Quiz: What style of Parent Are You?

Please take a moment to look at the quiz on the seats whilst we wait to begin.

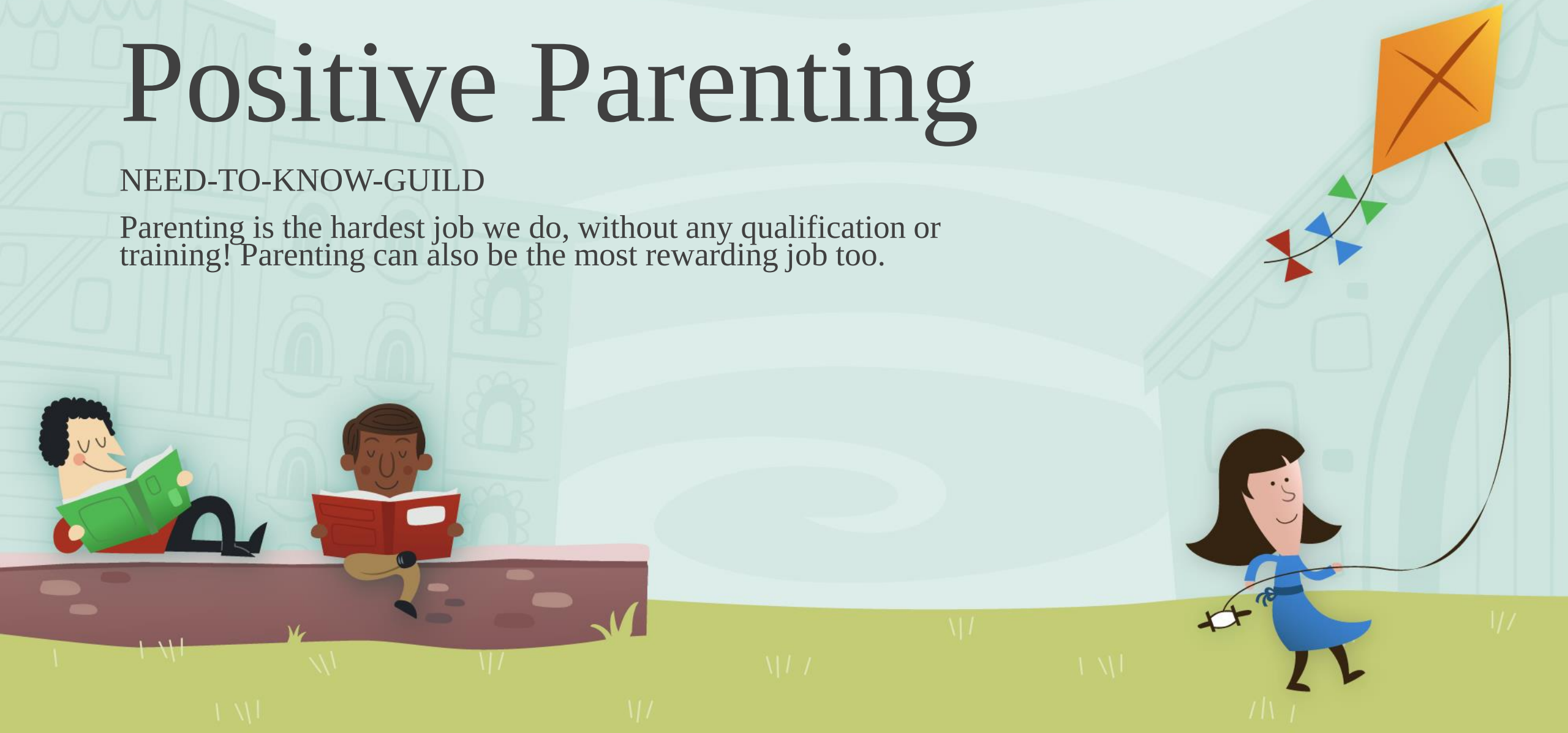
Contents

- Sleep, exercise and diet
- Structure, routine and boundaries
- Rewards and consequences
- Play
- Managing change

Positive Parenting

NEED-TO-KNOW-GUILD

Parenting is the hardest job we do, without any qualification or training! Parenting can also be the most rewarding job too.



