

# Supporting Parents and Carers with Managing Behaviour

## What is Positive Parenting?

Positive parenting is based on good communication and positive attention.

There are five key aspects to positive parenting

### 1. Ensure a safe, interesting learning environment

- Ensuring that children have a safe interesting environment will help you to relax more as a parent

### 2. Create a positive environment

- Be available for your child when they need you, stop what you are doing (put down your mobile phone/turn off the TV etc)
- Help your child to learn by letting them try things for themselves
- If you give your child positive attention when you like what they are doing, they will be more likely to do it again.

### 3. Use assertive discipline

- When your child is misbehaving or upset, it's best to remain calm, avoid yelling, name calling, threatening or hitting
- Be consistent and predictable with your response
- Calmly explain to your child what you expect them to do

### 4. Have realistic expectations

- Remember that children are individuals who will develop at different rates
- Don't expect that your child will be 'good', 'polite' or 'tidy' all of the time or you will be disappointed

### 5. Take care of yourself as a Parent

- Being a good Parent doesn't mean that your child has to dominate your life
- Ensure your needs as an adult are being met such as time for companionship, recreation and time alone.

## Managing Misbehaviour

All children need to learn to accept limits and control their disappointment when they don't get what they want. From the age of three, it is important for children to have clear ground rules that are consistently enforced by both parents and other carers.

Rules should tell children what to do rather than what not to do e.g. walk inside the house, speak in a calm voice etc. rather than don't run in the house, don't shout. Try to involve your child when deciding house rules.

Use planned ignoring for some minor misbehaviour such as whining or using a silly voice. When you ignore a behaviour, don't look at or talk to your child, they may become louder at first to try to get your attention, remain calm, turn and walk away if necessary, when the problem behaviour stops and they behave appropriately you can praise them. Do not ignore more serious misbehaviour such as hurting others.

## **Using time-out**

Time out is recommended for children aged between 2-10 years of age.

It's a positive strategy to use instead of shouting or smacking.

Time out involves removing your child from the activity in which the problem has occurred and have them sit quietly away from the situation. Once your child has remained quiet for a set time they can rejoin.

It's important that your child knows what to expect before you start using time out, also, where possible give your child a chance to change their behaviour by explaining that if they continue with their unwanted behaviour, the consequence will be 'time out'.

Time out should always end with an apology and then the incident should be forgotten.

## **How to help your child behave well**

Help your child to learn by giving encouragement and positive attention.

- Spend quality time with your child
- Talk with your child
- Show affection
- Praise your child
- Provide engaging activities
- Set a good example
- Avoid arguments in front of your child

Parents! - Work as a team:

- Back up each other's parenting efforts
- Discuss together and plan your behaviour strategies
- Involve your child in family decisions and setting boundaries
- When updating each other about your child's behaviour, don't forget the positives