

# Giving Effective Directions

Children respond to simple, direct, and specific commands better than open-ended questions or lengthy instructions.

## Do's

### **Make eye contact.**

Call child's name first, pause until eye contact is made, give direction.

### **Give a direct command.**

"Put the ball away."

### **Tell child what to do.**

"Put your hands down by your side."

### **Give simple commands.**

"Brush your teeth."

### **Specify exactly what the child should do.**

"Put your dirty shirt in the clothes hamper in your closet."

### **Use a firm but not angry voice.**

### **Use "let's" if you plan to complete the command with your child.**

"Let's pick up your blocks."

### **Provide rationale/reason before the command.**

## Dont's

### **Give command from another room.**

### **Present commands as questions.**

"Will you put the ball away?"

### **Tell child what not to do.**

"Don't hit your sister."

### **Give chain commands.**

"Brush your teeth, put your pajamas on, and go to bed."

### **Give vague commands.**

"Clean up your room."

### **Raise your voice.**

### **Use "let's" if you expect your child to complete the direction by themselves.**

### **Provide rationale/reason after the command.**