It's worth remembering

"Your children need your presence more than your presents"

"Children are apt to live up to what you believe of them"

"There's no such thing as perfection. Just focus on trying your best"

"The only things kids wear out faster than shoes are their parents"

"If you want your children to improve, let them overhear the nice things you say about them to others"

"The best way to make children good is to make them happy"

"The best inheritance a parent can give his children is a few minutes of his time each day"

Children don't think about yesterday, and they don't think about tomorrow. They just exist in the moment"

"Too much love never spoils children. Children become spoiled when we substitute presents for presence"

THE BASICS

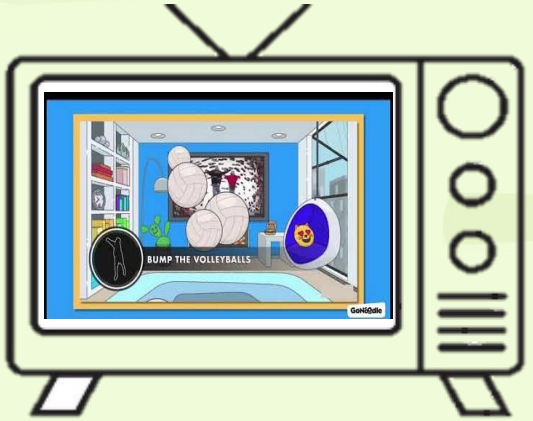
- Sleep
- Exercise
- Diet

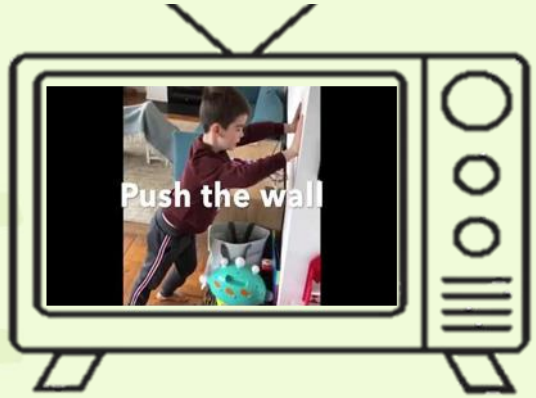
8 Steps to Sound Sleep

1. **Outside play, noise, rough and tumble** - A short period where your child can work off some energy through physical play.
2. **Mealtime**
3. **TV and quiet play** - This should not be a device such as iPad/phone/gaming if there is less than 2 hours till child's bedtime.
4. **End play and share some quiet time** - This may be an opportunity for your child to share any concerns or things 'on their mind'. Try and keep this time as calm as possible, but if your child tends to choose bedtime as their usual time to try and talk to you, then creating an alternative opportunity to 'share & catch up' might alleviate later bedtime difficulties.
5. **Final drink and snack**
6. **Bath, teeth, toilet and pyjamas**
7. **Story, magazine, comics, collector cards, catalogues** - This can be a time to share a story with your child, or your child can do this independently. Alternatively, you could consider a short period sharing a book together and then your child could have 10/15 minutes alone.
8. **Lights out**

EXERCISE

Children these days don't do nearly as much exercise as you did when you were a child. This is a shame – not just for their physical heath, but also for their mental health too. Children should be doing half an hour of really energetic activity every single day.





DIET

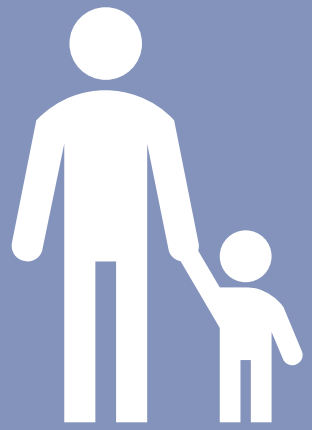
1. Eating a wide variety of nutritious foods helps mood, attention and learning.
2. Eating regular meals also helps promote good mood and attention.
3. Including foods that are rich in fibre are also beneficial.
4. Nutritional supplements may help some children. This is especially true when the diet is low in any particular nutrients.

The Eatwell Guide shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.

What is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs?

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs developed by Abraham Maslow argues that humans have different levels of needs. The needs are tiered as displayed in the image. At the base of the pyramid are basic human needs (food, water, clothing, etc.), and at the top is self-actualization (the finding of purpose). Each intermediary level builds upon the level below it. In other words, in order for a child's safety and security needs to be met, their basic human needs need to first have been met. Once basic human needs are met, then relationship needs should be met, then once relationship needs are met, then achievement needs can be met, and finally once all other needs are met, then the need for self-actualization can be met.

