

 <b>University of Phoenix</b> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>	Higher education. Highly accessible.		View Additional
	weekends	online	undergraduate
	graduate	flexible schedules	evenings
			<small>Now in the UK!</small> nearly 200 locations <a href="#">CLICK HERE</a>

Home » Education » K-12 » K-12 For Educators » How to Stop Attention Seeking Behavior

## How to Stop Attention Seeking Behavior



By doban

User-Submitted Article

Member Article Rating: 5.00 (3 Ratings)

We have all seen attention seeking behavior that we needed to stop. We have all seen children and adults do things that were inappropriate and yet got them a lot of attention. A [child](#) misbehaves at school and the teacher redirects them. An adult says something inappropriate and everyone turns to look. Rarely does good behavior get the same kind of attention that bad behavior does. People who are lacking attention learn quickly what behaviors get them the attention they want. They may not even care if they are getting negative attention. There is a way, though, to stop that negative attention seeking behavior.

### Instructions

Difficulty: Moderate

1. If you want to stop attention seeking behavior then you first have to give them what they want (attention) for other more positive things.

The need for attention is a basic human need. Granted, some people need more of it than others do. However, they have just not learned to get it for positive behaviors instead of negative. The reason they have not learned that is because we often do not pay attention to positive behaviors. Being good does not gain us a lot of attention. Being bad does. We cannot get rid of the need for attention. Do not even try. What we can do is start giving that attention for good behaviors. Make sure to notice the little things that [kids](#) do. Let people know how appreciative we are. Schedule an evening that belongs to your child with no interruptions. Little things like eating together, bedtime stories for little kids, talking about what they want to talk about without interruptions, or even just saying "thanks" can go a long way.

2. Cut out attention for negative behaviors.

This is the hard part. It may be impossible to cut out all negative attention. Kids and adults do things that we have to respond to. However, we can pick and choose our battles. We do not have to respond to every little thing. We can also avoid overdoing it. If a child misbehaves in class, does that really require the teacher and principal and counselor all three hovering around? That is often way too much attention. Yes, that actually happens. If your child misbehaves, can they be redirected in private with minimum time spent on it? Can they be taken out of the restaurant or store before being scolded? The key is to minimize any attention they get for negative behaviors as much as possible.

3. Cut out negative attention almost at the same time that you start focusing on good attention.

Timing is important. Do not try to cut out the negative attention before really giving more positive attention though. If you cut out the negative before giving the positive you are essentially asking them to go without any attention. That will not work. What will happen, if you try to cut out the negative and they are not already getting enough positive, is that they will increase the negative behaviors in an attempt to be seen and heard. We want just the opposite to happen.

4. Be patient and give this some time to work.

The older the child, the more patient we will have to be. Old habits and learned behaviors die hard. If your child is fairly young, then getting rid of negative attention seeking behavior is much easier to do. However, if they are older and the negative attention getting has been working for them for a longer period of time, then it will take longer to swap those negative behaviors for positive ones. Hang in there and do not give up. They are depending on the fact that they can

persist longer than we can. Keep giving them positives and keep cutting out the negative attention. Also make sure that the positive you are giving them is something they want. For example, it will do no good to compliment a student in front of the class if that is something that they find embarrassing.