



National Skateboard Certification Program©

STUDENTS NOT LISTENING? TOP 10 TIPS TO DEAL WITH IT!

As instructors we have all faced it. The kids are not listening to you without you repeating yourself over and over and it's driving you crazy. You give them chances or count to ten and they still won't listen. Here are some tips to deal with it.

1. CONSIDER THEIR AGE

Children's nervous systems grow at a slow pace. Children simply aren't capable of some of the things we expect out of them. Don't think of them as little adults. That doesn't mean that we can't set limits. On the contrary - as instructors, it's one of our responsibilities. But we may have to patiently step in to set those limits physically. Instead of telling them what to do repeatedly, tell them once - then "help" them to do what you asked. This can be done kindly but firmly and consistently.

2. CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOR

Instead of expecting them to change their behavior, change yours. What you're doing isn't working, right? Consistently being firm over a period of time will let them know what is expected of them. Children are impulsive and may be incapable of putting the brakes on themselves, no matter what we've told them to do. That's where we step in!

3. GET BACK TO BASICS

If the students are chocked full of energy and things are feeling too crazy to continue, have a breakout plan. Let the skateboarders join in a game or activity to burn off this super charged of energy, you'll soon find you can get back to the lesson after their energy is discharged.



4. LISTEN TO YOURSELF WHEN YOU TALK TO THEM.

Are they tuning you out because everything you say is negative? If you were lecturing and yelling at me all day, I would tune out too! It's a natural reaction and unconscious for anyone to discount someone who is negative. Yet as instructors, some of the time what we say has a negative tone. "Don't do this, don't do that." If you are talking or yelling, change your strategy to take action, balanced with patience, of course.

5. DON'T GIVE THEM REPEATED CHANCES

Tell them once instead of counting to three or giving them repeated chances. Being firm doesn't mean we have to be cruel or mean when we do it. Having firm limits means that we react consistently to issues when confronted with them. They know what to expect!

6. TRY LOWERING YOUR VOICE INSTEAD OF RAISING IT!

If you practice lowering your voice, you can get very good at this. Often students/athletes will stop if they hear you lower your voice and listen. Of course you need to follow this up with action! If the behavior is dangerous another more immediate approach may be necessary

At the very least, the kids would know that something has changed...

7. TAKE ACTION IF REQUIRED



Keep a whistle handy and explain that when you blow it you need everyone to stop what they are doing and return to a designated area. An alternate to this is to raise your hand to signal attention. Be clear about your expectations right from the beginning and be consistent!

8. KEEP YOUR EMOTIONS IN CHECK.

Kids are going to push you - it's one of their jobs! They'll see how far they can go and it's your job to set limits.

If you are having a problem with anger, take a deep breath. Go to another room. Ask the help of your fellow instructor or instructor. You can set up a signal beforehand with. Try to speak to your supervisor before becoming angry or frustrated to the point of not managing.

9. TOUCH BASES WITH YOUR FELLOW SKATEBOARDING INSTRUCTORS

Debrief if need be. Ask for a time out and assistance from you supervisor if required.

10. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF! SET TIME ASIDE FOR YOURSELF

We need to regroup and relax. Take breaks when provided and time out to enjoy a little skateboarding, reading or just putting your feet up. Why are we including this here? Because teaching children is work and you need energy to deal with all the issues. Eat right, exercise and get plenty of sleep. Pretend you're running a marathon because you are!



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