

The language of cooperation



Here are 10 simple language techniques you can use to invite cooperation from your kids. Try these techniques out to see what works for you.

1

Describe the problem

E.g.. "The living room is messy."

2

Describe the problem PLUS+

E.g. "The living room needs to be cleaned up before dinner."

3

State the rule or the practice

E.g. "We clean one lot of toys away before getting another lot out."

4

Describe what you feel

E.g. "I don't like it when your toys are on the floor all day as I feel like everything is a mess."

5

Put it in writing

E.g. "Dear Jeremy, Please clean me up before dinner. I will feel much better if I can see some daylight. Regards, The carpet. PS. It helps sometimes to clean up one mess before starting another."

6

Tell them what you will do

E.g. "I will listen to you when you have calmed down."

7

Choices

E.g. "You can stay inside if you are quiet. If you want to be noisy you can go outside."

8

The broken record

E.g. Parent: "It's time to clean your teeth." Child: "But I don't want to." Parent: "It's time to clean your teeth." Child: "My teeth aren't dirty." Parent: "It's time to clean your teeth."

NB: It helps to look away as you repeat yourself. Lack of eye contact makes a huge difference.

9

When ... then

E.g. "When you have done the chores then you can turn the TV on."

10

The invitation

E.g. "Can you help me out by clearing the table away after dinner?"

