

Using Choices

Children who find it difficult to follow instructions benefit from adults using choices to distract and give the child (and the adult) a way out from confrontations. They also give the child some power over their own actions. Choices also encourage thinking and decision making. If there is a problem getting the child to follow instructions **careful use of language and two (adult chosen) choices will often prevent problems arising.** We are trying to avoid a confrontation so practice at a time when the child is usually happy to do what you ask. See how they react to being given this kind of choice and give yourself chance to get a bit used to thinking of choices because that is sometimes the tricky bit! The choice is about HOW they are going to do the thing you are asking them.

Choices (only offer 2)

(Remember to make them visual whenever possible)

Getting dressed- "Pants or vest?"

Mealtimes- "Sitting here or here?"

Tidying up- "Cars or mat away first?"

Getting in the car- "Which door?" (point)

Going out- "Coat or shoes?"

Shoes on- "Which one first?" (hold up/ show)

Out and about/ Holding hands- "Which hand are you holding?"

This one or this one?"

Bedtime- "Teeth brushed or toilet?"

Going to bed- "Holding hands or by yourself?"

Use choices whenever and wherever you can. They really work!

Good luck 😊