POSITIVE PARENTING



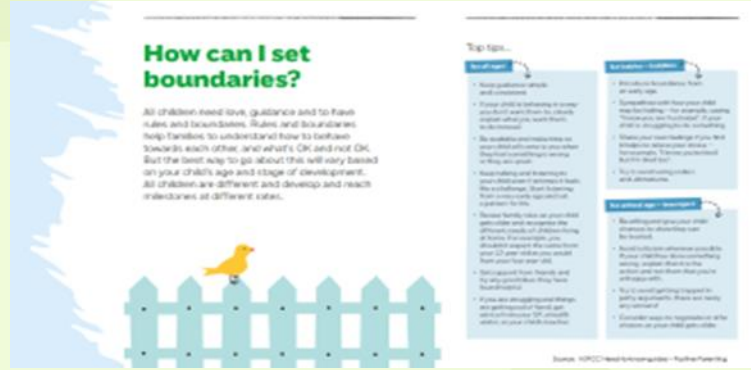
- Predictability
- Rewards & Consequences
- Consistency

PREDICTABILITY

When the world is unpredictable and confusing there is a lot of uncertainty which can lead to anxiety.

Many children have a need to control activity and interaction around them. To help deal with this insecurity and anxiety, we have to decrease the uncertainty in their lives.

Boundaries



Structure & Routines

How can I set boundaries?

All children need love, guidance and to have rules and boundaries. Rules and boundaries help families to understand how to behave towards each other, and what's OK and not OK. But the best way to go about this will vary based on your child's age and stage of development. All children are different and develop and reach milestones at different rates.

Top tips...

for all ages

- Keep guidance simple and consistent.
- If your child is behaving in a way you don't want them to, clearly explain what you want them to do instead.
- Be available and make time so your child will come to you when they feel something is wrong or they are upset.
- Keep talking and listening to your child even if at times it feels like a challenge. Start listening from a very early age and set a pattern for life.
- Review family rules as your child gets older and recognise the different needs of children living at home. For example, you shouldn't expect the same from your 12 year-old as you would from your four year-old.
- Get support from friends and try any good ideas they have found helpful.
- If you are struggling and things are getting out of hand, get advice from your GP, a health visitor, or your child's teacher.

for babies – toddlers

- Introduce boundaries from an early age.
- Sympathise with how your child may be feeling – for example, saying "I know you are frustrated", if your child is struggling to do something.
- Share your own feelings if you find it helps to relieve your stress – for example, "I know you're tired but I'm tired too".
- Try to avoid using orders and ultimatums.

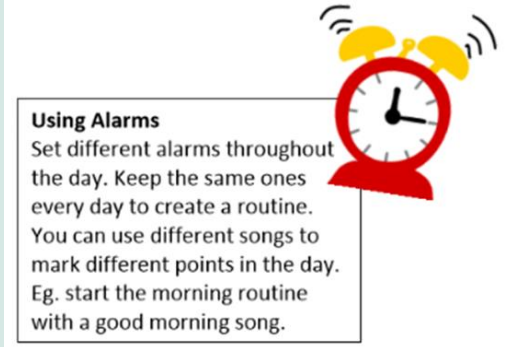
for school age – teenagers

- Be willing and give your child chances to show they can be trusted.
- Avoid criticism wherever possible. If your child has done something wrong, explain that it is the action and not them that you're unhappy with.
- Try to avoid getting trapped in petty arguments, there are rarely any winners!
- Consider ways to negotiate or offer choices as your child gets older.

Source: NSPCC Need-to-know-guides – Positive Parenting

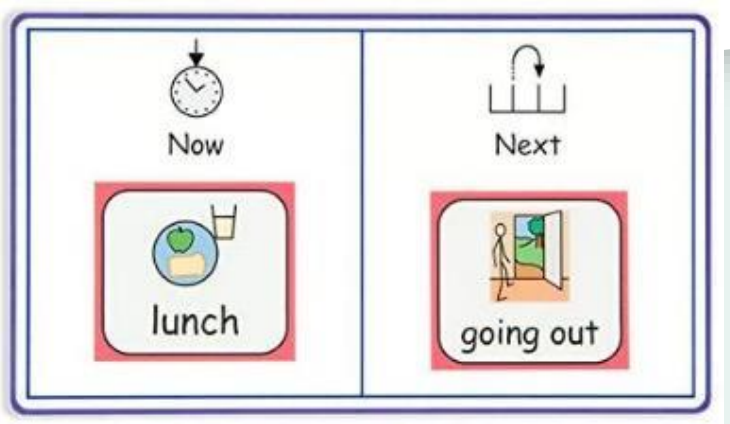
Structure & Routine

Build structure into your daily routine: The more structured and predictable the daily routine is, the less uncertainty there is for the child.



