



Tips for reducing distractibility

1 Carefully consider if your child is capable of performing the responsibilities expected. Do not give your child too many chores to do at once, make sure he/she gets up early enough to get to school on time, provide more than enough time to perform a responsibility etc, and do not expect perfection.

2 Establish rules for performing everyday expectations (e.g., get up on time for school, do your chores right after you get home from school, finish your homework before you watch T.V, etc). These rules should be consistent and followed by everyone in the home. Talk about the rules often.

3 Establish a routine for your child to follow for getting ready for school, performing chores, doing homework, etc. This will help your child remember what is expected.

4 Reward your child for getting things done without being distracted. Possible rewards include verbal praise (e.g., "You're on time for school. Good for you!", "Thank you for remembering to finish your homework before you turned on the T.V., etc), a kiss on the cheek, a hug, having a friend over to play, staying up late, watching a favorite T.V. show, and playing a game with a parent.

5 If there are other children or adolescents in the home, reward them for getting things done without becoming distracted.

6 Model for your child the appropriate ways to get things done without becoming distracted. Show your child how to follow a routine by following one yourself and getting things done on time.

7 Make certain that your child sees the

8 When your child does not get something done because he/she was distracted, explain exactly what he/she did wrong, what should have been done and why.

For example: Your child is supposed to catch the school bus at 7:45 am and is still getting dressed when the bus arrives. Go to your child and say that she/she has missed the bus because of not being ready on time. Explain that it is unacceptable for your child to miss the bus because you don't have a car to take him/her to school.

9 Write a contract with your child.

For example: I, William, will be ready and waiting for the school bus at 7:40 am for three days in a row. When I accomplish this, I can watch 30 extra minutes of T.V.

The contract should be written within the ability level of your child and should focus on only one behavior at a time.

10 Allow natural consequences to occur due to your child becoming distracted and not getting things done (e.g., a pet goes hungry if not fed, possessions are lost if not put away, etc.).

11 Along with a directive, provide an incentive statement (e.g., "After you get ready for bed, you may watch T.V.").

12 Provide your child with written reminders. (e.g., a list posted in the bathroom, indicating what his/her chores are and when they need to be done).

13 Tell your child when it is time to set the table, feed the dog, etc.

14 Limit the number of chores for

relationship between behavior and the consequences which follow (e.g., failing to feed the dog will cause the dog to go hungry).

which your child is responsible and gradually increase the number of chores as your child demonstrates the ability to get them done on time without becoming distracted.