

# STOP AND THINK SOCIAL SKILLS

## Following Directions

If listening is the most basic skill for all students, then following directions is the second most basic skill. This is because students initially learn most things by modeling or imitating others while following their directions and then by trying to do those things themselves. If students are unable to follow directions effectively, they may learn new things incorrectly, ineffectively, or not at all. At the middle to late elementary school level, students must follow more complex instructions than in the past, often involving multiple steps or multiple levels.

**Use the Stop and Think language at home with your children to help reinforce the steps of following directions.**

Help children to verbalize the following steps when they need to follow directions:

**Step 1:** Stop and Think.

**Step 2:** Am I going to make a good choice or a bad choice? A good choice!

**Step 3:** What are my choices or steps?

1. **Listen** to the direction.
2. **Ask** a question if needed or if you don't understand.
3. **Repeat** the direction out loud or to yourself.
4. Get ready to **follow** the direction.

**Step 4:** Just do it!

**Step 5:** Good job!

\*\*Information taken from The Stop and Think Social Skills Program developed by Dr. Howard M. Knoff