Using a Visual Schedule

If possible, provide visual timetables (pictures or text) so children can see what is coming up next and what they are doing now. This gives order to their day. These visuals provide a path to follow. It lets them know what to expect and when to expect it. This alone can reduce anxiety.

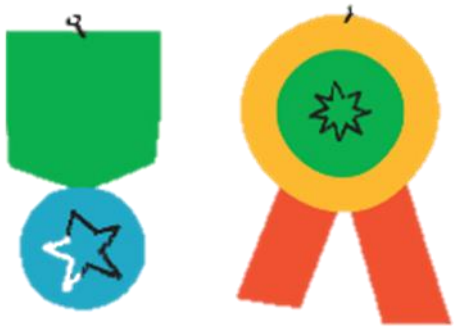


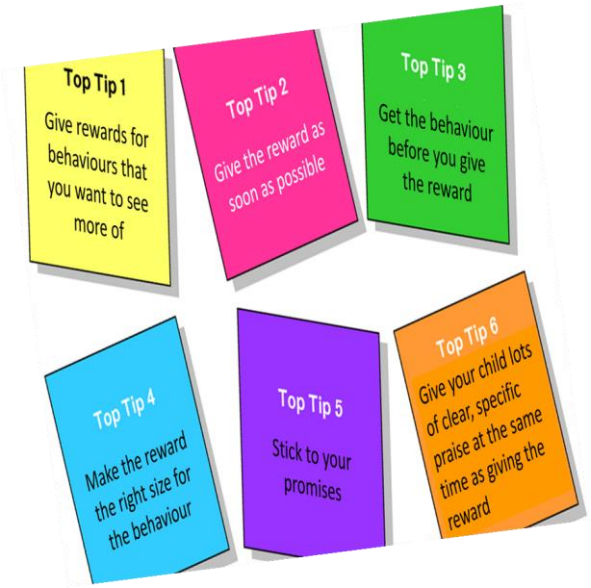
Transitioning between Tasks

1. Some children can have difficulty switching their brain activity between different tasks.
2. They do much better if they have warnings or reminders when one activity is ending and another is beginning, especially if the current activity is a favourite activity.
3. To ease transition difficulties try to ensure that the child always knows what will be coming up next, e.g. watch TV, then bath.
4. Use timers if it helps.
5. This way their brain is prepared for what is coming up next, and the reminders help bridge the transition. This is particularly useful for limiting time spent on devices – there are some apps available that allow you to control this from your phone, e.g. screen time.

REWARDS & CONSEQUENCES

Children need to learn that being good feels good. They do this by having lots of chances to do well and getting rewarded for it. You can help with this by giving rewards for the behaviours that you want to see in your children.





Some Ideas for Simple Rewards…

Getting to stay up half an hour later

Watching a favourite cartoon

Having a friend around to stay over

Painting your child's nails

Getting to choose what sort of take-away to order

A small toy (e.g. something from a pound shop

Half an hour on the PlayStation

A trip to the park

Play a board game

Play

Play

Special Time

Praise

PLAY

Children need the freedom to explore and play as their development is influenced through the exploration, thinking, problem-solving and language expression which occurs during play.

Play nourishes every aspect of children's development – it forms the foundation of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional skills. These skills support children in being ready for school and their future lives.

Top five tips:

- Show your child you're interested in what they like. Think of enjoyable activities you can do together.
- Think of times when you have seen a positive change in your child's behaviour and anything you could learn from that experience.
- Ask your child for their views and be willing to listen. This can help you to see things from their view.
- Don't give up or be too hard on yourself if things don't immediately change. Focus on small steps and achievable goals.
- Be prepared to compromise and admit you're wrong.

