

it's not
going to be

EASY

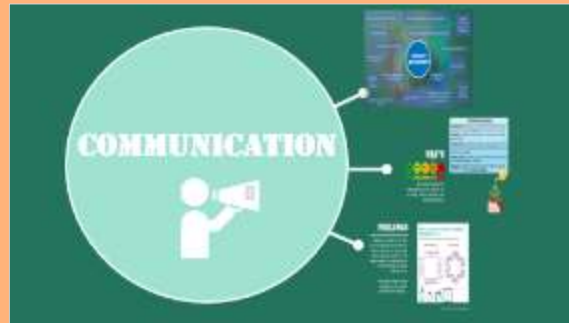
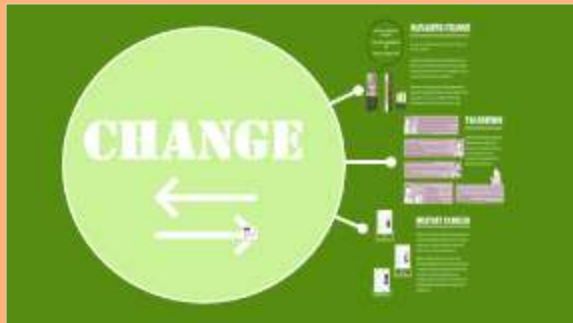
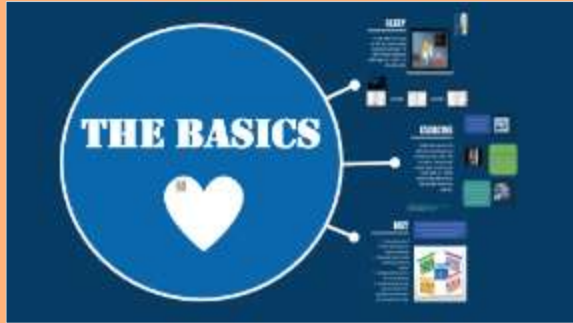


But it's
going to be

WORTH IT!



SUMMARY SECTION



THE BASICS



SLEEP

It is really helpful if you can get your child into a routine of getting enough good quality sleep. The Sleep Foundation suggests that children aged 5 to 10 need 9 to 11 hours a night.



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 health, but also for their mental health too. Children should be doing half an hour of really energetic activity every single day.

Get kids going by having a reward program for exercise.



Encourage your child to get their exercise program. Encourage your child to get their exercise program. Encourage your child to get their exercise program.

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DIET

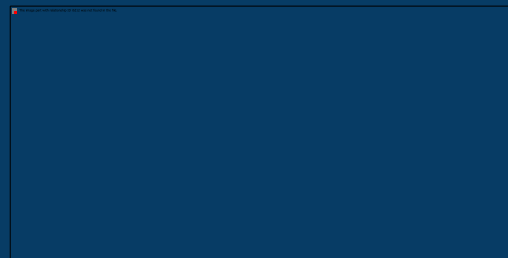
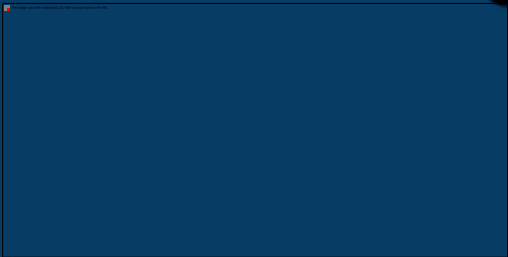
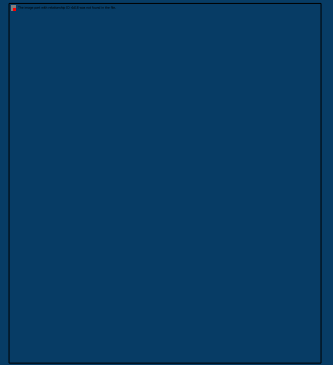
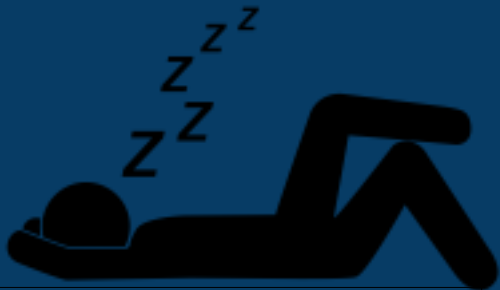
The 5-a-day rule means five portions of what we eat every day should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.

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.



SLEEP

It is really helpful if you can get your child into a routine of getting enough good quality sleep. The Sleep Foundation suggests that children aged 5 to 12 need 9 to 11 hours sleep a night.



THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

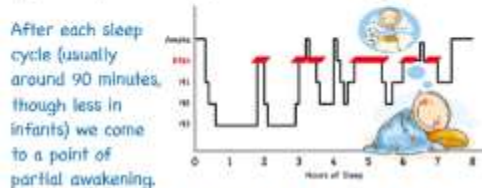
Sleep is essential to support children's development. Well-rested children are more able to meet their full potential in every aspect of their lives. Listed below are just a few of the symptoms of sleep deprivation in children:

- * Growth or hormone issues
- * Concentration difficulties
- * Mental health issues
- * Lowering of the immune system
- * Hyperactivity
- * Weight gain
- * Behavioural issues
- * Difficulty remembering things.

Parents who are disturbed by their child's poor sleep patterns are also likely to suffer from sleep deprivation. A well-rested household usually makes for a happier home.

SLEEP CYCLES

At night time we experience different levels of sleep and we sleep in cycles. REM and Non-REM sleep are different stages but both essential to keep us healthy. The diagram shows an example of how these cycles occur. We get our deep sleep towards the beginning of the night and our lighter sleep in the early hours of the morning.



If everything is as it was when we fell asleep then we may just roll over and carry on sleeping. If anything has changed however... that's when we wake up! This is why it is important that a child's sleep conditions remain the same through the night. A child who needs rocking to sleep is highly likely to wake up after each sleep cycle and need a parent to rock them back to sleep. Likewise a child who has learned to fall asleep watching a lullaby show is likely to need this condition back in place to be able to nod back off.

THE STAGES OF SLEEP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

* Non-REM Sleep

Stage 1 – a very light sleep, where your child will be easily woken. If you've ever tried tip toeing out of their bedroom and they've woken up then this is why – they were in a very light sleep.

Stage 2 – still quite a light sleep but the body is preparing for the deep sleep that is about to come. Your child will be more relaxed now and if you are trying to sneak out of their bedroom then this is a good time to make your exit!

Stage 3 – this is a very deep sleep. The body needs this sleep so that repair can take place. Your child will be difficult to wake when they are in this stage.

* REM sleep

REM sleep, or rapid eye movement sleep as you may hear it referred to, is when dreams occur. It is vital for mental and emotional development. Our brains can become very active during REM sleep yet our bodies are relaxed.



CIRCADIAN RHYTHM

– what it is and what it does

We all have an internal body clock, sometimes referred to as a circadian rhythm. Our body clocks take their cue from light and dark, which can be confusing for some children when in winter we spend much of our time in darkness. It is important that we strengthen our children's body clocks so that they develop a regular sleep and wake up time. Putting them to bed at the same time each night will help, as will waking them at the same time each morning – even at the weekend! Sometimes children's body clocks can go off track, for example when changing the clocks from winter time to summer time. If bedtime has crept backwards you need to gradually reset your child's body clock by bringing it forwards by 15 minutes every three nights until you reach the desired time.

MELATONIN

Melatonin is a hormone that occurs naturally in our bodies when it gets dark. It is produced at night time to help us go to sleep. This is why it is a good idea to put your child to bed in a dark environment and to dim the lights in the run up to bedtime. Melatonin production is interfered with by screen activities for example watching television or playing on a computer. The light from the screens will stop the melatonin being produced as effectively therefore it is best to avoid these activities in the hour leading up to bedtime.

Some children, particularly those on the autistic spectrum, are prescribed melatonin to help with their sleep issues. Good sleep hygiene should still be maintained as the melatonin will not work as effectively if your child is not comfortable, relaxed and in an appropriate bedroom environment.

HOW MUCH SLEEP IS NEEDED?

Sleep needs change as children get older. Most three year olds will need around 12 hours of sleep and will be starting to drop their daytime nap. Naps in the daytime do help pre-school children to avoid becoming over-tired. Ironically an over-tired toddler is harder to get to sleep than a well-rested youngster. Naps in pre-school children should be encouraged and scheduled so that they aren't too close to bedtime.

Children around the age of four to six years old need between 10.5 and 11.5 hours of sleep on average. And as they move through school they are likely to need around 10 hours each night. Teenagers' sleep needs will be addressed later in the guide – they need around eight to nine hours but often get much less than this.

It's important to remember if your child sleeps less or more than the average it's not always an issue!

GOOD SLEEP ROUTINES

Everybody can benefit from having a good sleep routine – even grown-ups! A good sleep routine needs to be planned well in advance. Consistency and firmness are also key.

Firstly you need to consider what time bedtime will be and then work backwards, planning the hour leading up to it in some detail. If your child isn't settling until late you may need to gradually move their bedtime as previously described, the routine will need to be gradually moved too.



Here are some tips for devising the ideal bedtime routine:

- ★ Make sure bedtime is realistic, if your child isn't falling asleep until 11pm there is no point starting a routine at 6pm
- ★ Turn all screens off in the hour before bedtime
- ★ Dim the lights, close the curtains if needs be and create some darkness to help to promote the melatonin (sleep hormone) production
- ★ Offer quiet activities that are motivating to your child. Fine motor skill activities are perfect to aid relaxation eg jigsaws, colouring in, threading, building with bricks etc.
- ★ Consider introducing supper time. Slow releasing carbohydrates are great for keeping little tummies full. Dairy products are also very calming at night time. Avoid anything sugar loaded or containing caffeine
- ★ Baths are great if your child finds them relaxing. If however they are fearful of them or get over-excited they may not help in the bedtime routine. Ideally a bath should take place 30 minutes before bedtime as this aids relaxation by increasing the body temperature. It is the slow decrease in body temperature that helps us to feel more relaxed and nod off more easily
- ★ Get ready for bed in the same order - for example, pyjamas on, tooth brushing, toilet
- ★ Once in bed spend some time reading a bedtime story with your child
- ★ Give hugs and kisses and tell your child 'it's night time, go to sleep'
- ★ Wake them up at the same time each morning to help to strengthen their body clock



COMMON SLEEP PROBLEMS

★ Self-settling

The biggest difficulty is often that children can't settle themselves to sleep at the start of the night. Some children need a parent in bed with them or rocked in a pushchair or even driving around in a car to be able to fall asleep. Once they come up through the sleep cycle to a point of a partial awakening and they find the conditions have changed they need attention. Teaching children to soothe themselves to sleep can be done gently and gradually.

★ Changes in Routine

When routine is changed it can impact on sleep issues. Christmas for example is a wonderful time of the year but in January many families are still struggling to get their children to sleep. Sticking to routine as much as possible is helpful and will ensure your child feels secure.

★ Feeling Hungry or Thirsty

Adding in a supper time can help with the hunger pangs at night. If a child is thirsty then offer them water. Diet is important and what is consumed during the day can impact on sleep. It is best to avoid anything sugar loaded during the evening such as biscuits and cakes. Caffeine is a stimulant so tea, coffee, cola and even hot chocolate are best avoided in the run up to bedtime. Good choices are anything calcium based such as yoghurt, fromage frais or a glass of milk. Porridge is a great supper time snack or even a banana smoothie.

★ Discomfort

The bed needs to have a supportive mattress. This is particularly important for growing children. An unsupportive bed can result in aches and pains leading to problems in adulthood. According to BackCare, youngsters need a supportive bed as much as, if not more than an adult. Their research found that an increasing number of teens and even younger children are suffering back problems.

Some children may be uncomfortable due to medical conditions for example children with eczema may find it hard to get comfortable at night time. Youngsters who



are unwell or teething may also have issues getting comfortable which will impact on their sleep.

Common colds can make children feel uncomfortable and disrupt sleep patterns. A child who has recently had a hospital admission may also find their sleep is disrupted. This can be due to discomfort but can also be caused by a change in environment.

★ Fear/Anxiety

Some children may genuinely be fearful of the dark. Stories normalising this fear can be helpful and there are lots of lovely ones available. Children may also want a parent with them during the night. Some children take comfort from having a parent's T-shirt over their pillowcase so that they have their familiar scent close by. Where fear or anxiety is severe it may be necessary to seek advice from your GP to see if more specialist support is required.

★ Night Time Wetting

Bed wetting is common in children. The likelihood of it occurring decreases as a child gets older. Maintaining a consistent approach is useful and if your child does wet the bed try to change them in a dimly lit environment with as little interaction as possible. If you are concerned about bed wetting you can seek advice from your health visitor or school nurse.

★ Sensory Issues

Sometimes children have sensory issues that impact on their night time sleep. For example if your child is very noise sensitive during the day they are likely to be the same at night time. This means that the central heating clicking on for example could wake them very easily. Some find that white or pink noise or even music can help with this issue. Children need consistency so make sure the same conditions are used throughout the night. Likewise some children are very touch sensitive and do not want to be covered at night time. This can result in them becoming too cold and waking in the early hours as a result.



NIGHT TERRORS AND NIGHTMARES

Night terrors and nightmares often get confused. Here are our tips on telling them apart and how to handle them:

Night Terrors

- ★ Usually happen shortly after going to sleep
- ★ Your child will appear to be terrified but is actually asleep
- ★ Your child won't take comfort from you

What to do:

- ★ Wait for the terror to pass and then settle them back to sleep
- ★ When these are regular try rousing your child 10 minutes before they usually happen for two weeks to break the cycle
- ★ Children usually grow out of night terrors, if you are concerned consult your GP

Nightmares

- ★ Are bad dreams that children wake from
- ★ Your child will take comfort from you

What to do:

- ★ Reassure them that it was a dream
- ★ Don't reinforce the nightmare - there is no need to lock under beds for monsters as they don't exist remember!



