



Teach Strategy

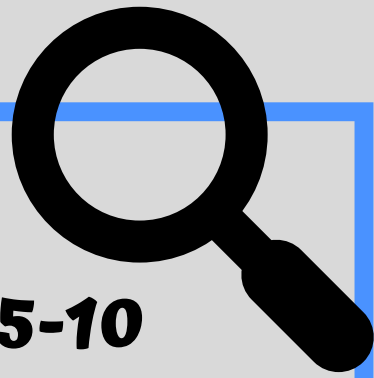
Ask for Attention



1

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

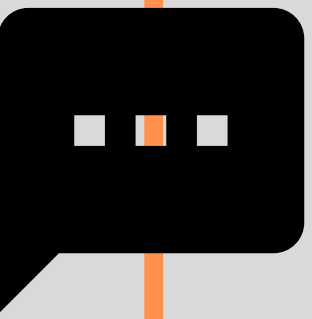
Positive attention can include things like playing with your child or reading a book together.



2

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

Before you leave the interaction, model how your child can ask for your attention. For example, say "Remember, if you want me to play, you can say 'play please.'"



3

- If your child appropriately asks for your attention, return to the interaction and provide positive descriptive feedback.
- If your child does not ask, asks inappropriately (yelling), model the desired 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 (playing, eating dinner, bed time) until you notice your child asking for your attention without a model or without engaging in challenging behavior.

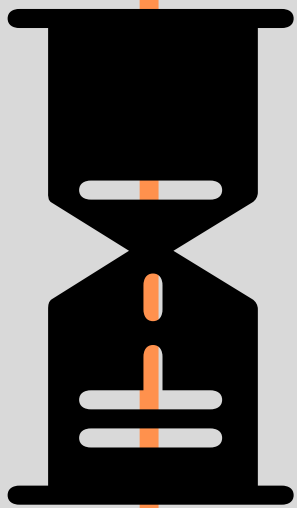
It is important to comply with your child's appropriate requests while they are learning this skill to help them understand this new skill meets their needs rather than challenging behavior.



5

Once your child appropriately asks for your attention often, you can explain that there are times your child may need to wait for your attention (ex: if you are on the phone, need to make dinner).

When you ask them to wait, let them know when they will have your attention again. Begin by only asking your child to wait for a short time (ex: 1-min) and increase the time in small increments as your child is able to wait without engaging in challenging behavior.



Helpful Hint!

- Identify a hand signal (index finger up), gesture (sign for wait), or visual (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").
- Be sure to return to your child after a short time at first and build up to longer times without your attention.



For more information on how to teach your child to ask for attention, [click here](#).