SPECIAL TIME

Giving your child ten minutes of your undivided attention every day

- Try to do special time every day.
- Ask your child what they want to do for the ten minutes. Let them choose anything, within reason.
- During the ten minutes, give the child your undivided attention.
- Turn the TV off, ignore the phone, don't try to do anything else (e.g. cook the dinner, do the ironing) at the same time.
- Have a nice time with your child and use this time to give your child lots of praise.
- Give your child lots of affection during these ten minutes – give them hugs and kisses if they like that. If they don't like hugs and kisses, at least try to show some physical affection – put an arm around their shoulder or touch them on the arm a few times.
- Let the child be in charge during these ten minutes. If they want to change the rules of the game that you are playing, that is fine. If they act silly or show off, let it pass. During these ten minutes, it is all about having a relaxed time. Don't criticise your child unless they actually do something dangerous.
- Don't use this time to teach your child – there are plenty of other times for learning. These ten minutes are just about enjoying your time together.
- Try not to ask too many questions during these ten minutes. Asking questions stops your child's mind from relaxing and going with the flow. Questions are fine at any other time, but not in this special ten minutes.

PRAISE

Praise nurtures your child's confidence and sense of self. By using praise, you're showing your child how to think and talk positively about themselves. You're helping your child learn how to recognise when they do well and feel proud of themselves.

Make it really clear what you are giving the praise for (e.g. “Thank you for listening to my instruction”

Sound really positive when giving praise

Don’t follow praise with criticism (e.g. “Well done for tidying your room, why can’t you do that every day?”

Give praise when you see a behaviour you like

Give praise straight after the behaviour you liked!

"You are putting your toys away really nicely!"
"Good boy for doing as you were asked first time"
"I really like it when you share your toys with Sam!"
"I'm really proud of you for going to school today!"
"Thank you for coming in on time!"
"Well done for going upstairs in the dark!"
"Wow, what a wonderful job you've done on your homework!"

INCREASE

Safety ✓	Being physically present with a child and emotionally available to him helps to develop a secure base and builds attachment. It also provides effective discipline, helps the child develop skills and reduces shame by letting him know he is good to be with. It is important not to isolate the child or get angry, *especially* when he is distraught and /or behaving badly.
Structure, choice, routine, rituals✓	Reduce the child's stress by structuring their activities and routines and making choices for them or by limiting choice to 'this or that one'. Be predictable by always accepting and validating a child's thoughts, feelings and behaviours, but surprising with the consequences you provide for misdemeanours. Re-attune quickly after any separation, discipline or dysregulation. Be directive and firm with instructions, while remaining attuned and empathetic to the child's difficulties.
Soothing✓	A traumatised child who becomes distressed may be more likely to show rage or fear than to ask for comfort, so stay with the child and introduce soothing in tiny steps, remaining empathic when your care is rejected. Regularly soothing a child helps to co-regulate their distress, teaches self-regulation and self-care. If it is not appropriate to hug, comfort verbally or send home a 'hug token' to parents.
Smiling✓	This refers to the atmosphere of your home/school as much as the look on your face. The idea is to create a space where life feels good, where you focus on the positives, e.g. at an aggressive outburst try, "Listen to you! You really know how to show me you are angry." Keep your interactions playful and accepting.
Supervision✓	Intensive supervision creates opportunities for a child to succeed, thereby reducing the child's shame response and emotional outbursts. Supervision means being with a child as if they were a toddler, structuring the environment, engaging in a playful way and helping to regulate the child's emotional response. Provide supervision that's a gift not a punishment.
Success✓	Children with attachment issues often expect to fail. Help them succeed by matching your expectations to their developmental, not chronological age. If Sasha pinches her sister after sitting beside her for five minutes, practice sitting nicely for two minutes. Stay with her and appreciate how well she's doing. These children also find it hard to learn from routine mistakes. Reducing shame lets a child acknowledge, rather than deny, routine mistakes. Once acknowledged mistakes become learning opportunities.
Storytelling tone✓	Speaking with a tone of voice like that of telling a story tends to engage a child and hold his attention. He is also likely to be more receptive to your guidance than if you were to use a lecturing tone. Children pay little attention to lectures; they may comply verbally, but there is less true engagement. Ultimately, lectures have less influence on behaviour.
Sleep✓	Getting to sleep and staying asleep may be difficult for a child because of fears associated with night-time, separation, the bedroom, the state of being less in control, and because there are few distractions in bed. Not getting enough sleep can seriously affect daytime performance and behaviour levels.