CREATING THE PERFECT SLEEP ENVIRONMENT

A restful bedroom environment is important when addressing sleep. We all fall to sleep more easily when we are in a comfortable environment. Here are some top tips to help you create a restful bedroom:

- * Make sure the room is well aired
- * The temperature should be around 16–20 degrees Celsius
- * Choose suitable curtains to darken the environment. Blackout blinds can be particularly helpful in the summer months
- * Avoid over-stimulating colours in the bedroom such as bright red. Try calming colours such as neutrals and pastel shades
- * A quiet room can encourage better sleep. Check what noises can be heard from your child's room
- * Eliminate electronic devices from the bedroom. If this isn't possible, try to separate areas of the bedroom for sleep and play. It's important that children and teens know that the bed is a place for rest
- * Freshly laundered bedding is important
- * Cover over toys if they are causing a distraction at night or zone off the room so that they are out of sight
- * Check whether the mattress and the pillows are comfortable
- * Are there any posters that may appear to be frightening when the lights are off?
- * Move the bed away from the radiator

As children get older you can involve them in planning their bedroom design so that they have ownership of it.

BEDS AND MATTRESSES

The age at which a child is ready to move out of a cot into a bed varies but is generally between 18 months and three years. A cot bed or smaller-scale starter bed may help initially to make the transition to a single bed.

* Bunk beds

Make sure you ensure your bunk bed is safe – there are safety standards (BS EN747) and regulations (entrapment hazards) in place which manufacturers and retailers should comply with. Check the bunk is thoroughly stable; that there are two guard rails on the upper bunk (*even if it's going to be against a wall); any ladder must be firmly secured; and catches and fixings are not accessible or prominent enough for small fingers to fiddle with. Children under six years are not advised to use the top bunk.

* How often should I change a child's mattress?

Parents should aim to change the child's bed and/or mattress at significant growth periods. This may require several bed changes – for example a teenager who's suddenly shot up to 6ft plus needs a bed that will enable his feet to stay on the mattress and not hang over the end! The right mattress is vital as it must provide the correct support for growing bones and muscles. That means sufficient support to hold the spine in correct alignment and sufficient comfort layers to cradle the body's contours.



TEENS AND SLEEP

In the modern world everything is 24/7 and there are far more entertaining things to do than sleep when you are a teenager. Many teens enjoy spending their evenings gaming, surfing the net or on social media sites and quite often these activities can run well into the night.

Teens do tend to feel more alert later in the evening and more tired in the morning as a result of changes in their biological clocks.

Try to share with your teen why sleep is important. A good night's sleep can help them to:

- * Have spot-free skin
- * Maintain a healthy weight
- * Grow
- * Have more energy
- * Remember information for exams
- * Concentrate at school, leading to them getting a better job and more money



Some general tips to share with your teens include:

- * Avoiding energy drinks in the evening and anything that is sugar-loaded or full of caffeine
- * Doing the same things at the same time each night can help to promote better sleep
- * Turning off gaming equipment and screens an hour before bedtime can make falling to sleep much easier
- * Checking whether the bed is comfortable, if not you may need to invest in a new one. Teens should be encouraged to try different mattresses to select one that they find comfortable
- * Exercising regularly, three times weekly can help with sleep problems
- * Decluttering the bedroom can help. It's hard to switch off when you are sleeping in a messy environment
- * Try zoning areas of the bedroom for school work, play and sleep.



8 Steps to Sound Sleep

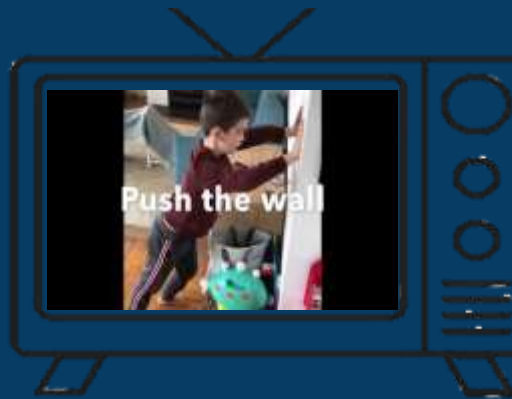
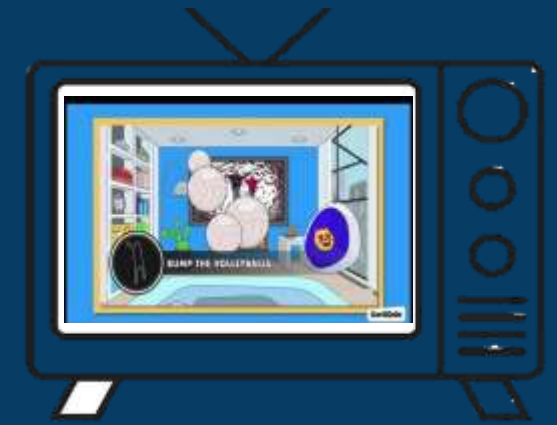
1. **Outside play, noise, rough and tumble** - A short period where your child can work off some energy through physical play.
2. **Mealtime**
3. **TV and quiet play** - This should not be a device such as iPad/phone/gaming if there is less than 2 hours till child's bedtime.
4. **End play and share some 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 health, but also for their mental health too. Children should be doing half an hour of really energetic activity every single day.

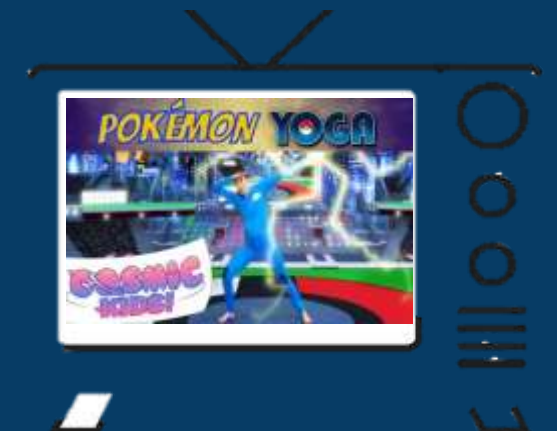
GoNoodle gets kids moving with short interactive activities.



Obstacle courses provide great regulating sensory experiences.

Encourage your child to carry objects to make the obstacle course. Try to include things that will allow your child to crawl and have different body positions.

Cosmic Kids Yoga includes simple yoga poses which are fun and regulating, and can be completed by you and your child together.



DIET

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



Fruit and vegetables

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day



Dairy and alternatives

Choose lower fat and lower sugar options



Oils and spreads

Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts



Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and sugar



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

Eat more beans and pulses, 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat



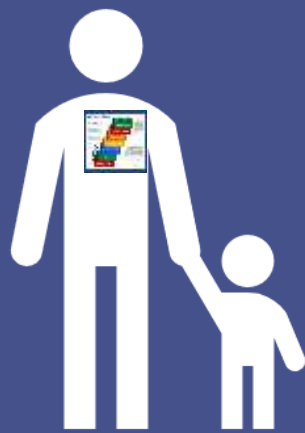
Hierarchy of Needs?

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

POSITIVE PARENTING



Boundaries

Structure & Routines

PREDICTABILITY

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

More 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.



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.



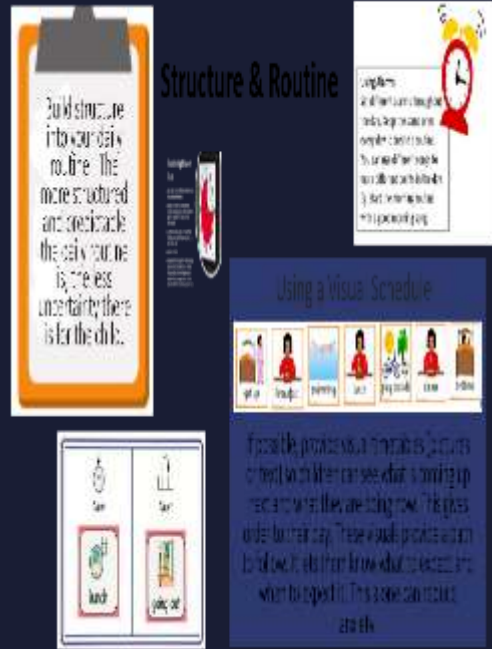
ASSAULT CYCLE

One recognised method of identifying actions that can lead to challenging behaviours is the 'Assault Cycle'. Learning and understanding the phases of the cycle will help you to identify the patterns of behaviour, observe and record your child's response appropriately. As the child describes increasing distress about a perceived threat, the intensity of their reactions escalates. Their reaction and response to the threat is cyclical in nature, each one associated with behavioural, physical and psychological responses.

Phase	What to look for	What to do
1. Trigger	Identify the trigger that has caused the child to become distressed.	Remove the child from the trigger.
2. Escalation	The child's behaviour becomes increasingly challenging and they may become aggressive.	Stay calm and use de-escalation techniques.
3. Peak	The child is at their most distressed and may be shouting or crying.	Use calming techniques and provide reassurance.
4. De-escalation	The child's behaviour becomes less challenging and they may start to calm down.	Continue to use calming techniques and provide reassurance.
5. Resolution	The child is calm and their behaviour is back to normal.	Discuss the incident with the child and provide feedback.



Boundaries



Structure & Routines

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.

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

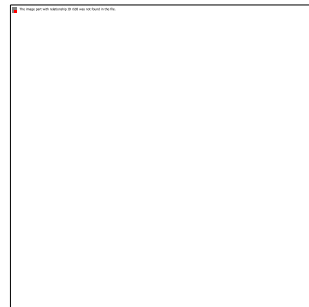
- Introduce boundaries from an early age.
- Sympathise with how your child may be feeling – for example, saying "I know you are frustrated", if your child is struggling to do something.
- Share your own feelings if you find it helps to relieve your stress – for example, "I know you're tired but I'm tired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

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 Alarms

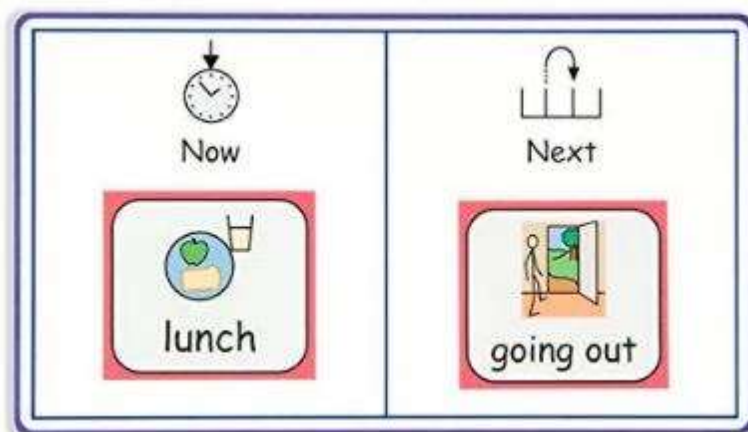
Set different alarms throughout the day. Keep the same ones every day to create a routine. You can use different songs to mark different points in the day. Eg. start the morning routine with a good morning song.



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.



Keeping Your Cool

It's important to find ways to relieve your stress and manage your anger. Lots of things, not only your child's behaviour, can make us feel stressed – from family relationships to managing a work-life balance, health, housing, unemployment and much more. You want to be the best parent you can but being stressed is stressful!



When stress takes over, it can make you lose your temper and say or do things you later regret. You might find yourself saying something hurtful or smacking your child; and living in a stressful home can also impact on your child's feelings and healthy development. But you can avoid this by managing stress and anger.

- **Accept support**

This may be from your family, a friend or by using online forums. Knowing that there are other parents in the same situation can be a great encouragement.

- **Make time for yourself**

This may involve doing things like exercising or listening to music. Treats can be as simple as a long soak in the bath, watching a DVD or going for a walk. If you live with a partner, agree a way to make sure you both get time off.

- **Get help**

This is a positive step to take and not a sign of weakness. If you're feeling stressed and anxious all the time seek some outside advice. A range of difficulties may get in the way of being a parent and it's important to get help. Talk to your GP or health visitor, or the helpline.

- **Be as prepared as possible**

All children will be stressful at times so consider ways of dealing with this in advance. For example, if your child gets bored and irritable on long journeys, or waiting for things like doctor's appointments, take a couple of books or activities to keep them busy.

- **Don't overlook success**

If you have coped well with something difficult, be proud of what you've achieved. Celebrate your children's successes too.

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Look after yourself

Being a parent is so important, and while it's common to feel less needed as children get older, or to feel more like a taxi driver or cleaner, you are the person your child will look to for help. Finding time for yourself is something you shouldn't overlook or feel guilty about. It may take planning but having a break can help you to be the best parent you can be.

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Top Tip 1
Give rewards for behaviours that you want to see more of

Top Tip 2
Give the reward as soon as possible

Top Tip 3
Get the behaviour before you give the reward

Top Tip 4
Make the reward the right size for the behaviour

Top Tip 5
Stick to your promises

Top Tip 6
Give your child lots of clear, specific praise at the same time as giving the reward

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.



Top Tip 1

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Top Tip 2

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Top Tip 3

Get the behaviour before you give the reward

Top Tip 4

Make the reward the right size for the behaviour

Top Tip 5

Stick to your promises

Top Tip 6

Give your child lots of clear, specific praise at the same time as giving the reward



- Star charts work particularly well for children aged 4 – 12 years old
- Choose the behaviour that you want to see more of
- Choose the reward
- Choose how many stars your child must earn before they get the reward
- Make sure the first few stars come particularly fast
- Make sure that what you are asking is manageable
- Get your child involved
- Never mark up failures on a start chart
- Leave days and dates off the chart



Star Charts

Some Ideas for Simple Rewards...

Getting to stay up half an hour late

Painting your child's nails

Getting to choose what sort of take-away to order

Watching a favourite cartoon

Having a friend round to stay over

Half an hour on the PlayStation.

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

A trip to the park

A magazine

ASSAULT CYCLE

One recognised method of identifying actions that can lead to challenging behaviours is the 'Assault Cycle'. Learning and understanding the phases of the curve will help you to identify the patterns of escalating behaviour and assist your child to respond appropriately. As the child becomes increasingly stressed about a perceived threat, the intensity of their emotions escalates. Their reaction and response to the threat is cyclical in nature, each one associated with behavioural, physical and psychological responses.

