

TABLE 12-1	
TELL CHILDREN WHAT TO DO WHEN REDIRECTING THEIR ACTIONS	
INSTEAD OF SAYING	SAY
No.	Stop.
Don't touch.	Look with your eyes.
Don't throw rocks.	Keep the rocks on the ground.
No running.	Use walking feet.
No pushing. No touching others.	Keep your hands to your side. Hug yourself. Keep your hands in your lap.
No shouting. No yelling.	Use your inside voice.
No fighting.	Tell your friend, "I would like a turn, please." Or ask, "When can I have a turn?"
No running away. No hiding.	Stay with your friends.
You are not paying attention.	Look... or Look what your friends are doing.
No hitting.	Stop. Use your words (give the exact words or phrase to say).
No bad words.	Use nice words.

the word, "Stop," and intervene. In other situations, try to eliminate saying, "No," or "Don't." Guide them by telling or showing alternatives. You can tell them to do an action that is the opposite of the unwanted one. It also helps to use the same keywords or phrases and/or pairing verbal cues with sign language.

Remember to ask yourself, "Do they know what else to do?" Have your first thought be that children are lacking the skills instead of willfully trying to be naughty or irritate you. Make a landmark decision to change your assumptions and automatic way of reacting.

***Fabulous Five: Teach Alternative Actions***

- **Tell children what to do versus what not to do when setting limits.**

Three-year-old Dana decided to play the Native American drum. I handed her a drumstick with a leather covering and said, "Just hit the drum with this drumstick."

"Not our eyes," Dana said as she shook her head to make the point. "If we hit our eyes, our eyes will pop out and we have to get them fixed at the doctor."

"Just hit the drum."

- **Tell children to do an action that is the opposite of their unwanted one.**

At the school's outdoor field days, two third graders, Erik and Martin, started to shove each other. One flicked the red visor off the other's head.

I stepped in between them. "Today is a day for fun, not fighting."

I sat down, and Martin started flicking my ankle. To get him to stop, I reached down and extended my hand. "Shake my hand."

He raised his foot instead.

I held the heel of his shoe, shook it like a hand, and said, "Hi, Mister Foot."

He grinned back.

- **Give a verbal cue using a key word or phrase.**

"Although Roman has wonderful things to say, he talks nonstop," the preschool teacher said during a planning meeting.

"It would help if we all use the same words to let him know when it is time to listen," I said.

"Let's say, 'Turn on your listening ears,'" his teacher suggested, and the group agreed.

- **Pair a verbal cue with sign language.**

While the preschool teacher read a book in the specialized classroom, three staff members repeatedly told children to sit down. The noise level increased, and few children paid attention to the book.

Later, when the staff met, we talked about how to change the situation. The next day we taught the class sign language for "stop," "sit," "more," and "all done." The children practiced, and the staff began using the signs throughout the day.

A week later, I saw Randy rolling on the floor. Without saying a word, I signed, "Stop. Sit." I pointed to his chair. He moved to his seat but looked at me instead of the teacher. I pointed to my eyes and then to the teacher reading the book, and he shifted his attention to the book.