Soup✓	Accepting food and sharing family meals is a big part of accepting nurture and feeling like part of the family. Feeding your child gives them the message that they are cared for. In the past they may have been left hungry, fed inappropriately, or roared at to eat. Providing comfort food (for Dan its soup!) can mend a bad day.
Seeking meaning✓	When you and your child begin to understand why they do certain behaviours it can be easier to change those behaviours. Likewise, it is easier for them to accept your boundaries and consequences, when they understand you are motivated by a desire to care for them and not because you want to punish them. Explaining boundaries to the child in terms like, "because you are worth it", teaches them that they are worthy of care, reduces shame, makes explicit your intentions, and supports your relationship with them.
Special✓	Every child needs to know they are amazing – it's what babies learn from good enough birth parents. Your child needs to know that you feel this way about them, that by being your child they are unique, special and separate from every child who is not yours. Discover what is unique about your child and accept them for who they are. This form of acceptance is much better than praise in building self-esteem. As Dan says, "*Discover the song that is in their heart and sing it to them when they forget it.*"
Sense of humour✓	A sense of joy, playfulness and humour is connecting and repairing. Humour should never be directed at the child but should be about having a shared sense of fun. Humour helps us all take conflict less personally. It is often part of the repair of relationships and helps create good memories. Humour puts problems in perspective.
Stretching✓	As parents and carers we may need to stretch and modify our childrearing beliefs and practices to meet the individual needs of a child who has experienced trauma. The way our parents raised us or the way we have raised birth children may have been 'good enough', but is unlikely to match the level of intensive, specialised care a traumatised child requires.
Sorry✓	Sorry is one of the most powerful words in your vocabulary. Apologising when you get it wrong increases your child's respect for you, models repair and shows that everyone makes mistakes. It also teaches the child that they are important to you. Saying it and meaning it can help to calm the worst battles or prevent them taking place.
Sensory✓	Because sensory motor skills develop early in life, they can be compromised by neglect or abuse in infancy. An affected child may have difficulty regulating behaviour and emotions, paying attention, or may have problems with co-ordination, balance, movement, pressure and touch. A sensory integration assessment can often help with all of these.
Self care✓	Caring for traumatised children is hard work and if we don't take care of ourselves we can have trouble regulating our emotions or feeling good about life. We need to protect ourselves and our adult relationships, participate in activities and spend time with people who help us feel good about life. Why? Because we're worth it!

DECREASE

Shame ✕	Children often have such a deep sense of shame caused by how they were treated in the birth family that they can't understand why you would want to care for them. You can't talk a child out of his shame. You need to express empathy for his sense of feeling bad, and gently explore how it feels, how he manages it, and where this belief may have come from.
Sarcasm ✕	When adults try to limit their anger over a child's behaviour, they may express it as sarcasm. Sarcasm triggers greater shame within the child than a direct expression of brief anger. This is because he becomes confused as to how genuine the adult's thoughts and feelings are toward him and he is less able to trust them. When using PLACE, always do so with genuine empathy, curiosity and sincerity to avoid sounding mocking or sarcastic.
Shouting ✕	Anger from adults confirms a child's belief that he is bad. To change this belief we need to avoid threats, swearing, name calling and angry, negative or ambiguous facial expressions. Children with attachment difficulties tend to read ambiguous faces as sad or mad; they may interpret mild annoyance as rage, and hear adult disapproval as, "You hate me". If you get angry, express it directly about a specific behaviour. Give a quick alternative, not a lecture and repair the relationship asap.
Smacking ✕	It may seem obvious but it still needs to be said that smacking a child is likely to activate terror, shame and/or rage within the child who may associate the smack with being physically abused in the past. A traumatised child may not trust adults who smack and may struggle to resolve the effects of past abuse and neglect.
Stimulation ✕	Neglect and/or abuse in infancy causes deficits in brain function that make it hard for children with attachment difficulties to regulate their emotions - even positive ones! These children need life to be low key so they don't become hyper aroused or stressed. When a child becomes distressed or behaviour deteriorates ask yourself, "Was he over stimulated?" A big party, a funfair, or too many presents at Christmas may be as difficult to manage as a problem at school.
Secrets ✕	Children need to know their history, so don't keep secrets about their past because you think it is too difficult to share. They need to know how they got to be who they are and where they are. Difficult information can create challenges in the short term but ultimately it will build a relationship of trust. Obviously, we need to consider carefully when, how and who should do the telling.
Seclusion ✕	Time out for bad behaviour is likely to leave a child feeling abandoned and unsafe. We don't isolate children for being sad so why do it when they're angry? Staying calm and present can help a child stay regulated. Avoid lecturing, staring or controlling behaviour. Let her know you are available if she needs anything.
Shoulds ✕	Expecting that a child should be able to do something because of his chronological age is setting him up for failure and shame. Match your expectations to the child's developmental age and what he can achieve consistently, then gradually encourage a bit more, while remaining patient. Children with attachment difficulties may be age appropriate in certain skills and behind in other, less obvious, skills that can cause continuous challenges for them.