What you might see:	What you might see:	What you might see:	What you might see:	What you might see:	What you might see:
<p>An obvious 'quick' trigger such as a word or an action.</p> <p>A 'slow-burning' trigger such as tiredness or hunger.</p> <p>Nothing – Sometimes you just <u>don't</u> see a clear trigger.</p> <p>You need to be aware of what the very first signs of any triggers are; changes in activity, tone of voice etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not able to understand or communicate emotions • Frustration • Anger • Worry • Confusion • Not sure how to solve a problem 	<p>There are likely to be more obvious behaviours increasing throughout this phase.</p> <p>Throughout the cycle, what you see will be very individual.</p> <p>Some children show this by the volume of their speech increasing, or repetitive behaviours such as tapping, being more argumentative, or a whole range of changes in their behaviour.</p> <p>One thing to keep in mind is that some children may be increasingly quiet or withdrawn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not feeling able to communicate emotions • Frustration • Worry • Confusion • Not sure how to solve a problem 	<p>'Explosive' behaviours, aggressive behaviours, hitting, shouting, pushing, pulling, threatening, crying, running, hiding.</p> <p>Signs that the 'emotional brain' is in control, such as impulsive actions and speech, and speech that may not make as much sense due to the nature of the emotional outburst.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling like they can't trust anyone • Extreme anger or frustration • Threatened by the situation • Feeling people are against them • Feeling unsafe 	<p>The intensity of behaviours are starting to reduce. </p> <p>Signs that the 'thinking brain' is in control such as speech becoming more logical, actions appearing to be more controlled, and physical signs of becoming more relaxed such as shoulders dropping or breathing becoming slower.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting to feel safe • Becoming more aware of things or the people around them 	<p>Crying, negative speech, very quiet, being tired, falling asleep.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of their actions • Shame • Guilt 	<p>Back to their 'normal'.</p> <p>Able to chat and have a conversation either about what has happened or about other things.</p> <p>They may get more animated when talking about the triggers, but they are able to control those and they are not above their baseline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepted • Encouraged • Positive

• Words in **bold** are feelings the child might be feeling during each phase

The 7 Confident Thoughts

‘The 7 Confident Thoughts’ are the building blocks of self-assurance and self-confidence. People who can think in this way will be more ready to cope with and manage any changes that may arise.



Other people respect me

People are generally pretty nice

I have some control in my life

Bad things don't often pop up out of the blue

Bad things don't happen often

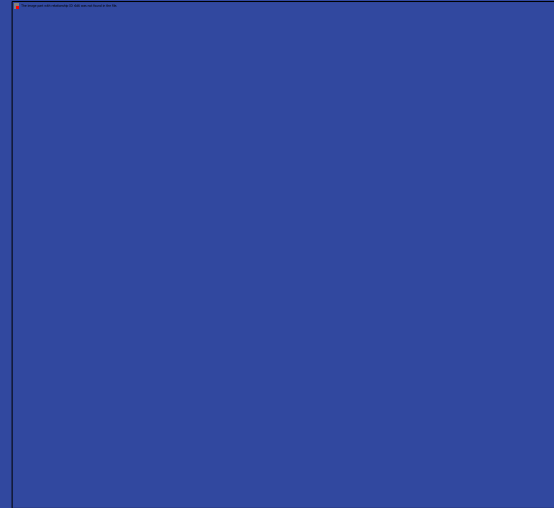
I can cope with most things

The world is pretty safe

Happy, confident children are those who have a feeling that the world is safe, that they can cope with most things, that they have some control over their lives and that people are generally nice.

Children who feel that the world is fraught with danger or that they cannot cope (even if they actually can) are prone to anxiety and other mental health problems. So they need to start developing the belief that the world is safe and that they can cope with whatever life throws at them. In order to do this we should teach them about how our thoughts have a huge impact on our feelings and behaviours.

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT



Understanding your child's needs

Children's needs and behaviours change as they get older, and understanding these needs will help you better understand your child.



1. Babies

Babies behave as they do to get their needs met. For example, when they cry they're trying to tell you that they need something – maybe they're hungry, need their nappy changed or feel tired.

Older babies may show what appears like a 'stubborn streak' – spitting out food or wriggling away from a nappy change. All they are doing is trying to express their likes and dislikes in the only way they can.

When you're stressed you may feel your baby is being "deliberately naughty" or trying to provoke you. This is not possible. Remember you should never shout, scream, hit, shake or smack a baby.

2. Toddlers

All toddlers test limits and have tantrums. Research shows that a child's brain is still developing during this period so there are limits to how much they're able to control their emotions. Remember that behaviour in toddlers which is often seen as naughty is actually quite normal and part of growing up.

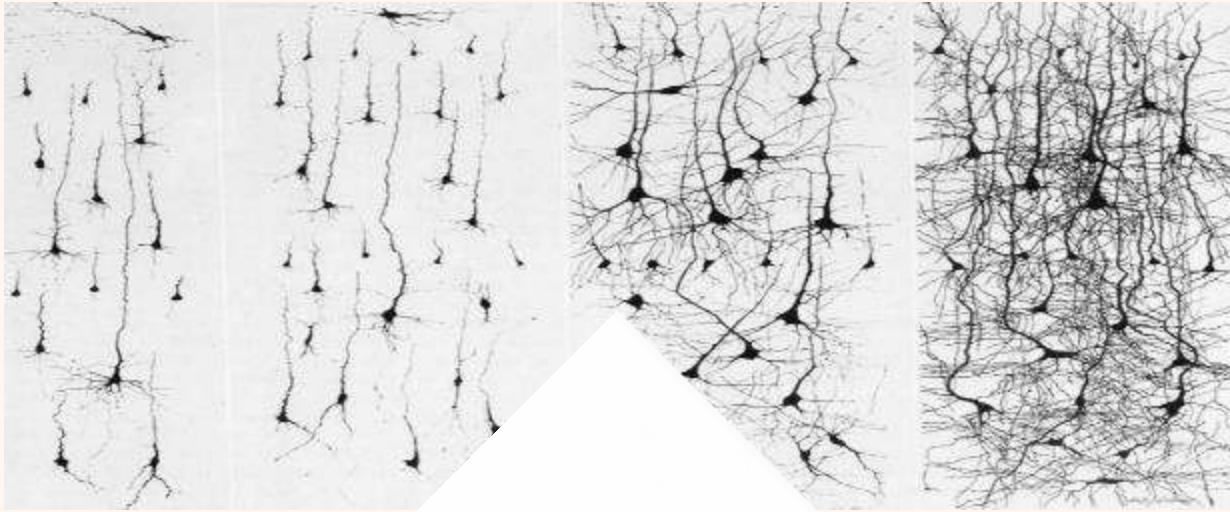
3. School age

School age children are constantly learning and exploring their world. They may have lots of questions as they start to form their own views on issues. As they move towards being more independent they may seem to push boundaries and become more challenging, a necessary part of growing up.

4. Teenagers

As children continue to develop their own identities in their teenage years, they might become more challenging – sometimes seeming "moody" or withdrawn or not as talkative and open as their parents would like. They might be more inclined to disagree with their parents, or choose different views. Friends (and celebrities) will become a bigger influence and your child may not always do what you would like.

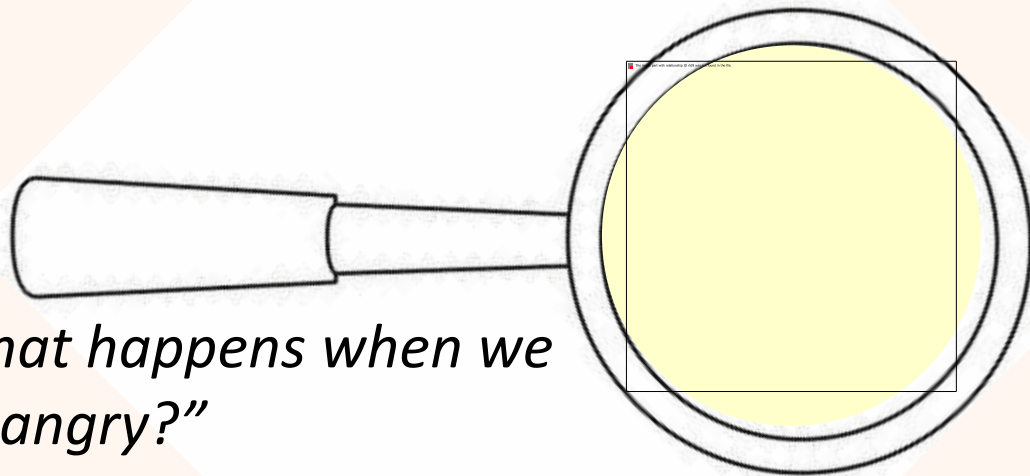
Growing a Brain



New-born

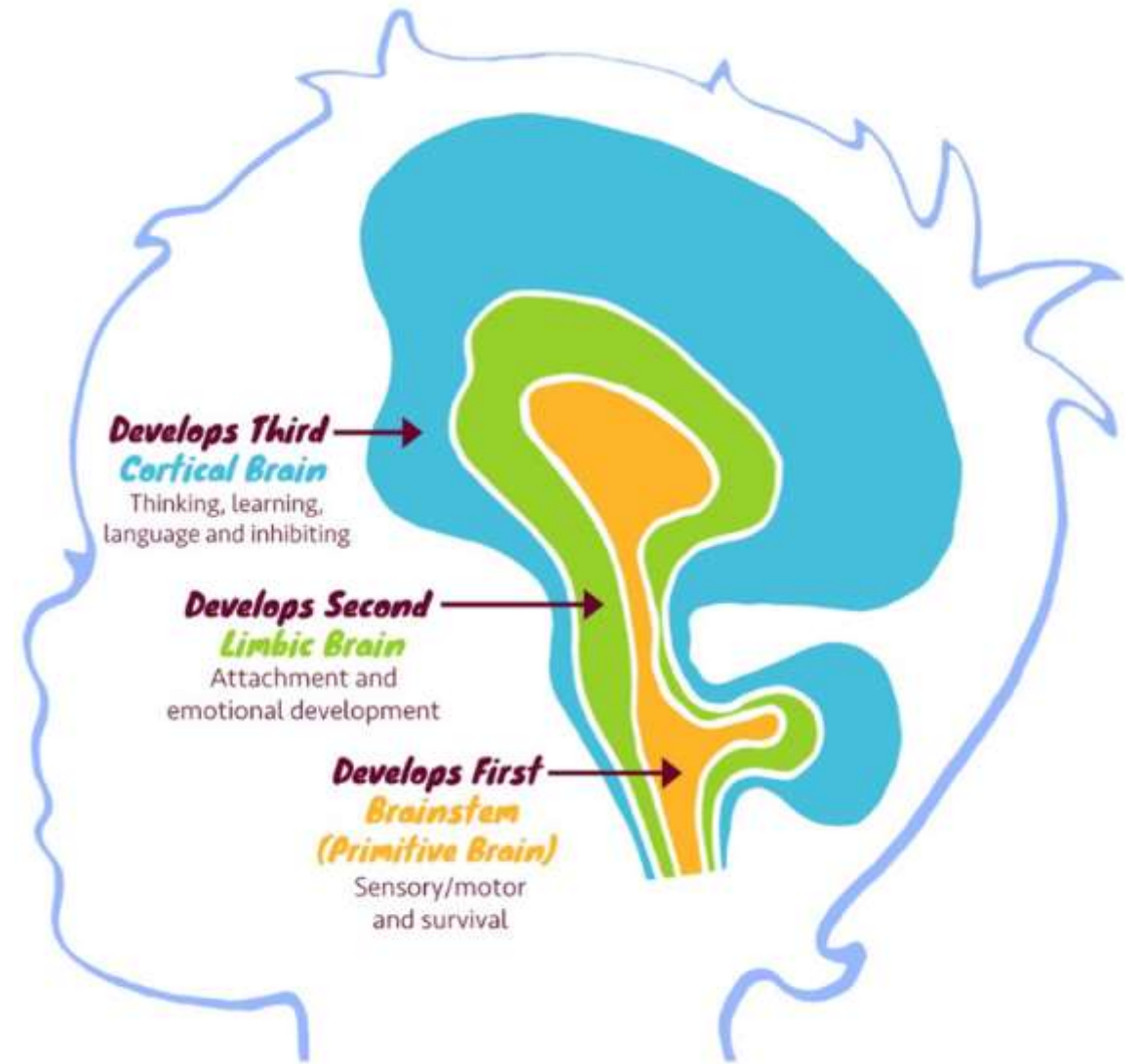
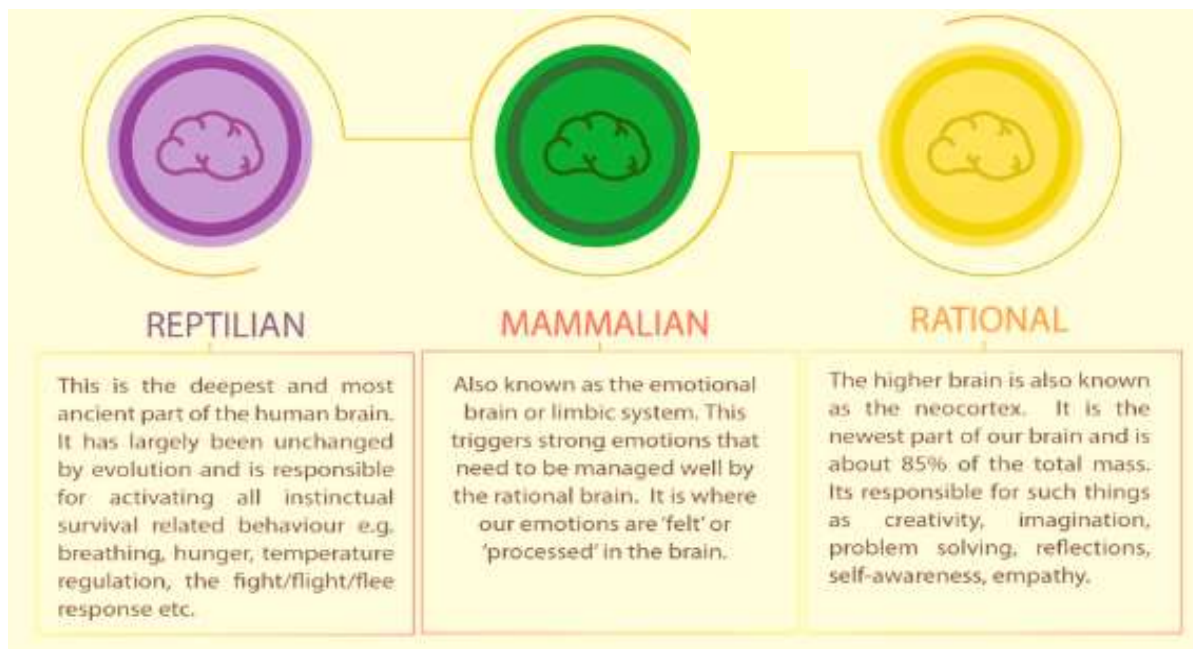
3 months

2 years



“What happens when we get angry?”





