



Leicestershire Partnership 
NHS Trust

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

**Information for parents of children
aged 4 - 7 years**

Health for
Under 5s

**Health
for Kids!**

HEALTH:TEENS

 ChatHealth

Why might a child misbehave?

Attention seeking - Children will do just about anything to get the attention they crave from their parents.

Revenge - Trying to get back at someone who they feel have treated them badly - this can be their siblings, school peers, parents ...

Unable - to verbalise feelings and emotions in an appropriate manner.

Feeling Powerless - Having no control over a situation or event ...

Frustration - Unable to express themselves verbally and become angry.

Boredom

Sleep - Are they tired? Had a disturbed night's sleep? Bedwetting?

Diet - Are they hungry? Had too much sugar, sweets or fizzy drinks?

Emotional and Behavioural Development



All children develop differently and at their own pace but most children go through the same stages.

- Firstly, babies are totally dependent upon others and go through stages of not wanting to be apart from parents/carers.
- Toddlers and pre-school children go through demanding phases as they learn independence and confidence.
- Primary school children become more interested in the people and world around them – but are often still egocentric and think everyone thinks like they do!

4 years

Children are constantly trying to understand and make sense of the world around them.

By this age children...

- may have one particular friend
- are capable of being very sociable
- play with groups of children
- can take turns but are not consistent
- are developing a strong sense of past and future
- are able to cope with delay in having their needs met
- can be confident and self-assured
- may be afraid of the dark and have other fears
- turn to adults for comfort when overtired, ill or hurt



5 Years

At this age children are usually friendly, willing to talk to anyone, and are able to be polite.

By this age children...

- want approval of adults
- prefer games of rivalry to team games
- enjoy brief separations from home and carers
- show good overall control of emotions
- show a desire to excel, and can be purposeful and persistent
- boast and show off
- enjoy co-operative group play, but often need an adult to support
- still respond to discipline based on bargaining
- are developing a sense of shame
- argue with parents when they request something





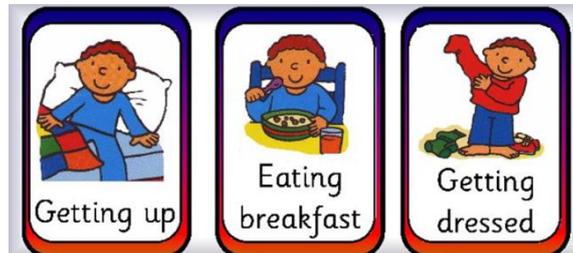
At this stage children grow steadily more independent. Their friends become more important.

At 6 years children...

- may have spells of being rebellious and aggressive
- are often irritable and possessive about their own things

At 7 years children...

- are more aware of gender characteristics
- may be so enthusiastic for life that carers have to guard against them
- becoming overtired
- become very self-critical about their work
- may be miserable and sulky, and give up trying for short periods



Routines

- Children thrive on routine however many people think the word 'routine' means bad and boring.
- Routine increases a child's sense of security and promotes good behaviour.
- Establishing clear routines is important.
- Consistent approach by all adults is needed - this includes both parents and other carers, family members.
- Children have to learn to follow a fixed sequence of actions - same time same place, same way and once a routine is mastered children tend to do it automatically.

Remember:

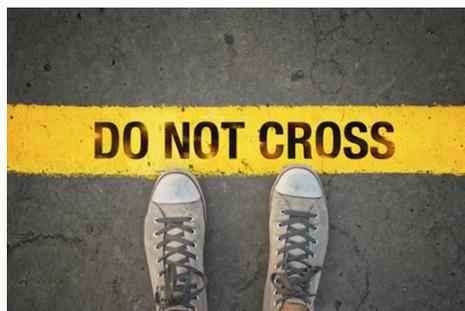
1. Consistency
2. Once a routine is set up children tend to do it automatically
3. Keep to the same time, same place, same way



Routines - Top Tips

- ✓ Give clear and simple instructions.
- ✓ Give eye contact at your child's level.
- ✓ Gain their attention – maintain eye contact when giving instructions.
- ✓ Explain what you want them to do, why and how.
- ✓ Give children time to practice – don't expect this to happen overnight.
- ✓ Remind children of expectations each time they carry out the routine. Remember they may need prompting for a while and give them praise for trying.
- ✓ Your child will often learn from you so be a good role model – show them how it's done!
- ✓ Take account of your child's age and stage of development (see previous pages).
- ✓ Consider a visual timetable/prompts to help remind your child what they need to do.
- ✓ Keep your cool!

Boundaries



Your child must know how you expect them to behave. Knowing what is expected of them is very important, but remember they might need reminders.

Boundaries need to be understood by your child and these need to be realistic. Remember to take account of your child's age and stage of development.

The importance of praise

It lets your child know they've done the right thing!

- ✓ Praise will reinforce positive language and behaviour.
- ✓ Promote positive self-image and self-esteem.
- ✓ Praising in front of others and unexpected praise can boost positive behaviours in children.
- ✓ Remember to be consistent!



