



## 7 Tips to Overcome Defiant Behaviour

### Daily Positive Attention

One of the simplest ways to reduce defiant behaviour is to provide your child with a daily dose of positive attention. Sometimes children misbehave in an attempt to gain a parent's attention, even if it is negative attention. Providing a child with just a few minutes of individual attention each day can often reduce a lot of defiance. Set a few minutes aside each day to engage with your child and ask about his/her day at school or talk about a topic of interest your child has.

### Praise Compliant Behaviour

It's important to offer your child a lot of praise when he/she is compliant. Giving positive attention to the good behaviour can show your child that compliance will gain the positive attention he/she craves. Provide your child with extra opportunities to comply with simple requests for the sole purpose of being able to offer him/her praise. For example, at the dinner table, ask, "Please hand me a napkin," and as soon as he/she does praise him/her by saying, "Thanks for handing me that napkin right when I asked you to." This will begin sending the message that you appreciate compliance.

### Give Effective Instructions

Make sure that the defiant behaviour you're witnessing is actually defiance. For example, if you yell from the kitchen to tell your child to come to the dinner table, he might not have heard you. Give effective instructions by establishing eye contact and ensuring your child understands the directions. Sometimes children are too tuned into the TV or the activity they're participating in to really absorb what you're telling them. Eliminate any distractions before giving them instructions. This is especially important with children who have ADHD.

### Offer Choices

One of the best ways to combat defiant behaviour is to offer two choices. For example, ask a child, "Do you want to wear the red boots or the brown shoes?" By offering a choice, defiant children don't feel like they have some control. Just make sure you can live with either choice.

### Reward Systems

Reward systems encourage more compliant behaviour. E.g.: compliance = extra 10 minutes of T.V time.

### Avoid Power Struggles

Avoid getting into a power struggle with a child who is non-compliant. It will only make the defiance worse. Instead, use a warning such as a 5 minute countdown to assist with transition.