TRIGGER



Thoughts

"I'm not good enough"
"No-body likes me"



Feelings

fear, worry, anger



Body

sweating, faint,
fast heart rate



Behaviour

Avoidance, withdrawel,
aggression



PLAY



PLAY

Children need the freedom to explore and play; their development is influenced through these experiences. Thinking, problem-solving and language expression often occur during play.

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



Children will learn to play by playing.

Additional Activities

- Play is essential for children's development.
- Play is a natural part of a child's life.
- Play is a powerful tool for learning.
- Play is a way to build self-esteem.
- Play is a way to build social skills.
- Play is a way to build emotional skills.
- Play is a way to build physical skills.
- Play is a way to build cognitive skills.

SPECIAL TIME

Giving your child ten minutes of your undivided attention every day.



www.mindgarden.org.uk

- Spend 10 minutes every day with your child. This is a special time when you are fully present and focused on your child.
- Use this time to listen to your child, to play with them, to read to them, or to do whatever they want to do.
- This time is not for teaching or correcting. It is for connection and fun.
- You can do this with any child, at any age.
- This time is not for you. It is for your child.
- This time is not for a reward. It is for a connection.
- This time is not for a punishment. It is for a connection.

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.



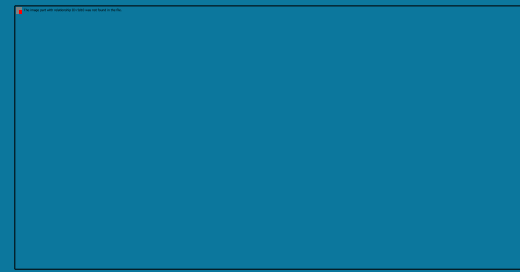
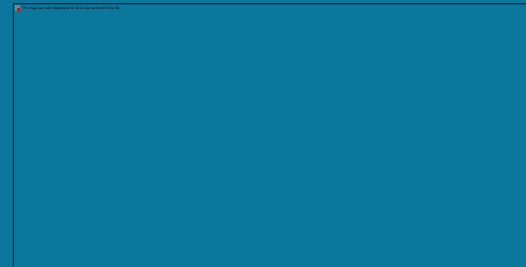
PLAY

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.



Click link for parent/carer guide to play...



Click link for more play activities...

Additional Activities

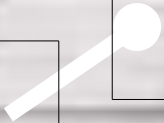
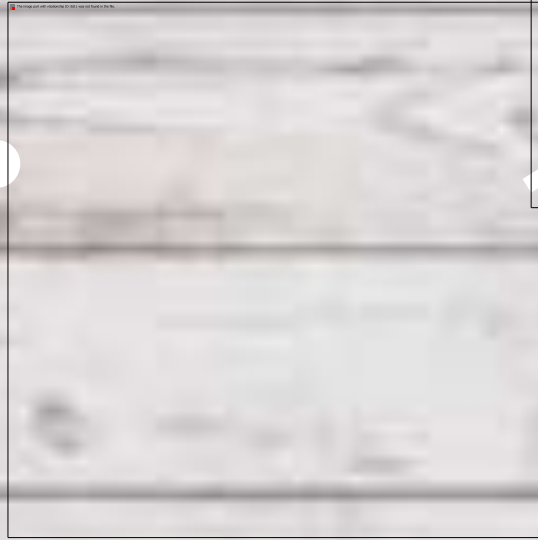
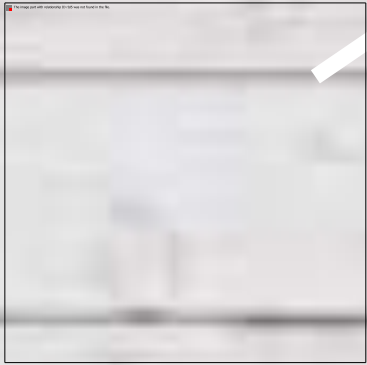
Top five tips:

- 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.



Developmental Play Ideas





Nurture

- Face painting using feathers
- Hand massage
- Mirrors (to make eye contact) or looking at one another through glass
- Dark tent with sensory objects
- Blanket wrapping
- Special diary of things they've done
- Sensory bottles (lava lamps etc.)
- Inviting a friend to a special party
- Making their own treasure box
- Badge making
- Bubbles
- Temporary tattoos and nail painting (with permission)
- Invisible string which will always link you together
- Making a transitional object
- Making jewellery
- "Relax Kids" books and CDs of meditation
- Drawing around the child or around their hands
- Peer massage on each other's back (children need to ask permission before they touch another)
- Memory boxes
- Looking after special objects such as a bear or a doll
- Worry dolls (Silly Billy by Anthony Browne) or worry bags (A Huge Bag of Worries by Virginia Ironside)
- Feelings tree



Belonging

- Sharing stories and walking through a story together
- Cooking, possibly with no recipe
- Gardening
- Construction such as Lego with no instructions.
- Taking things apart e.g. old electrical items
- Painting a picture together
- Messy play e.g. gloop, shaving foam, flour, glitter, spaghetti hoops, jelly, snow (cornflour and conditioner), moon sand, sand mousse (sand, water and bubble bath) mud pies, shredded paper, saucer of milk with drops of food colouring then add washing up liquid.
- Using puppets
- Sand trays
- Small world play
- The Shape Game, doodles, consequences, modelling clay then passing it on for next person to continue.
- Feely bag
- Treasure chest.
- Building dens
- Dressing up box



Problem Solving

- Using musical instruments to act out feelings
- Construction with a challenge in mind e.g. make something with four wheels or a tall tower
- Categorising and sorting e.g. find different things that are the same colour, different ways to get into groups
- Treasure hunt/ scavenger hunt
- Sand tray – relating it to feelings
- Talking about characters from books and exploring their emotional landscape.
- Dancing/painting to different types of music
- Puppet scenarios to address issues
- Water play with problem solving e.g. how can I move the water/fill the bucket?
- Board games or strategy games such as chess where the children have to think ahead
- Computer games with decisions to make (Scratch), CBeebies games such as build your own park in Bob the Builder land, Simple City.



Teamwork

- Misfits (you draw the head, fold the paper, pass it on and the next person draws the next body part)
- Box game (joining dots, taking turns)
- Using blindfolds to get over different obstacles
- Sitting back to back and describing something for the other child to draw
- Simon Says
- Mirroring/shadowing activities
- Tasting things with blindfolds on and discussing preferences
- Draw around a child and then stick post it notes when they achieve something
- Den building
- DT projects as a team
- Roleplay/hot seating
- Heroes – why are these famous people like heroes?
- Junk modelling monsters – what qualities do they have?
- Post-it note game
- What if...?

Therapeutic Play Ideas





Nurture

“The purpose of nurturing activities is to reinforce the message that the child is worthy of care and that adults will provide care without the child having to ask. Nurturing activities help to calm and regulate an anxious child and enhance feelings of self-worth.”

- Taking care of hurts with lotion and/or sticking plasters
- Footprints or handprints with paint; requires adult to wash them later
- Help the child to relax on a bean bag and become soft and floppy. Wiggle body parts to see if they're relaxed
- Roll the child up tight in a blanket
- Place heavy pillow on child's stomach; the child has to move it only using his stomach muscles
- Draw pictures, letters or number on each others backs
- Face packs
- Feeding favourite foods with blindfolds; guess what you are eating
- Group massage in a row or circle
- Fan after an activity or use cool flannel
- Doughnut challenge; adult or peer places a doughnut over his finger. Child has to make as many bites into the doughnut as he can without making it fall off
- Arrange feathers in a child's hair; the child has to copy the same pattern in the adult's hair
- Polish fingernails
- Manicure/pedicure after soaking feet/hands in warm soapy water
- Arrange/comb hair
- Try on hats, selecting them for each other
- Describe the other person's likes and preferences
- Read each others palms
- Tell me what you will be like when you are an adult
- Using face paints make each other look as young as you can then have a “regression” party where you pretend to be babies or 5 year olds. Do appropriate play from those age groups
- Guide a blindfolded peer around an easy obstacle course



Engagement

“The purpose of engaging activities is to connect with the child in a playful, positive way, to focus intently on the child, and to encourage him/her to enjoy new experiences. At all times it is important to attend to the level of the child’s arousal and modulate it when needed.”

- Slow motion ‘Follow The Leader’
- Hand-clapping games
- Eyes closed: guess where I touched your face with a feather
- Mirroring: face each other and copy the other’s facial expression or facial and body movements. For a very active child you can use slow motion. Take turns being the leader
- Stick a cotton ball on your nose with lotion; ask the child to blow it off
- Row, row, row your boat. Add the child’s name at the end, e.g. Jack is such a dream
- Create a special handshake – high 5, wiggle fingers, bump knuckles and use in the group
- Hide and seek; the adults make appreciative comments about the children as they look for them
- Divide into 2 teams. Have a cotton ball or crushed newspaper balls “snow fight”. Players may set up a shield e.g. a pillow behind which they hide. Add more structure for over-active children
- Do the Conga to music, copying the actions of the leader
- Make life-size body/head tracings and fill in as a collage or with positive comments from the group
- Winking games: if the leader winks her left eye the others take one step to the left
- Do a job/walk somewhere, keeping a beach ball between you
- 2 person bean bag throwing/juggling
- Peanut butter and jelly (or fish and chips). Say fish and get the child to say chips in the same way, varying tone and loudness
- Foil prints: the child makes a foil impression of a part of his body and the others have to guess which part it is
- Teach the child something he doesn’t know



Structure

“The purpose of structuring activities is to organise and regulate the child’s experience. The adult sets limits, defines body boundaries, keeps the child safe, and helps to complete the sequence of activities.”

- Place a beanbag on your head. The child has to catch it when you tilt your head. Then swap over
- Cotton ball blow: blow a cotton ball across a blanket to someone else
- Measure the children’s heights on one of the walls
- Toilet paper bust-out: wrap the child’s legs, arms or whole body with toilet paper. On a signal the child breaks out of the wrapping
- Activities that cycle from fast to slow where the children have to wait for a signal e.g. When the adult shouts “dinosaur” the children have to run on the spot etc.
- The group have to move together underneath a turtle shell (could be a piece of sugar paper). They have to follow adult instructions
- Cotton ball hockey or football in 2 teams
- Pop bubbles with your head/your feet/your shoulders only
- The group tries to keep a bubble in the air for as long as possible
- Red light/green light: ask the children to do something e.g. run on the spot, do star jumps. With your back to the children ask them to start when you say green light. See if you can catch anyone moving when you have said red light
- Three-legged walk: obstacles can be added to make this more challenging
- The Hokey Cokey
- Zoom-erk: Sitting in a circle, the word “zoom” is passed around the circle quickly. When one person stops the action by saying “erk”, the “zoom” reverses and is sent back the way it came



Challenge

“The purpose of challenging activities is to encourage the child to take age-appropriate risks in order to foster feelings of competence and mastery. These activities are mostly done cooperatively with the adults. Challenging activities also help the children to accept structure, engagement and nurture that they may resist in more direct forms.”

- Paper punch: hold a piece of newspaper stretched out and invite the child to punch through it. Praise his strength. Increase the challenge by adding additional layers of paper
- Balance a pillow/cushion on your head as you move around the room. How long can you balance it for? Increase the challenge by adding pillows
- Pop bubbles as quickly as possible using only one part of the body
- Keep a balloon in the air
- Balance on a stack of pillows
- Walk around balancing a beanbag on your head
- Jump to see how high you can reach and touch the wall
- Eat watermelon and then see who can spit the seeds the furthest or see how many the group can get into a container
- The group all hold hands in a circle and then tangle themselves up. Children have to give instructions to help them become untangled without breaking hands
- Have a water pistol fight or water pistol shooting contest with a target
- Feather blow: waft a feather from one end of the room to the other using a piece of card. Who can reach the other side first?

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!”

“I really like it when you share your toys with Sam!”

“I’m really proud of you for going to school today!”

“Good boy for doing as you were asked first time”

“Wow, what a wonderful job you’ve done on your homework!”

“Thank you for coming in on time!”

“Well done for going upstairs in the dark!”

Being playful can be achieved by keeping the tone light and upbeat, smiling, ruffling a child's hair when walking past, playing hide'n'seek when they get in from school, or giving a quick hug for no specific reason. Praise can be positive when it is kept specific, short, low key or done with pizzazz – a pretend fanfare, whistle, or victory dance when they get their spellings right or remember to pick up their toys.

Adults should show the child that they love or like them especially when the child misbehaves. This helps to move the child from the damaging effects of shame to the healthy development of guilt. If you do lose your temper, apologise and reconnect with the child quickly afterwards.

