

Managing child behaviour top tips

One of the biggest challenges parents face is managing difficult behaviour. Most children and young people can be disruptive at times when they behave in a challenging way. It helps to have options that can be used to help manage their behaviour.

Ages and stages

Be sure that you know what your child is capable of doing depending on his or her age and stage of development. Sometimes we think a child is misbehaving but the behaviour can be quite natural for the developmental stage they are at. Knowing this helps you look at behaviour management more objectively and less reactively.

Clear guidelines

- Be clear about the rules you have set around acceptable behaviour. With younger children give one very clear statement rather than a lot of rules together works best. With younger children give clear direction rather than a lot of rules together works best.

Positive reinforcement and praise

Try to avoid being critical and use praise whenever possible. This will encourage children to continue behaving in an acceptable manner. Reinforcement should be focused on promoting a child's self-esteem and feelings of accomplishment and cooperation. Children can be rewarded through Star Charts, playing a game, going to the park, or simply give verbal praise and appreciation.



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Consequences and Consistency

- × If rules and guidelines are not followed by your child then consequences will need to be given. These must be realistic, fit with child's age and stage of development and teach a lesson. Most importantly they must be consistently enforced. Start with small, time-limited consequences, and then slowly increase the time or intensity of the consequence for repeating the same behaviour.

Choose your battles

- × Try to ignore trivial things and focus on the important things. Remember that you are a role model to your child and so you should aim to model the behaviours you expect to see from them.

Spend time together

It's important that you spend time with your child, listen to them and have fun together. Building your relationship with your child will make them feel loved, valued and understood by you and therefore will make it easier to encourage positive behaviour.



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