Positive reinforcement

Praise will help keep the positive behaviours going!

Once a child successfully carries out a particular wanted behaviour praise will help keep them co-operative and keep these positive behaviours going.

Keep telling them they're doing great.



Examples:

"Thank you for following my instructions."

"Well done for playing nicely!"

"I'm proud of you for ..."

Be consistent!

Consistency

Say the same things

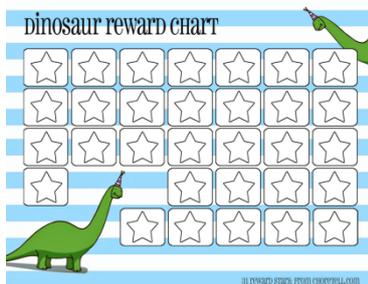
Parental consistency is important!

If one parent says yes and the other no then it can cause...

- Confusion for your child
- Friction between parents and family members
- The unwanted behaviour to continue

Remember: Grandparents and wider family members need to follow the same behaviour strategies for it to work!

Types of reward systems



Star charts and reward charts



Token Jars
(pasta / marbles /
Lego / buttons)

**Always remember your
child's safety**



Visual timetables and picture prompts

Remember: Do not take rewards away! You can't take a reward away once it's been given as this will not reinforce the positive behaviour that has already occurred.

Reward positive behaviour and ignore negative behaviour where you can.

WAYS TO MANAGE YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOURS

1. Deliberately ignoring behaviours

Shouting, telling off, commenting are all ways of giving attention and can reinforce the unwanted behaviour from your child.



- Always put your child's safety first however if the behaviour can be ignored, ignore it.

2. Body language

- Make eye contact.
- Get down to your child's level.
- Remember your facial expression.
- Be aware of your own gestures and movements. Avoid hands on hips, wagging fingers, crossing arms, laughing at your child as your child is likely to copy you!



3. Your language

- Keep it simple. Only make one request at a time and be clear.
- Remember, children can often get confused.
- Turn it on its head'. Ask your child for the behaviour you want – 'please walk' instead of 'don't run'.
- Be a good role model. Don't shout and swear.



4. 'When and then'

This helps your child to better understand what is expected of them. It deals with things positively rather than negatively.

'When you have done your homework, then you can play your game'



Consider using a timer, then your child knows exactly how long they have to go.

'You've got 5 minutes left to play then it time to get ready for bed'

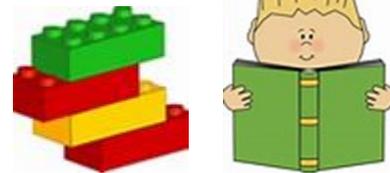
5. Distraction

Asking your child to do something else takes the attention away.

This works well with younger children.

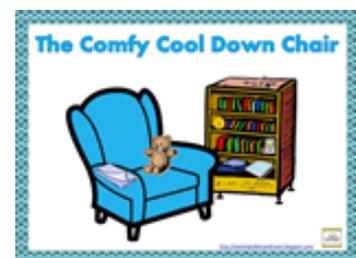
Example:

If your child is whining for sweets bring out their favourite toys or books...



6. Time Out

- Time out can be very effective when things get heated as it allows things to calm down. It can prevent situations getting out of control.
- For young children it is not appropriate to do this for long periods of time – one minute for each year of age is adequate.
- For yourself, try walking away, counting and deep breathing to 10 etc.
- Never tell your child to just 'go away' – they will feel rejected.
- Explain to the child it is the behaviour you don't want not them!
- Avoid sending your child to their bedroom as this can provoke the feeling that this is a negative place and can affect their sleep.



7. Discipline

Discipline and consequences need to be age and developmentally appropriate.

Remember to be consistent with what you say and do.

Do not make threats:

- Don't use idle threats - follow through what you have said
- Make sure the consequences fit the crime
- Don't threaten your child with the Police, Social Services, prison etc.

Physical punishment:

- This models and encourages aggressive behaviour.
- It does not teach your child the behaviour you want.
- It can lead to injury.
- You may get into trouble.

Do not:

Withhold meals; lock your child in a room; humiliate your child; threaten or hit your child.

Final Reminders ...

| Do... | Don't... |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be consistent• Be positive• Be realistic• Ask for help when you need it | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get wound up or shout• Negotiate too much• Label your child as 'naughty'• Label your child with Autism or ADHD if they do not have a proper diagnosis |

Further support and advice

- ✓ GP
- ✓ Advice Point & Local Children Centre
- ✓ Healthy Together Team
- ✓ Parent Chat Health - Text 07520 615381
- ✓ www.healthforkids.co.uk
- ✓ Your child's School Family Support Worker or SENCo
- ✓ Fun and Families - www.funandfamilies.co.uk
- ✓ 1,2,3 Magic - www.123magic.com

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| Handout information taken from: | Promoting Positive Parenting PowerPoint |
| Name of Originator/Author: | Johanna Broad Craig Stephen |
| Date Issued: | March 2017 |
| Date Reviewed: | December 2018 |