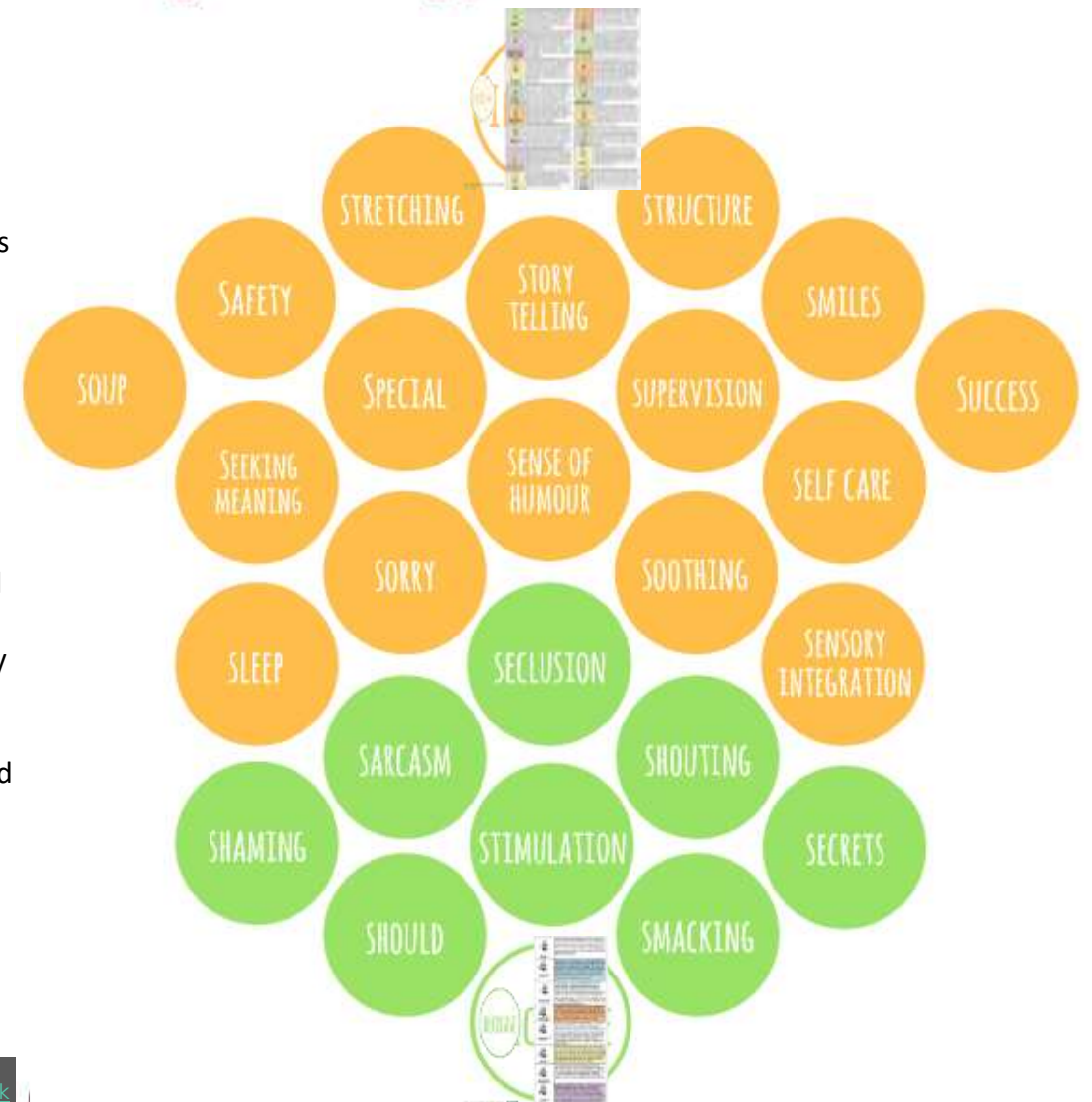
Accepting the child for who they are, not what they achieve is important for children. This does not mean that their behaviour has to be accepted! Remain calm and say something like, 'I can see you are upset about this. That doesn't mean you are allowed to hurt people.'

Being curious and wondering aloud about why the child is behaving in a certain way can be helpful. 'I wonder why you are shouting so much today', 'Isn't it amazing that you just remembered that (particular event) today,' can help a child reflect on their actions and is usually more effective in raising awareness than asking directly what's wrong. A child who has 'switched off' their feelings may not know what is bothering them, they may say something trivial, or withhold the information through lack of trust. Being curious, or making an educated guess (not assuming you know for sure), 'I'm thinking you might be worried about the spelling gala on Friday' can be an excellent way to open a discussion, in which you can listen attentively and not interrupt.

















Empathy is the most important quality we can have when working with children. To understand the child's needs we must put ourselves into the child's shoes. It is important not only to feel empathy but to convey it to the child, 'I can see that this is hard for you', 'Your knee is really red, I bet it hurts.' Empathy allows the child to feel their feelings, not suppress them. It encourages the release of grief and rage which, if buried, can continue to cause emotional and behavioural problems. Adults should empathise with the child before putting disciplinary measures in place and while employing those measures (e.g., consequences). The adult must be genuinely empathic, not flippant or sarcastic

DAN HUGHES' 24 S'S








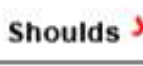
A guide for raising your troubled or sensitive child



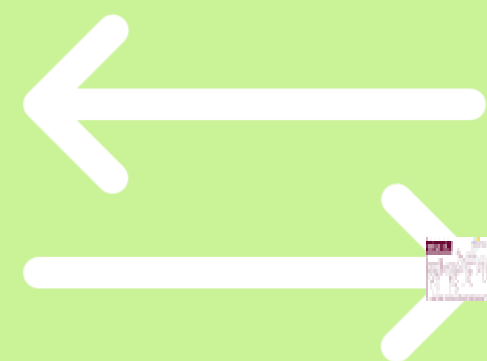


 Safety ✓	<p>Being physically present with a child and emotionally available to him helps to develop a secure base and builds attachment. It also provides effective discipline, helps the child develop skills and reduces shame by letting him know he is good to be with. It is important not to isolate the child or get angry, <i>especially</i> when he is distraught and /or behaving badly.</p>	 Soup ✓	<p>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.</p>
 Structure, choice, routine, rituals ✓	<p>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.</p>	 Seeking meaning ✓	<p>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.</p>
 Soothing ✓	<p>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 empathetic 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.</p>	 Special ✓	<p>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, "<i>Discover the song that is in their heart and sing it to them when they forget it.</i>"</p>
 Smiling ✓	<p>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.</p>	 Sense of humour ✓	<p>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.</p>
 Supervision ✓	<p>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.</p>	 Stretching ✓	<p>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.</p>
 Success ✓	<p>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.</p>	 Sorry ✓	<p>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.</p>
 Storytelling tone ✓	<p>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.</p>	 Sensory ✓	<p>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.</p>
 Sleep ✓	<p>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.</p>	 Self care ✓	<p>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!</p>



 Shame ✘	<p>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.</p>
 Sarcasm ✘	<p>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.</p>
 Shouting ✘	<p>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.</p>
 Smacking ✘	<p>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.</p>
 Stimulation ✘	<p>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.</p>
 Secrets ✘	<p>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.</p>
 Seclusion ✘	<p>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.</p>
 Shoulds ✘	<p>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.</p>

CHANGE



Be kind to yourself one week at a time

Keep lines of communication open

Reach out and ask for help



MANAGING CHANGE

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, the condition worsens and creates stress. Unmanaged stress can cause physical and emotional problems.

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.



TRANSITION

It's difficult to accept change when it's unexpected. You may feel a sense of loss or grief. It's important to acknowledge your feelings and allow yourself to feel them. It's also important to seek support from friends and family.

Children may be feeling triggered by the end and the start of the school year. The change of routines and the inevitable loss and separation may bring feelings of abandonment and threat.

Children may feel a sense of loss when a loved one is no longer present. It's important to acknowledge their feelings and provide them with support and comfort.



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MILITARY FAMILIES

Between 7-18 months, children develop the ability to distinguish between familiar and less familiar people and a special relationship between the infant and his primary caregiver forms.

Military children have been found to show attachment needing behaviours when a parent/caregiver is absent. Optimising support services to help develop positive behaviour/attachment strategies will ensure families can provide secure parenting attachments before, during and after deployments.



MANAGING CHANGE

Be kind to yourselves and
each other

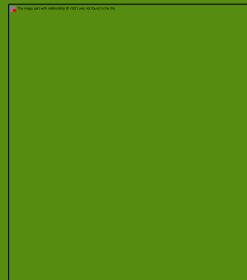
Keep lines of communication
open

Reach 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.

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





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



How to Cope when Things Feel Out of Your Control

Imagine what a role model or admired friend would do in the same situation.

Write down your thoughts. Stress can make us think negative thoughts about ourselves.

Talk to others about how you're feeling.



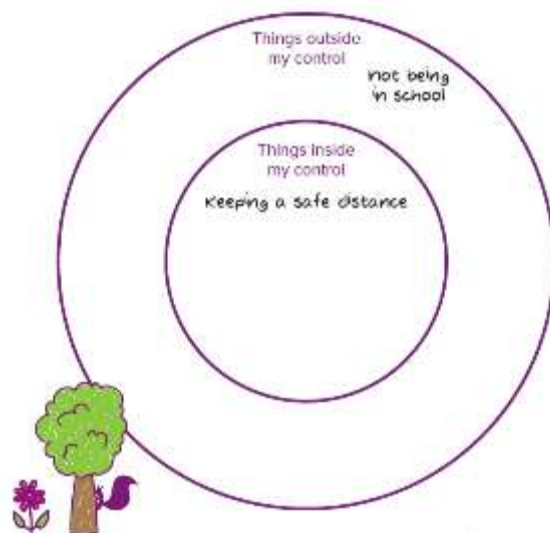
Some of the things that have changed are:



Inside/Outside of Your Control

Think about the examples we've given you. Some of them you can do something about (they are in your control) and others you can't (they are outside of your control).

Add them to the circles below and think of some of your own ideas too. We've put in a few examples to help you.



Thinking about Change

When changes happen, sometimes we can do things to help us feel more positive. Think of something that has changed for you recently. What was it? How do you feel about it? What could you do to feel better about it?



What changed?

↓

How do I feel?

↓

What can I do?

Helping your child to manage change through COVID-19

TRANSITION



- It's useful for adults to emotionally prepare themselves for the 'transition storm' that is about to begin. Put your seatbelt on and hold tight! The child needs you to be grounded.
- Remind yourself that the child's behaviour is a sign of their inside pain, and they need you to see through the behaviour to help them feel safe, secure and loved.
- Digging down past behaviours to the inside pain, can be hard and tiring work. Take good care of yourself and reach out to your support network for extra help.
- Remind yourself that punishments, withdrawal, consequences and shaming will make the transition harder for everyone.

- Help the child to see the storm coming too. Say "the end of the school year can be a tricky, I'm here to help you through it"
- Help the child name the feelings that they have no words for. Try "I wonder if your 'moving up day' feels pretty scary right now?" or "When things are different like this, I wonder if it makes you worry about being left behind?"
- Help make connections between their behaviour and their feelings, try "When you run away like that it makes me wonder if you don't know where to be to feel safe? You are safe right here".



Children feel fear in their body. Help the child's body to calm by:

- Doing short bursts of physical activity (star jumps, wall push ups, walking, running) frequently
- Playfully ask them to breathe deeply in the mornings and evenings – e.g. blow bubbles, blow away the feelings
- Do body calming activities with them
- Use sensitive touch to let them know you are there. Touch can be a great calmer.



Be crystal clear

Tell the child the things they need to hear, don't wait for them to ask you because they don't know what they need! **Tell them:**

- How much you care
- That you are not going anywhere
- That they are in your mind even when not in your class/not at home
- That they are safe and protected
- That they will not be taken away

- Tell them what is going to happen that day if the routine is different - use pictures and 'steps' to prepare them.
- Remind them throughout the day what is going to happen and when
- Keep to as much of the usual routine as you can

- Use 'transitional objects' to let them know that you are connected, even when apart. How about:
- As a parent, draw a little heart on your hand and the same heart on your child's hand as they go off to school.
 - Give your child a special stone, or photo to hold on to at school that reminds them of you
 - Teachers – give the child a 'transition card' – a piece of paper with a special message that they look after until you see them again.
 - Let the child use their special teddies whenever they need to



Children may be feeling frightened by the end and the start of the school year. The change of routine and the inevitable loss and separation may bring feelings of abandonment and threat.

MILITARY FAMILIES



Strategies for
Home

Strategies for
School

Key Contacts

Between 7-18 months, children develop the ability to discriminate between familiar and less familiar people and a special relationship between the infant and his primary caregiver forms.

Military children have been found to show attention needing behaviours when a parent/carer is deployed. Optimising support services to help develop positive behavioural/attachment strategies will ensure families can develop secure parenting attachments before, during and after deployments.

Strategies for Home

- Promoting the importance of education is key
- Ensure that school and key staff are aware when you are deployed
- Ensure children are prepared for when you are away from home for extended periods
- Attune, attend, and satisfy basic needs
- Provide a calm box – this could include bubbles, tearing paper or popping bubble wrap
- Assist with regulation – name the behaviour, match the behaviour, provide soothing or assist children in self-regulating
- Complete an activity together, bake, read, watch a video
- Model positive behaviours, for example sharing
- Teach children to play games, increasing social skills
- Give the opportunity for your child to practice independence
- Ensure children have time to talk
- Ensure consistent routines and boundaries
- If required, seek help if you are not coping



Strategies for School

It may be worth checking with school to see if they can carry out some of the following strategies:

- Dedicating a key adult to support discussions via groups or independent sessions
- ELSA support sessions
- Actively support practicing relative dependency for the child
- Give responsibility to the child, for example a special job they can be involved in
- Create a safe space/secure base a child can go if they feel overwhelmed
- Give children the opportunity to build relationships
- Transition to new schools – enable peer to peer friendships
- Assess curricular gaps when they move schools
- Encourage wellbeing support when a parent is deployed
- Offer spaces to connect with other children from military families and support workers
- Help to keep in touch with a deployed parent via mail or Ebluey
- Support parents before/during and after deployment



Key Contacts

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/the-childrens-education-advisory-service-ceas>
- <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/mental-wellbeing/dealing-with-mental-health-challenges-and-stress>
- <https://www.army.mod.uk/people/support-well/the-army-welfare-service-aws/>
- <https://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/our-services/advice-and-support>
- <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers/royal-marines/what-do-i-get/support-your-family>
- <https://www.rafbf.org/about-us/useful-links-and-resources/welfare-and-wellbeing-support>
- <https://www.winchester.ac.uk/collaboration/widening-participation/military-service-children/>
- <http://mkcheroes.co.uk/>
- <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-support/physical-and-mental-wellbeing>
- <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/disability-support/additional-needs-and-disability-support/fandf-membership-form>
- <https://www.army.mod.uk/people/support-well/army-parents-network/>
- <https://aldershothive.blogspot.com/search/label/Education>

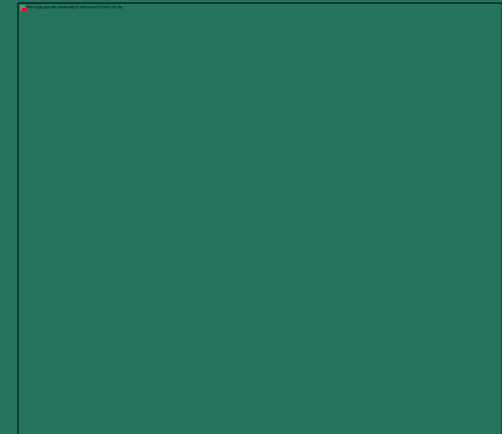
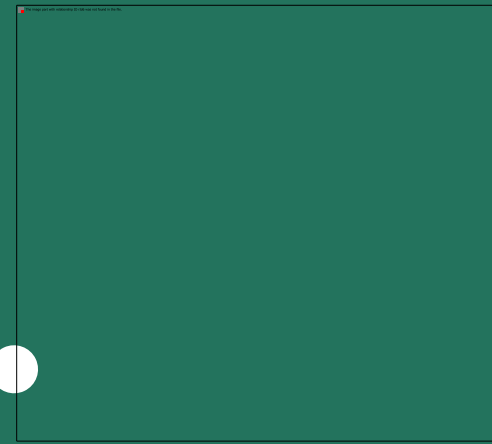


What if...



