

## Following Directions and Changing My Behavior: Ages 4-5

### Practicing following directions allows your child to:

- Learn how to change her behavior to match different directions
- Understand how different situations require different behaviors
- Describe appropriate behaviors for everyday experiences



### Ideas to try with your child:

- Practice following directions by playing “Simon Says,” modeled below:  
Adult: “Simon says touch your nose.” *Child touches nose.*  
Adult: “Simon says jump one time.” *Child jumps one time*  
Adult: “Touch your toes.” *If child touches toes remind them that Simon didn’t say to!*
- Play music as your child dances. Change the tempo of the music and invite her to change the dance.
- Throughout the day, talk about what behavior we need for common activities: “I’m going to cut this paper so I will sit down at the table.” “In the grocery store, we must stand quietly in line.” “At library story hour, what should our bodies be doing?”

### If your child is struggling:

- If your child is having trouble following Simon in the game, invite her to be Simon. You can model the directions as she gives them.
- Sing a simple song like “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes.” Mix up the order of the song and see if your child can follow along.

### Going further:

- Let your child teach someone else the directions of a game or activity.
- Let your child remind the family of the behaviors we should use before entering everyday places: the school, the bank, a place of worship, the swimming pool, etc.

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children’s best teachers. This resource guide, part of Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Children, highlights a key developmental skill for **children ages 4-5** that parents can help improve at home.