CHANGE

Managing Change

Transition

MANAGING CHANGE

kind to yourselves and each other

p lines of communication open

ach out and ask for help

Change can be good or bad. It depends on the person and the situation.

Good or bad change requires an adjustment of some kind; this takes energy. If the demands are too great, it can drain you and create stress. Unmanaged stress can cause physical and emotional problems.

How to Deal With Unexpected Change

Acknowledge that change is the new normal
Explore your feelings about the change
Prepare for it
Rely on your support system or create one
Give yourself grace as you move forward

You may not be able to control the change itself. So, the key to coping with change is to gain control of your response to it as much as possible. That's when adjusting your attitude toward change can help.

Would you rather be happy, or right?

Think of ways and ideas to resolve the problem.

Keep the conversations going, do not walk away

Do not keep dragging up the past or referring to it

Look at alternatives

You do not always have to agree

Be easy and open to talk to

Change begins with you

Do not name call

Listening is not obeying

Talk when calm and not angry

Separate the problem from the person

This is not about winning an argument

Sometimes we must have awkward conversations to resolve the issue

Show that you are listening.

Respect each other

1. I can see that you're hurting. That's an awful feeling.
2. Thank you for sharing that with me. My heart hurts for you.
3. I know you're really angry with me—I'm glad you are honest with me.
4. I've felt that way too.
5. Can I rub your back or just sit with you while you sort out these big feelings?
6. You're having a really tough day. I get it.
7. Sometimes I feel ____ when…
8. I know you're upset it didn't work out. But you did your very best, and I'm proud of you.
9. That makes sense. I'd feel that way too.
10. It sounds like you've had quite a day!
11. I'd be disappointed too.
12. Friendships can be so hard! I remember struggling with these problems at playtime too.
13. You know, I do the same thing sometimes! It's so hard for me to make the right choice.
14. I think I hurt your feelings. Can we talk about it?
15. It must be tempting to give up…
16. We're both struggling right now, aren't we?
17. Do you want to hear about my worst day at school, too?
18. This is hard to talk about it, isn't it?
19. I don't know what you should do, but I'm always in your corner.
20. It's brave of you to talk honestly with me.

HINTS & TIPS

Nice and nice

Nice and nasty

Never say no

Ear shotting

Don’t say don’t

Thank you, not please

Take up time

Don’t lose face

Use conditioner

Thank you, not please

Really important this one! Say please too often and it may sound like you are pleading!

“Childs name…Instruction…Thank you”

(Tia refuses to put her toys away) “Tia, toys in the box, thank you.”

(Tom refuses to put his trousers on) “Tom, trousers on, thank you.”

(Mark is jumping up and down on the seat) “Mark, bottom on the seat, thank you.”

Take up time

Confidently give the instruction, then walk away with the expectation that your child will comply.

“I can see you’re not wanting to tidy up.”

“I wonder if you’re struggling to eat your vegetables.”

“Wow, this is really hard for you to come off the iPad.”

“Tell me if I’m wrong but I imagine you felt sad that we didn’t go for ice cream.”