...we are curious about behaviour?

COMMUNICATION



CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Would you rather be happy, or right?

Think of ways and ideas to resolve the problem.

Keep the conversations going, do not walk away

Look at alternatives

Do not keep dragging up the past or referring to it

You do not always have to agree

Be easy and open to talk to

Talk when calm and not angry

Do not name call

Listening is not obeying

This is not about winning an argument

Change begins with you

Separate the problem from the person

Respect each other

Sometimes we must have awkward conversations to resolve the issue

Show that you are listening.

VRF'S



When things become too overwhelming for our children, we as adults, need to adopt our vital relational functions.

Vital Relational Functions

Attunement- Showing you can catch how they feel through facial expressions, body language, gesture and noises, mmm, oh, aah

Validation- Validate their perspective- I can see you are upset, angry, scared.

Containment- Make their deep distress, raging anger, or painful sorrow a survivable experience. Be near, hold their hand, put your hand on their shoulder.

Soothe/ Calm- Teach them to calm themselves down, this will take lots of practice. Breathe with them.

Regulate- Helping the child regulate their emotions by naming what they are feeling **'naming is taming.'**



Attune → Validate → Contain → Regulate



Catch 'n' match
the feeling!

Attune → **Validate** → Contain → Regulate



Stop the
behaviour,
validate the
feeling

Attune → Validate → **Contain** → Regulate



Make the
unbearable
survivable!

Attune → Validate → Contain → **Regulate**

Meet the intensity
then calm
and soothe



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.



FEELINGS

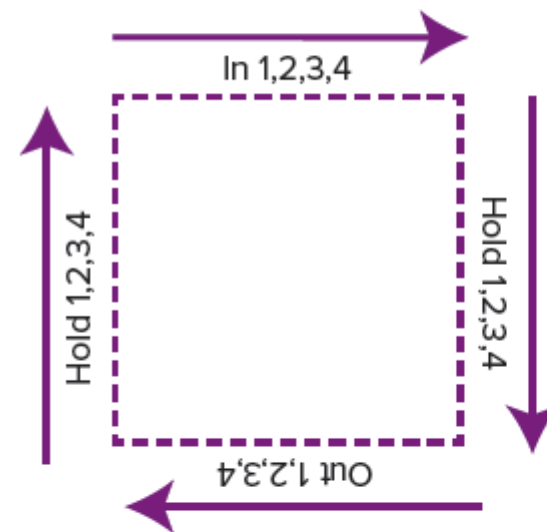
Feelings are signals in our body and it is important that we listen to them as they give us clues about what is going on around us. We need to teach our children that we all have feelings and these feelings are ok.

The following slides include strategies to help children understand their feelings...

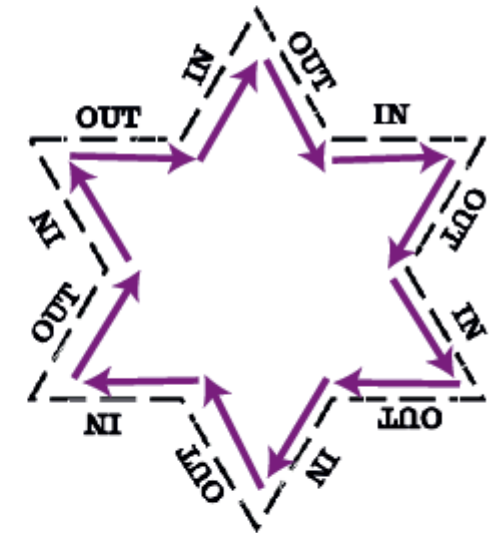
Why not give one of these breathing techniques a try...

As you breathe, use your finger to trace along the arrows

Square Breathing



Star Breathing



Today I feel...

Some words to describe how I feel now are...

My face looks like...

My feeling is...

- Comfortable
- Uncomfortable
- A bit of both

Remember
It's OK to feel ALL feelings. There is no such thing as a BAD feeling!

My body feels:

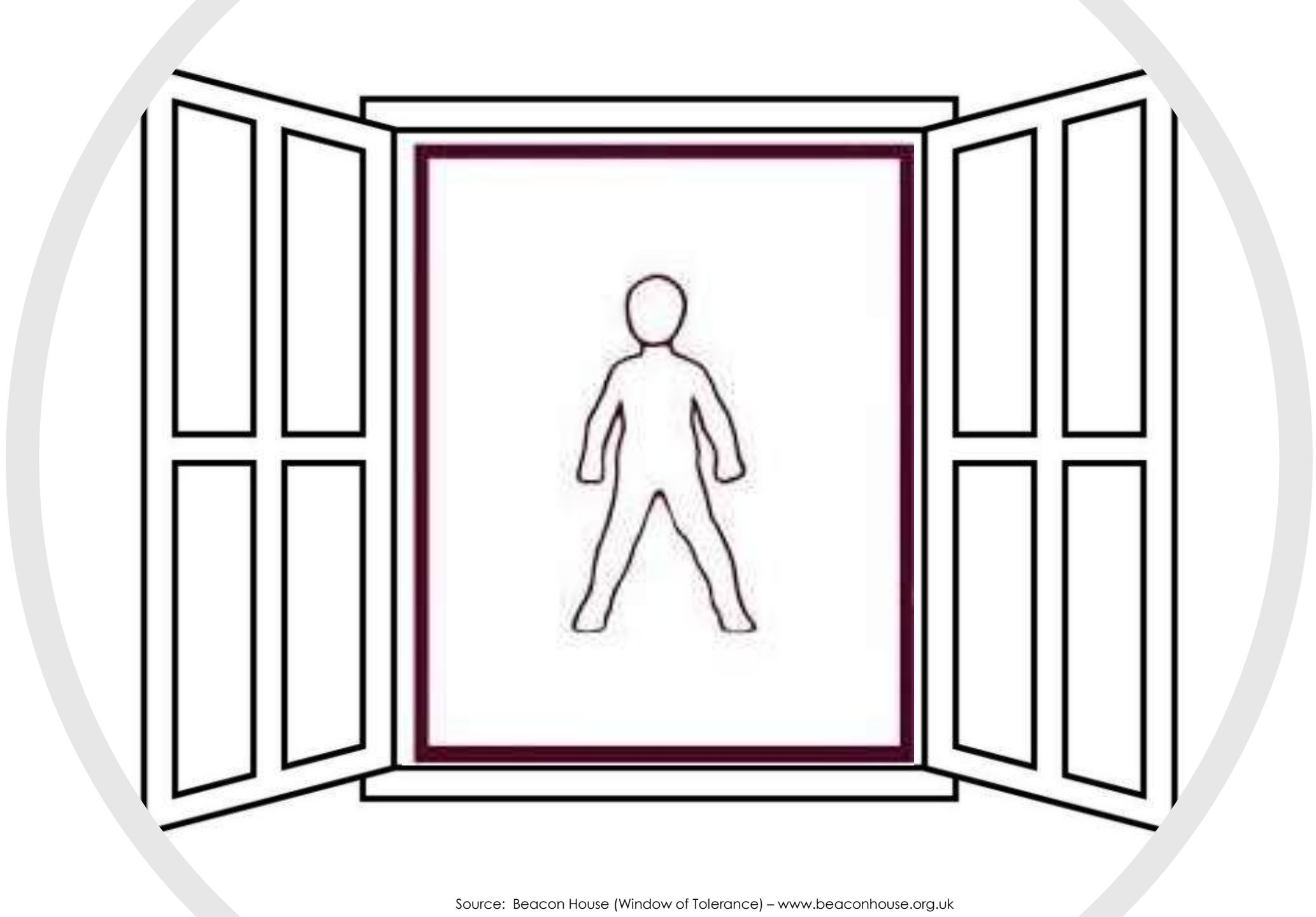
- Heavy Hot Relaxed
- Tight Fast heart
- Shaky Calm
- Butterflies

I think I feel this way because...

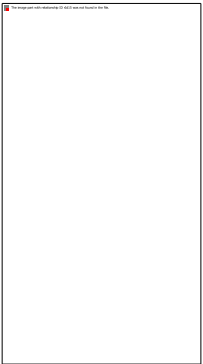
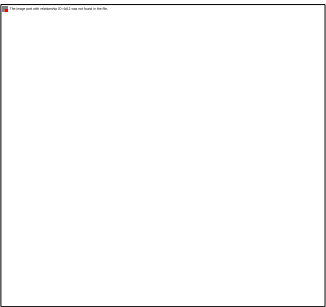
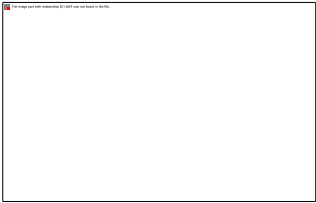
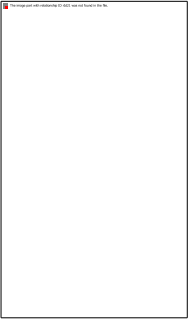
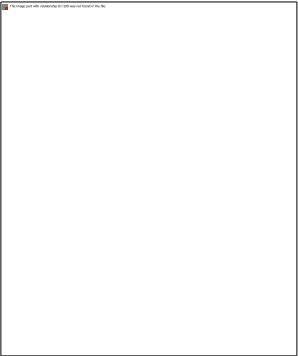
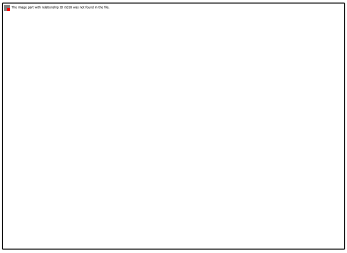
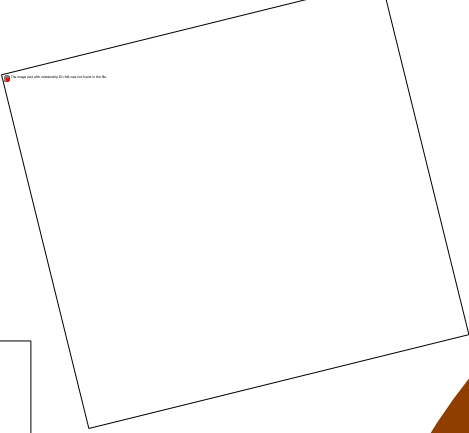
Wall of Worries

We all feel worried sometimes, lots of different things can make us feel worried. If something is worrying you, write it down on a brick on your wall. Is there someone you can share your worry with?





HINTS & TIPS



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

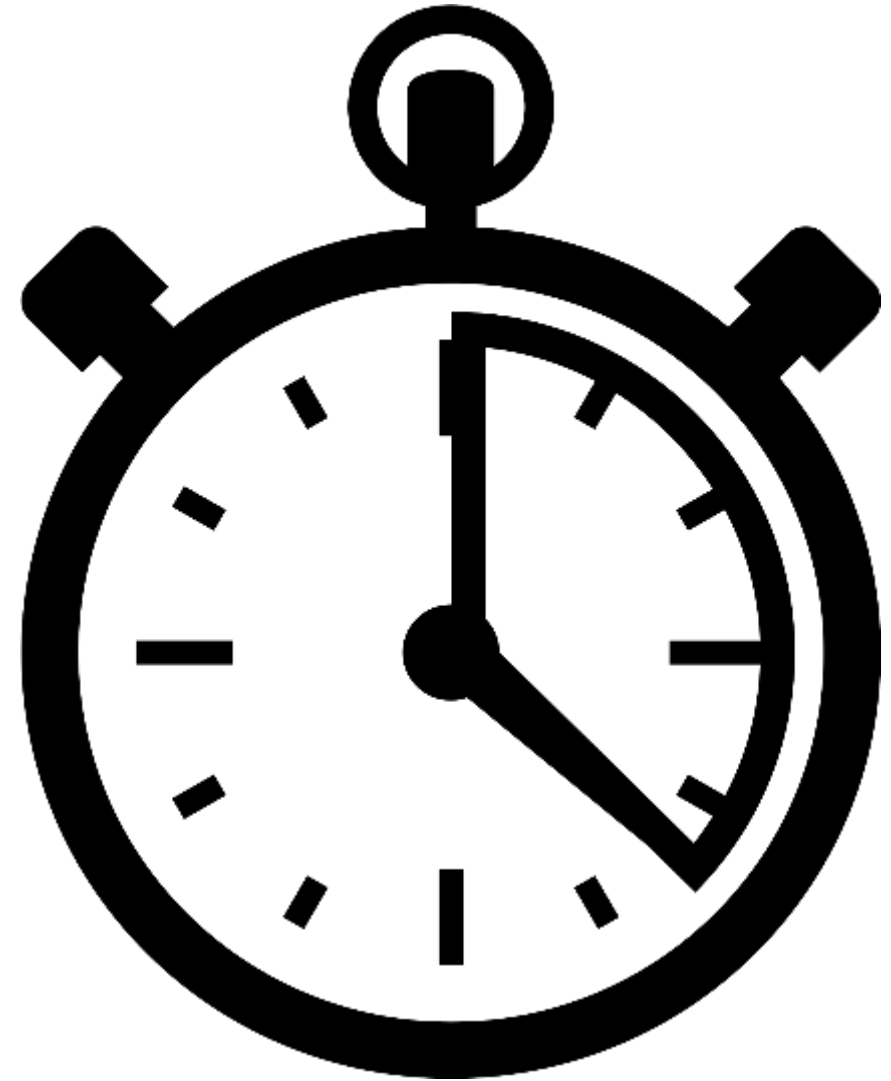
Confidently give the instruction, then walk away with the expectation that your child will comply.

“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.





CONDITIONER

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 nice

Child reluctant to carry out adult instruction

“Are you going to use the spoon or fork to eat your dinner?”

“Are you going to wear your pink tights or your white tights?”

“Are you going to do your homework with a pen or pencil?”

“Are you going to tidy up your toys with your monster hands or crab hands?”

