I had told my son that I was going to throw away his toys if he didn’t stop hitting the couch, that would have been unreasonable. Throwing away toys that cost a bit of money to buy as a consequence of a small infraction (hitting the couch while I am typing) is unreasonable. If he kept hitting the couch, what would I do? It would be unrealistic to actually throw away the toys.

Therefore, many parents in this instance keep making the same threat with no actual follow-through. The threats continue because the behavior continues and even escalates (i.e. the couch hitting gets louder and harder) and finally, the parent must throw away the toys and/or resorts to a different punishment to stop the escalation.

The escalation could have been avoided by stating realistic consequences and following through the first time. Time-outs and taking away a toy or a privilege are all reasonable. I often take away my kid’s tablet time or give five-minute time-outs as a consequence. I avoid making big threats that I cannot follow through with in good conscience. It helps me in the long run because when I give reasonable consequences, I can easily follow through with the punishment at that moment and not feel terrible.

Avoid making big threats that you cannot follow through with in good conscience. Instead, provide consequences with warnings and ensure that the punishment is worthy of the behavior. Small infractions should get small consequences. Big infractions require more serious consequences. Don’t make a habit of making big threats of big consequences that you can’t actually enforce.

## 6. Follow Through

A method of parenting where a parent follows through with their consequences immediately is called the “[one ask approach](https://www.lifehack.org/607269/the-only-effective-way-to-teach-your-children-well).” In this method, a parent asks their child only once to do something. If they don’t do it, then the parent provides a consequence if they don’t do as asked.

For example, if you ask your child to put their dishes in the sink but they don’t get up and start doing the task, then the parent can let the child know the consequence if they don’t follow through with what was asked. If they don’t put away their dishes, they are going to lose half an hour of their TV time. They don’t get three warnings or even two. One warning is all that is provided. If they don’t follow instructions, then the consequence is dealt out.

In this example, if the child doesn’t put away their dishes after the warning is provided, then the parent follows through and says “I am sorry, but now you lost half of your TV time for tonight.” The parent must then not allow the child to watch TV and can suggest reading books or playing outside instead. This method will help you parent with consistency.

## 7. Give Them Your Full Attention

When you are speaking to your child look them in the eye and give them your full attention. This approach is much more fruitful in getting your child to listen than distracted, partial attention.

Case in point: if a parent is playing a game on their phone and yells across the room to have their child go do their homework, the interaction is less meaningful than making a face-to-face request. If the parent sets down their phone and walks over to their child and looks in their child’s eyes and says, “it is time to stop watching tv for now and do your homework, you can watch after your homework is finished,” it is much more likely to be fruitful because full attention is provided.

Giving your child your full attention with eye contact and face-to-face interactions shows them that you care and you are serious about what you are saying. This will go a long way toward getting your child to listen and respond to what you have to say.

## 8. Show Genuine Care

Showing that you care is immensely meaningful to any child. Your child needs to know that you care about them. Your words, actions, and tone of voice show that you care. If you care, be sure to show it.

For example, if I want my kids to set the table for dinner, yelling at them saying “you know its time for dinner, you should have set the table five minutes ago” will not be as productive as making a caring statement. Such a caring statement could be “you do a great job setting the dinner table. It is so nice to work together, with me making the meal and you setting the table so we can enjoy time together each night. Can you set the table in the next twenty minutes before dinner?”

Showing your child that you care will help build a positive relationship, and your child will be more likely to listen and respect you. Your words and actions in your daily interaction will show that you genuinely care for your child.

## 9. Show Them That You Value Them

Giving your child your full attention also shows them that you care and that they are valued. Everyone wants to feel valued. Our children should always feel that we value them.

Some ways that you can give your child attention and show that they are valued include the following:

* Praise your child.
* Give physical affections, such as hugs.
* Show interest in their activities.
* Get on their level when talking.
* Make eye contact and smile while interacting.
* Give positive feedback in your daily interactions.
* Provide them with support in accomplishing daily activities (i.e. help your child tie their shoes and teach them at the same time as they are learning this task).
* Build up your child with positive messages.
* Reassure your child when they are fearful.
* Support your child when they are upset.
* Make time to spend with your child one on one daily.
* Respond to your child every time they talk to you (do not ignore them).
* Ask your child about their day with meaningful, open-ended questions.

According to the article, Positive Attention and Your Child,[1]

“From birth, children need experiences and relationships that show them they’re valued, capable human beings who bring pleasure to others. Positive attention, reactions and responses from key grown-ups help children build a picture of how valued they are.”

Children must be told and shown that they are valued. What we say and how we act toward our children should be done in a way that makes them consistently feel valued. This will help build a relationship where listening and respect go both ways.

## 10. Be a Good Role Model

To get your kids to listen and respect you, then you must also be a good role model worthy of respect. Kids watch their parents and caregivers and thus, will imitate their behavior.

Case in point: if you consistently object to figures of authority and do not follow rules or laws, then your child is observing and learning this from you. They will learn that they do not need to listen to or respect authority figures. Be an example that teaches your child to listen and respect others by your own behaviors and modeling.

The Bottom Line

The bottom line to teaching kids to listen and respect you is to treat them with respect and follow through with consequences. Your words must have weight, and this only happens when you are consistent with your follow-through. Treating your child with love, respect, care, and affection is important to creating a relationship where they want to listen to you and mutually respect you.