Don’t lose face

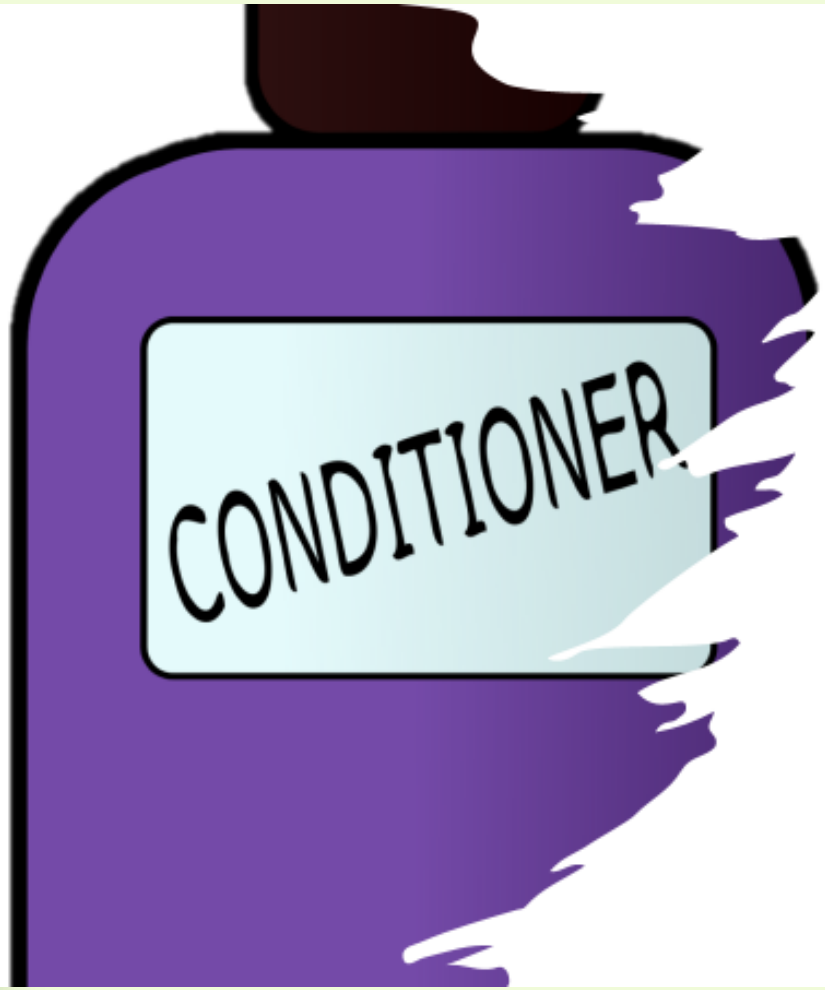
The ‘ask permission before doing’

With impulsive children it can be hard initially to stop them doing the things they want to do. In these situations, e.g. when Katie goes to run off to get something from another aisle whilst shopping, it may be worth trialing this strategy:

“Katie, hold my hand/trolley thank you. You need to use your words to tell me what you want.” When Katie uses her words, the adult says, “Yes, thank you for asking” and then, “go and look for the item.”

Initially, (where appropriate) try to say ‘yes’ as much as possible so that the child gets used to the idea that asking permission gets them what they want.

This is one step towards regulating impulses, in that it can be used to bridge the gap between saying ‘no’ outright (and then the child doing it anyway), to ‘yes’ but only with permission. If used carefully, this can prevent the adult losing face.



Use conditioner

Using the phrase “when…then…”

“When I have finished in this shop, then we can go home”

“When you have brushed your teeth, then we can have a story”

“When you have finished the last sentence, then you can have 30 minutes on your device”

Nice and nasty

Using a matter of fact, controlled calm voice

- “Either it’s finished/tidied now, or it will have to be later instead of us going to the park”
- “You need to come off your ‘device’ now or you won’t be able to use it tomorrow”
- “Your toys need to go away now or during TV time.”

Never say no

Sometimes we have to say “No” but for other times, try this… “Yes, as soon as you have…”

“I want Noura to come around and play today!” “Yes, she can come round, although not today. She can come on…”

“Can I go on the iPad?” “Yes, as soon as you’ve finished tidying away the game you have just been playing with!”

“Can I have a biscuit?” “Yes, as soon as you have finished your sandwich.”

Ear shotting

Speaking aloud within the child's ear shot.

This technique can be used in a variety of ways. The adult speaks out loud to another adult or child in the room within the child's ear shot.

"Wow, I'm so proud of Ahmed this morning helping me with the breakfast dishes. When he's finished putting his toys away, I'm wondering if he would like to bake some cakes?"

"Dad, I think Archie can do his homework if he reads it carefully, but I'm wondering if he would like one of us to help?"

"Charlie (brother), I can see that Sarah's cheeks are very red, I'm wondering if she's cross you took the toy away from her?"

Don’t say don’t

Frame instructions positively.

We often (unintentionally) give children ideas of what to do when we are trying to get them to stop doing something.

“Walking down the stairs Ali, thank you”, rather than, “Don’t jump!”

(Waiting to go out the front door) “Remember we walk together.”

“Put that down Olivia, thank you” rather than, “don’t throw that”

PARENTING IN A NUTSHELL

By I Might Be Funny

Newborns

"Will I *ever* sleep again???"

Toddlers

"What in the world are you doing on top of the refrigerator?! And why are you *naked*??"

© I Might Be Funny

Tweens

"You're too young to wear that.
You're not old enough to watch that."

Teens

"Wake up...it's *noon*! Get off your phone.
Pick up this room. Don't you roll your eyes at me."

Young Adults

"Call me. I miss you. This house is too quiet."