

TIPS FOR HANDLING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS DURING COVID-19 FROM THE NAFCS PSYCHOLOGY TEAM

Children are always trying to communicate with us. Sometimes, children communicate using behaviors that are inappropriate, such as arguing, being defiant, and whining. How you react to your child's behaviors can help teach and even change their behaviors!

Children sometimes learn that their challenging behaviors are useful for getting them what they want.

Does your child have a hard time....

- When told no?
- When told to get off electronics?
- When they are told to wait?

HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

- Give access to toys/electronic as a result of **positive** behaviors.
- When you say "no," stay with "no."
- Teach your child to communicate with language rather than misbehavior.
- Do not give toys or items to your child to make behaviors stop.



Children learn how to get adults' attention quickly, in both negative and positive ways.

Does your child often....

- Cry or yell, even during preferred activities outside of schoolwork?
- Continue to do something after they have been told "no?"

HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

- When possible, do not give a reaction to your child's yelling or crying. Walk away from the situation, if you need to.
- Provide attention to your child randomly throughout the day when your child is behaving appropriately.

Sometimes children react to express their feelings.

Does your child have a hard time....

- Staying up-to-date on schoolwork?
- Getting out of bed in the morning?

Does your child show...

- More anxious behaviors than usual?
- More energy during the day?

HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

- Ask your child how they are feeling every single day.
- Remain on a schedule, especially with eating and sleeping.
- Get outside every day, if possible.
- Incorporate movement breaks into your child's routine. Click [here](#) for movement break ideas.



Children have learned that they are sometimes able to get out of doing things when they behave inappropriately.

Does your child have a hard time...

- Following directions?
- Completing school work?
- Completing tasks they don't enjoy?

HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

- Speak to your child calmly when you are setting expectations for their behavior.
- Follow through with expectations, even if your child pushes back.
- Look for signs that show your child is getting frustrated. Be proactive and incorporate breaks to avoid behaviors.

Is your child anxious about returning back to school?

Here are some resources (click links):

[Social Story for Young Children](#)

[Tips to Help Reduce Children's Anxiety](#)

Here is an activity to complete while at home during COVID-19: [COVID Time Capsule Activity](#)