



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**
Program Topic : **Clear & Positive Instructions (LOVE)**

Guidelines to the presenter

1. Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
2. You should be seen as a peer rather than an authority.
3. Offer guidance or opinion rather than telling people what to do.
- 4.** Encourage people to seek further information
- 5.** Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

Topic:

Clear & positive instructions

Objectives

- Provide a description of what clear and positive instructions are.
- Enable an understanding of the benefits of using clear and positive instructions.
- Enable an understanding of how to give clear and positive instructions.
- Encourage parents to give clear and positive instructions.

Introduction

On this show, we celebrate the fact that you are the most important person in your child' life. You have the power to give your child the best possible start in life and it doesn't have to cost you a cent.

We will all come to a point very soon where it is necessary to give our children instructions. Clear and positive instructions reduce confusion as to what is wanted from

children. Clear and positive instructions also give children a sense of security and safety, improving their listening skills, and providing guidance to children. But giving instructions that your children respond to isn't always easy. Join us now as we discuss how to give your children clear and positive instructions.

Questions	Facts/Information
<p>1. <i>What are some of the reasons for children to follow instructions?</i></p>	<p>Following instructions reduces confusion as to what is wanted from them. It also has many other benefits for children, such as giving them a sense of security and safety, improving their listening skills, and providing guidance to children. If children follow instructions it creates a peaceful environment at home.</p>
<p>2. <i>It seems that many parents have problems getting their children to follow instructions. Why do you think this is?</i></p>	<p>Yes, many parents do have problems getting children to follow instructions. In fact, children who do not have problems only follow about 75% of the instructions that they are given by their parents. Children who have difficulty in following instructions generally follow more instructions than we realise. Unfortunately, if we know that a child has challenging behaviour, we look for and notice the problems and may miss the times when they do as they are told.</p>
<p>3. <i>Does giving instructions mean being one of those strict parents or shouting?</i></p>	
<p>4. <i>Some people may say that being strict and shouting has worked?</i></p>	

Let us look at an example: (change names to culturally appropriate ones if necessary)

Thabo, who is 8 years old, is playing ball outside. His grandmother calls from the kitchen and tells him to stop playing, come inside, take off his shoes, wash his hands and face, and come to the dinner table. She says this all in one sentence. Thabo stops playing and goes inside. His grandmother scolds him for not doing what she asked, and says that he cannot have any dessert.

What does this example describe?

In this case, Thabo's grandmother gives him too many instructions at once – also she is calling from the kitchen, and does not have his full attention. As caregivers, we usually give too many instructions. Children can only follow a few instructions at a time. For Thabo, he did follow one of the instructions and came inside as asked. Perhaps, if his grandmother had given Thabo one instruction at a time, he would be more likely to follow all the instructions. Even though Thabo did follow one of the instructions, his grandmother said that he could not have dessert – this does not encourage Thabo to follow rules.

5. How can parents give instructions in a more effectively?

Make sure that you have your child's full attention when you give an instruction. Move close to them, say their name and get them to look at you before giving the instruction.

Give instructions in a firm voice and stay calm – do not raise your voice. You are in

<p>6. How should we put forward these instructions?</p>	<p>control and can remain calm when giving an instruction.</p> <p>It is important that you only give your child one instruction at a time. Parents also often repeat instructions many times and give a string of instructions. For example "Get yourself up, washed and dressed. Put a clean vest on, and don't forget to clean your teeth". This can be difficult for a child to remember.</p> <p>Make sure that the instruction is specific, so that the child knows exactly what it is that they should do. Instructions are often much too general such as "Be good" or "Tidy your room". For an obedient child these may be quite acceptable instructions. However, for a child who has difficulty following instructions they are too vague.</p> <p>Phrase instructions as commands and not as questions. For example, rather say "Please put the pot in the cupboard" than "Would you mind putting the pot in the cupboard?"</p> <p>Once you give the instruction you must follow it through. Do not give up or be distracted. Behave as if you expect the child to do what you ask.</p> <p>Phrase instructions positively rather than negatively. For example, instead of saying, "Stop running in the house", rather say, "Please walk in the house." Instructions given in a positive way support good behaviour.</p> <p>It is important to praise your child immediately after they follow an instruction, even if he/she has behaved badly or been grumpy whilst doing it.</p>
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Remind the child of good things that they have done in the past. Never remind the child of their bad behaviour. It must be dealt with at the time and forgotten. Children only want to follow our instructions if we have a good relationship with them.

Let us look at another case:

Mother gets Lonwabo's full attention by making eye contact and getting down to his level. She says, "Time to get dressed for school, Lonwabo. First put your socks on." Lonwabo follows the instruction by putting on his socks. Mother praises Lonwabo and gives him the next instruction – "Good for you! And they match! Now out on your trousers, please." Lonwabo puts on his trousers. Again, Mother praises Lonwabo and tells him to put on his shirt – "You are doing a great job getting dressed, Lonwabo! Now put on your shirt, please." Lonwabo put on his shirt. Mother says, "Thank you for getting dressed all by yourself. Let's sing your favourite song on our way to school."

7. Is this a good example of giving instructions?

In this example, Mother made it easy for Lonwabo to follow her commands by only asking him to do one thing at a time. She also used his name while giving instructions, and also phrased instructions positively. She praised Lonwabo immediately after he followed an instruction. She also rewarded him by singing his favourite song with him on the way to school.

Let us look at another case story:

Mother and Father are listening to the news on the radio. Lindiwe, who is 6 years old, comes into the room singing loudly, which makes it difficult for Mother and Father to hear the news. Father says to Lindiwe, "Lindiwe, please sing softly. Your mother and

<p><i>I are listening to the news.” Lindiwe follows the instruction and sings softly. Father acknowledges that Lindiwe has followed the instruction. He praises her by saying, “Thank you, Lindiwe. I appreciate you singing softly while we are listening to the news.” Mother adds in, “Yes, and after the news we can all sing together.”Lindiwe continues to sing softly. After the news, the family sing together.</i></p> <p>8. What is going on in this example?</p>	<p>In this example, the Mother and Father do a good job at giving clear and positive instructions. Father frames the instruction positively, and he also explains why he would like Lindiwe to sing softly. He praises Lindiwe as soon as she sings softly, which encourages her to continue following the instruction for the rest of the news. Also, mother provides a reward by letting them all sing together after the news.</p>

<p>Conclusion</p>
<p>We’ve discussed that clear and positive instructions reduce confusion as to what is wanted from children. To keep things clear parents should only give one instruction at a time and instructions must be phrased positively. Praise and rewards can assist in children following instructions, but remember that children only want to follow our instructions if we have a good relationship with them.</p>
<p>Learning outcomes</p>
<p>After listening to this show the audience should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what a clear and positive instruction is. • Understand the importance of giving instructions that are clear and positive. • Parents use clear and positive instructions with their child. • Parents praise their children after they follow instructions.