Giving the child a win-win choice



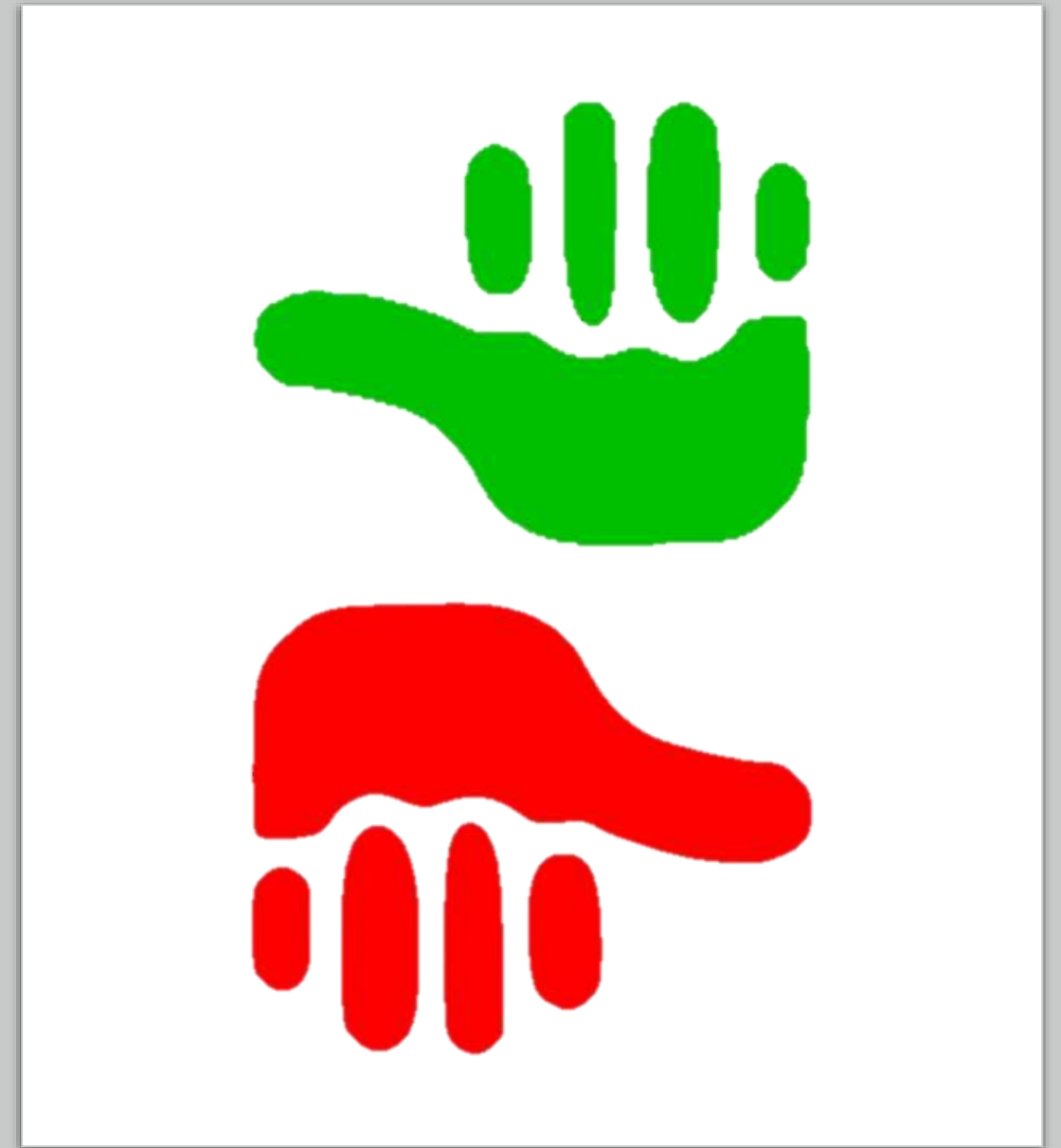
Nice and nasty

Using a matter of fact, controlled calm voice

“Either it’s finished/tidied now, or it will have to be 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 round 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?"



Frame instructions positively.

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

Don't say don't

“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”

INFORMATION DIRECTORY



Look for this symbol for websites with sections suitable for children and young people. Remember to check the appropriateness of each site to your child as many are aimed at older children and teenagers.



Sites with this symbol have a dedicated parent helpline.

Control + Click the link on the following slide to jump to relevant sections



➤ [Parenting Children with Autism](#)

➤ [LGBT+ Families](#)

➤ [Resources](#)

➤ [Single Parents](#)

➤ [Support for Families Affected by Criminal Behaviour or Domestic Abuse](#)

➤ [Parenting Anxious Children](#)



➤ [Parenting Courses](#)

➤ [Separation, Divorce, and Parenting apart](#)

➤ [Parenting Children with ADHD](#)

➤ [General Parenting and Child Mental Health](#)

➤ [Keeping Well as a Parent](#)

➤ [Parenting Apps](#)



Voices in the Middle
<https://www.voicesinthemiddle.com>



NSPCC
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/separation-and-divorce/>

You might be interested in:



<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/talking-about-difficult-topics/>

Separation, Divorce, and Parenting Apart



Resolution
<https://resolution.org.uk/looking-for-help/parents-children-the-law/>

You might be interested in:



<https://resolution.org.uk/looking-for-help/parents-children-the-law/managing-life-between-two-homes/>



Family Lives
<https://familylives.org.uk/advice/divorce-and-separation/shared-parenting-and-contact/what-is-shared-parenting/>



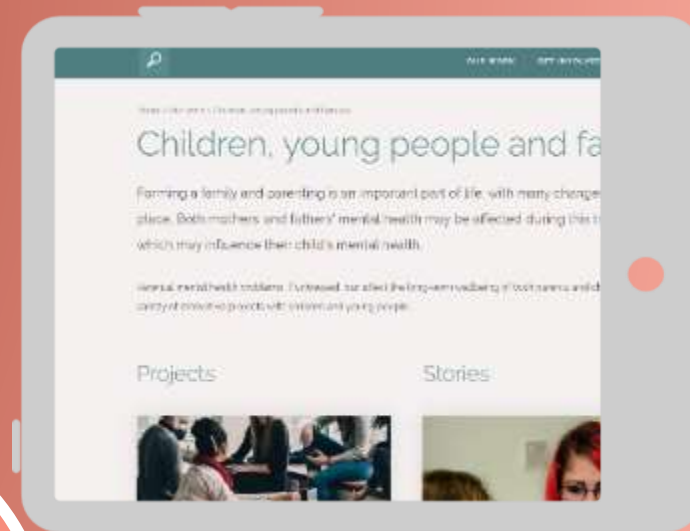
<https://familylives.org.uk/advice/divorce-and-separation/shared-parenting-and-contact/advice-if-your-ex-has-different-routines-and-parenting-styles>



Click the pictures to explore the web pages



Young Minds
<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-anxiety/>



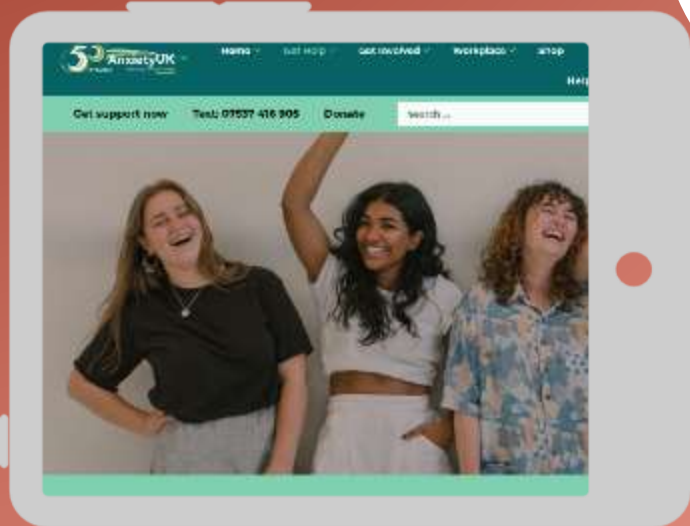
The Mental Health Foundation
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/children-young-people-and-families>

You might be interested in:



https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/anxious_child.pdf

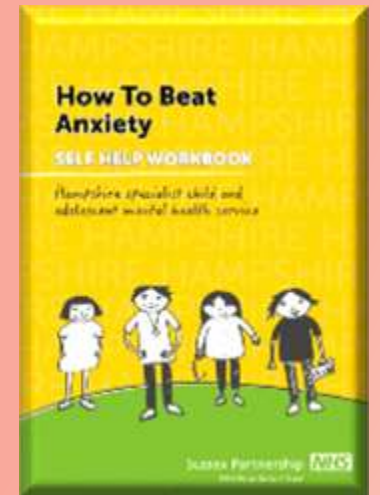
Parenting Anxious Children



Anxiety UK
<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/get-help/support-for-children-young-people/>

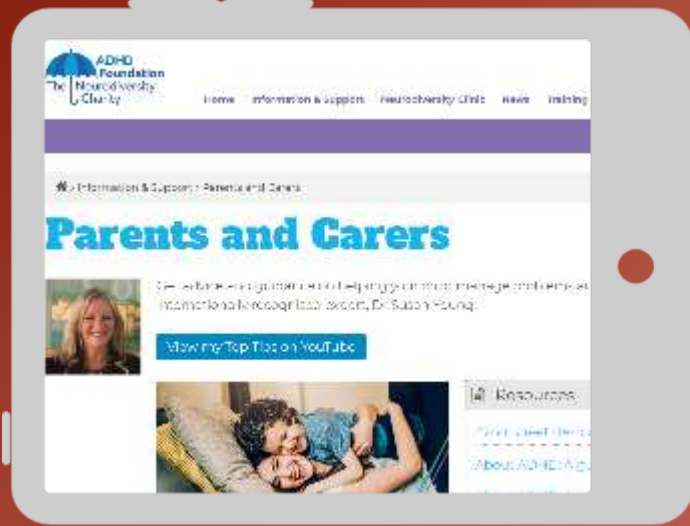


CAMHS
<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/help/parents-carers/anxiety-professionals/>



Via the CAMHS Anxiety page

Click the pictures to explore the web pages



ADHD Foundation

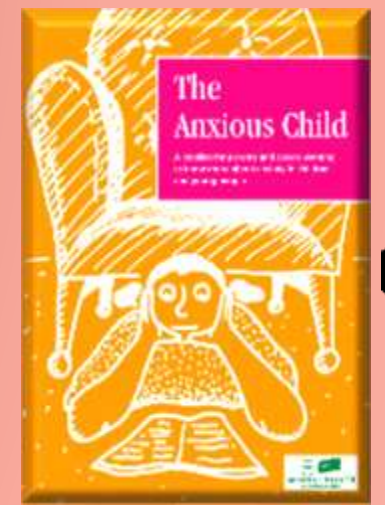
<https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/information/parents/>



CAMHS

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/help/parents-carers/adhd-professionals/>

You might be interested in:



https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/anxious_child.pdf

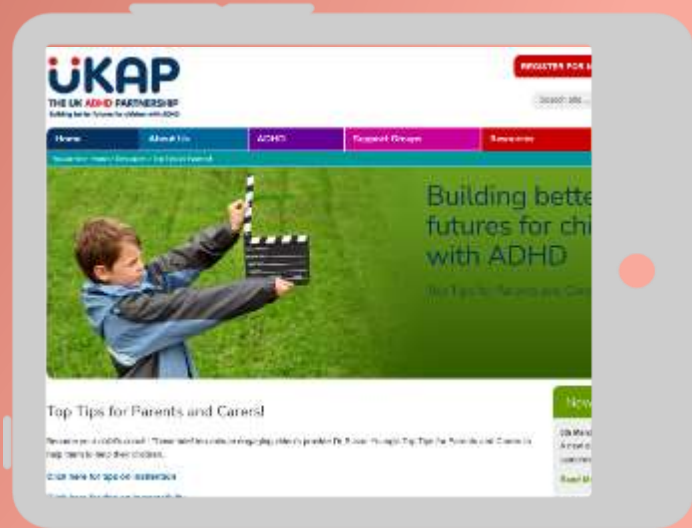
Parenting Children with ADHD



ADDitude

<https://www.additudemag.com/>

One of the only American-based sites listed so worth noting if looking for support available, but it has a good free webinars and resources section.



The UK ADHD Partnership

<https://www.ukadhd.com/top-tips-for-parents1.htm>



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The Autism Trust
<https://www.theautismtrust.org.uk/>



National Autistic Society
<https://www.autism.org.uk/>



You might be interested in:



Autism Education Trust
<https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/>

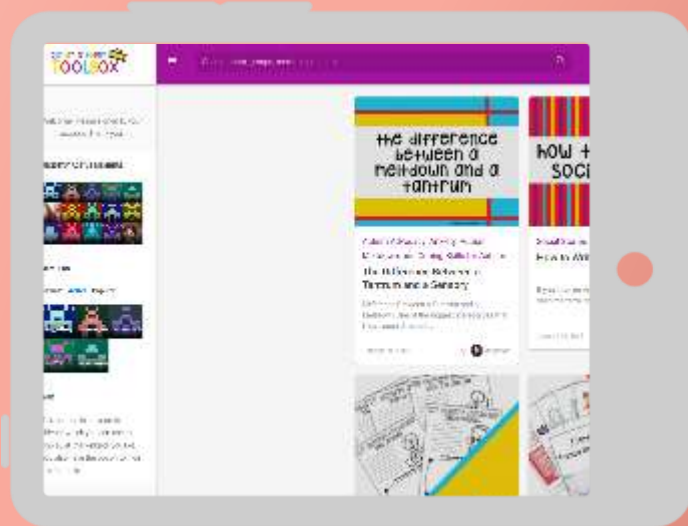


CAMHS
<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/help/parents-carers/autistic-spectrum-condition/>

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More Parenting Children with Autism



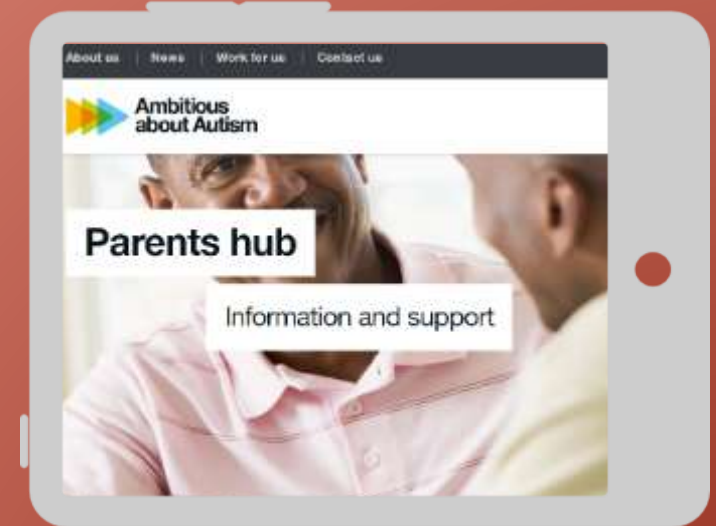
Your Autism Toolbox

<https://yourautismtoolbox.com/>



Autism Little Learners

<https://www.autismlittlelearners.com/>



Ambitious about Autism

<https://familylives.org.uk/advice/divorce-and-separation/shared-parenting-and-contact/what-is-shared-parenting/>

