

Use teachers' tips to improve behavior at home

Can't get your child to complete homework? Pay attention? Respond to requests? Why not get help from those who get not just one--but 20 or more--kids to do what's expected? Teachers!

Here's what they suggest:

- Teach what you want your child to do. Focus on the tasks you want to be routine--like putting her backpack by the front door.
- Post a schedule for activities. Your child will know what to do and when to do it. And she'll feel more independent.
- Avoid abrupt transitions. Kids can get really absorbed in an activity. To help your child switch gears, set a timer. Let her know how many minutes she has left before she needs to do something else.
- Make the mundane fun. Don't just tell your child to pick up her room. Challenge her to do it in rhythm to music.
- Use silent signals. Use a gentle touch on your child's shoulder to get her to pay attention. Flick the lights off and on to give a five- minute warning before bedtime.
- Provide meaningful things for your child to do. Stash books that interest her around the house. Keep paper, crayons and craft supplies handy so your child can use them at any time. In the grocery store, put your child in charge of coupons.

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