



IES Grant #  
R324A160086

# Teach Strategy

## Ask for Time with You

Your child may engage in challenging behavior to get your attention, either to spend time with you, or because they need your help. Use these steps to teach your child to appropriately ask for you, rather than using challenging behavior.



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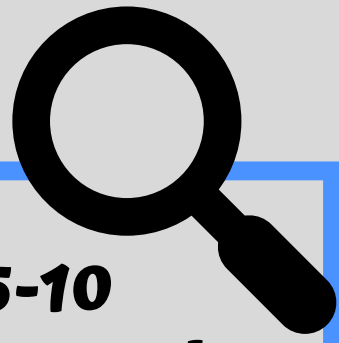
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1

Identify short blocks of time (5-10 min) during your day when you can spend time providing positive attention to your child.

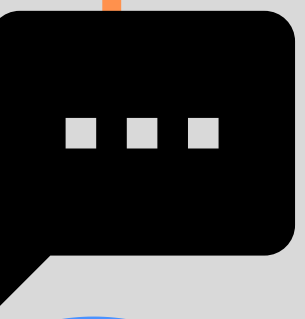
Positive attention can include anything that you and your child enjoy doing together, like reading a book, playing with a favorite toy set, or going for a walk.



2

Provide a warning that you will be done playing together soon.

Then, just before you end the time together, remind your child how they can ask for your attention. For example, say "Remember, if you want me to play, you can say 'play with me please.'"



3

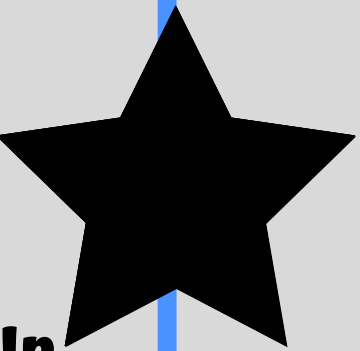
- If your child appropriately asks for your attention, return to the interaction and provide positive descriptive feedback (ex: "You asked so nicely! I'm proud of you. We can keep playing!")
- If your child does not ask, or asks inappropriately (ex: yelling), model the preferred communication from step 2 again.
- If your child begins to engage in challenging behavior, stay calm and avoid attending to the behavior.



4

Repeat this process several times throughout the day in different routines (ex: playing, eating dinner, bed time) until you notice your child asking for your attention without a model or without engaging in challenging behavior.

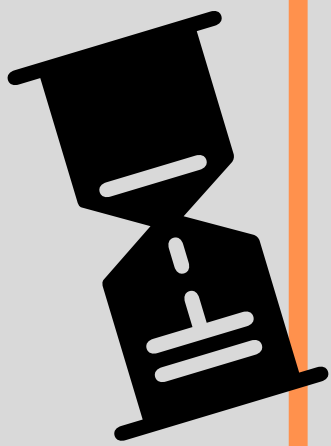
It's important to agree to your child's appropriate requests as much as you can while they are learning this skill. It will help them understand that they can get your attention without using challenging behaviors!



5

Sometimes you may not be able to immediately spend time with your child, or they may need to wait for your attention (ex: if you are on the phone, need to make dinner). When this happens, let them know when you will be available again, and give them a choice of things that are available instead (ex: "You can play with your brother, or listen to music while you wait.").

Try to practice by asking your child to wait for a short time at first (ex: 1 minute) and increase the time in small increments as they learn to wait!



### Helpful Hints!

- Identify a hand signal (ex: index finger up) or visual (ex: stop sign) to visually cue your child to that your attention is unavailable.
- Pair this cue with a short statement that lets your child know when you will be available again (ex: "in 1 min" or "wait 1 min").

**\*You can also use this same process to prompt your child to ask for more, or for your help! \***



For more information on how to teach your child new skills, [click here](#).