General Parenting & Child Mental Health

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Anna Freud

<https://www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers/child-in-mind/>



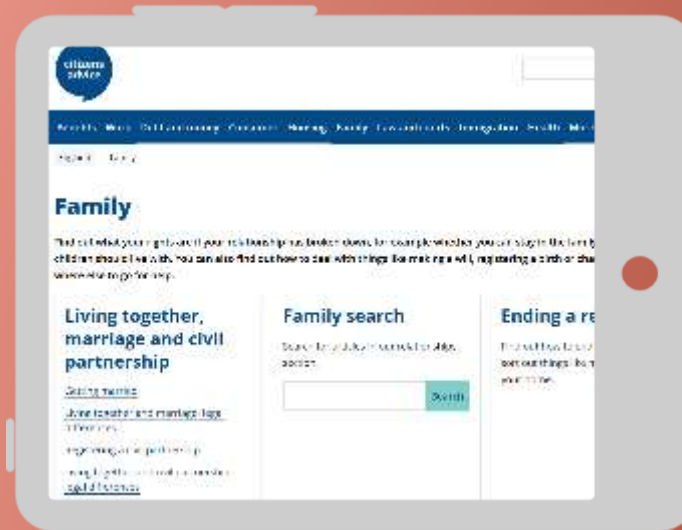
Family Lives

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/>



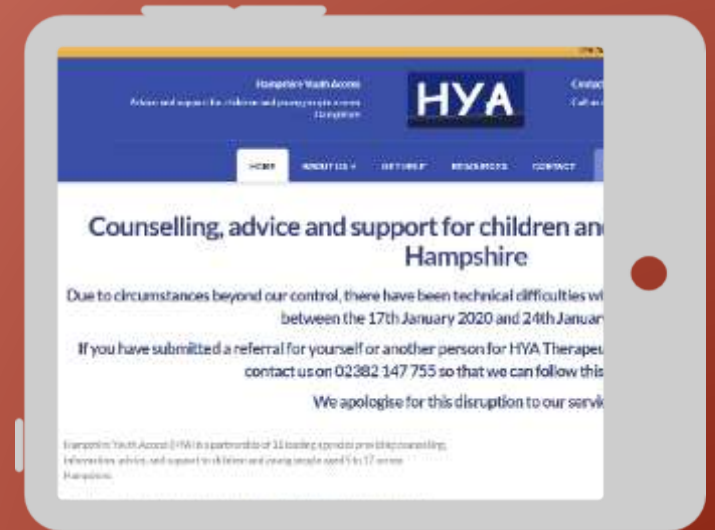
Action for Children

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/in-your-area/services/online-parenting-support-for-0-5-year-olds/>



Citizen's Advice

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/>



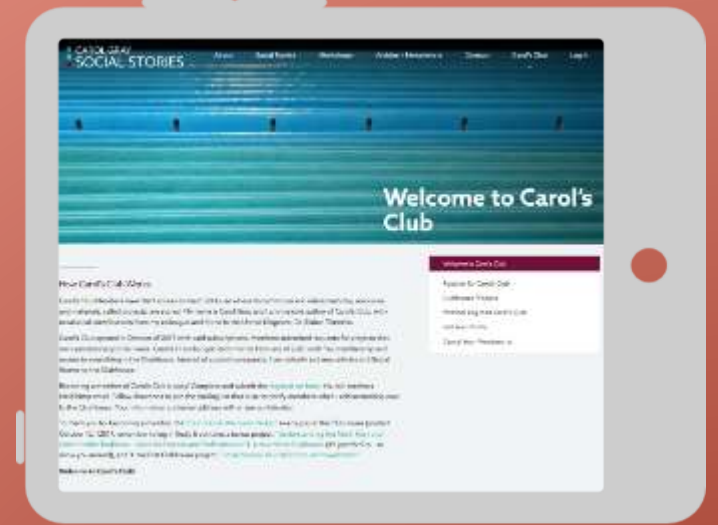
Hampshire Youth Access

<https://hampshireyouthaccess.org.uk/>

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Resources



Carol Gray Social Stories
<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/carols-club/?fbclid=IwAR3tLoio6cs0vBgaF6643UJINIKpQymw996piaAnOepSfzgaJWhuFOJ2ORX8>



Mind Moose
<https://www.mindmoose.co.uk/parents/>



Weekly email list with free resources

Big Life Journal
<https://biglifejournal-uk.co.uk/>

Keeping Well as a Parent

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web pages



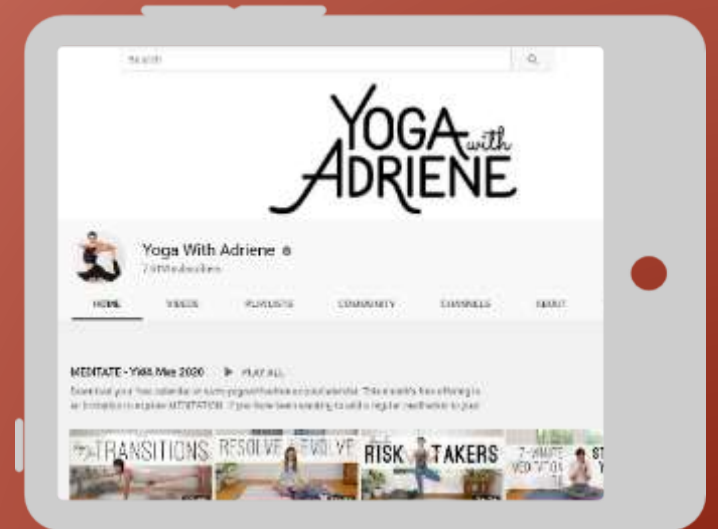
Mind

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/drugs-and-treatments/talking-therapy-and-counselling/how-to-find-a-therapist/>



Mindful

<https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>



Yoga with Adriene

<https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>

Single Parents



Gingerbread

<https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/>

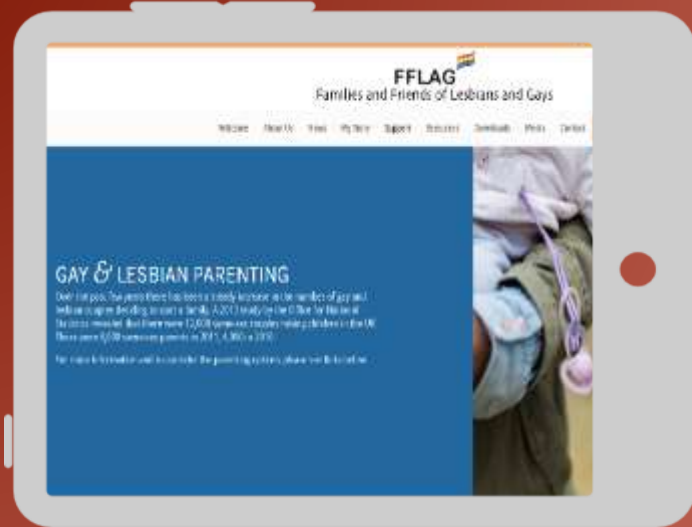


SingleParents.org.uk

<http://www.singleparents.org.uk/>



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FFLAG

<https://www.fflag.org.uk/portfolio-item/gay-lesbian-parenting/>



Stonewall

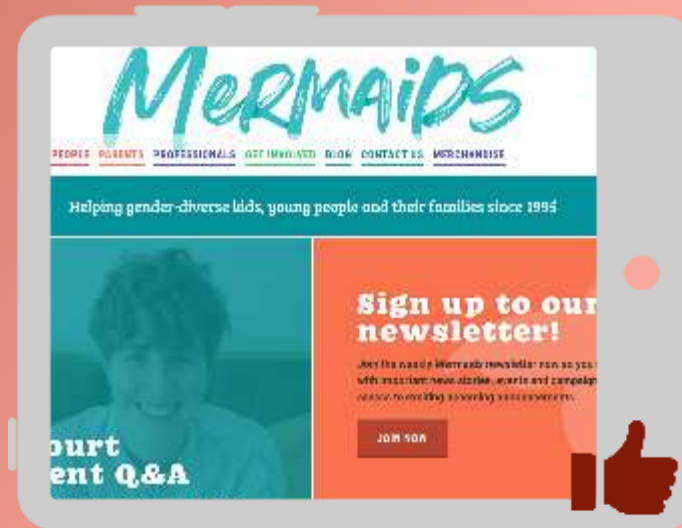
<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/parenting-rights>



Gingerbread

<https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/information/lgbt-single-parents/>

Specific LGBT+ advice for single parents.



Mermaids UK

<https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

Supporting transgender, non-binary and gender diverse children, young people and their families.



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Families Affected by Criminal Behaviour or Domestic Abuse

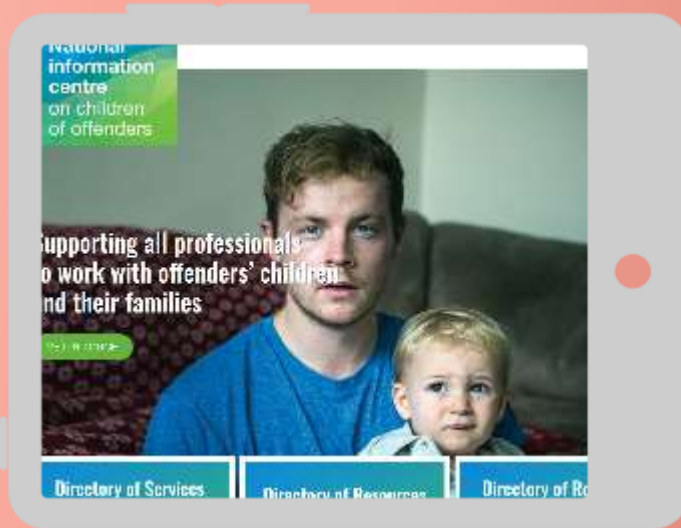
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The You Trust
<https://theyoutrust.org.uk/>



Hampshire Domestic Abuse Services
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/social-careandhealth/domesticabuse>

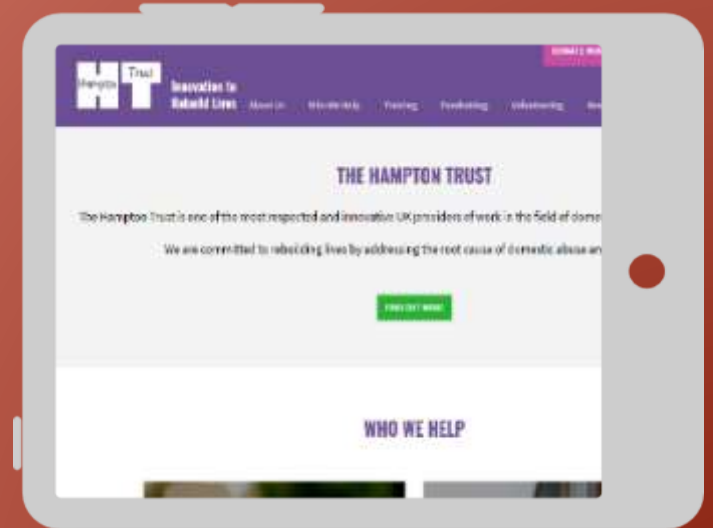


NICCO
<https://www.nicco.org.uk/>



The Freedom Programme
<https://www.freedomprogramme.co.uk/>

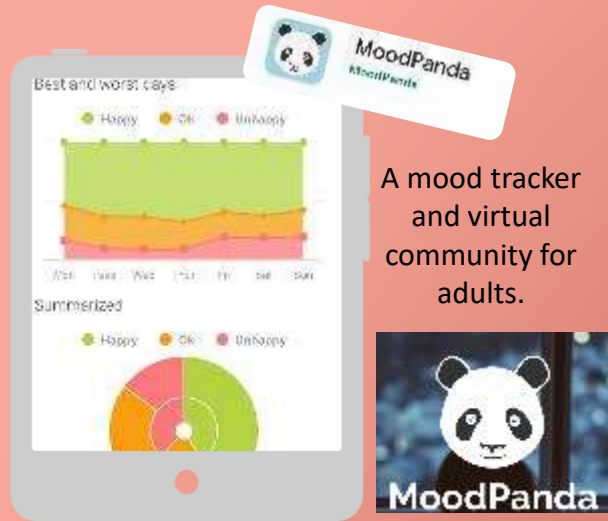
Offers an online course that can be done from your own home for both victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse.



The Hampton Trust
<https://www.hamptontrust.org.uk/>

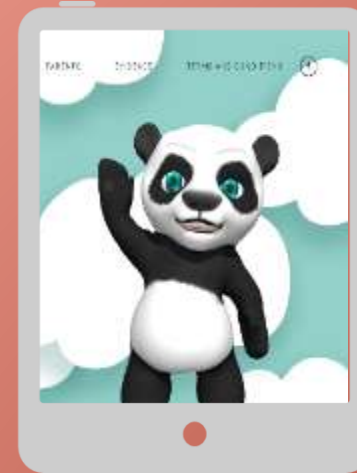
Apps for Parents & Families

Search the name in your app store to find the app



Mood Panda

A mood tracker and virtual community for adults.



Chill Panda

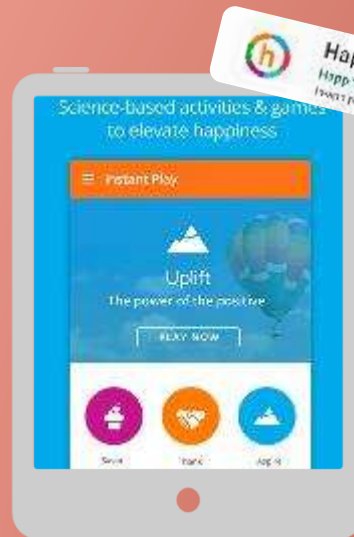
Available on Apple devices or Nintendo Switch.

Play your way to a calmer day!

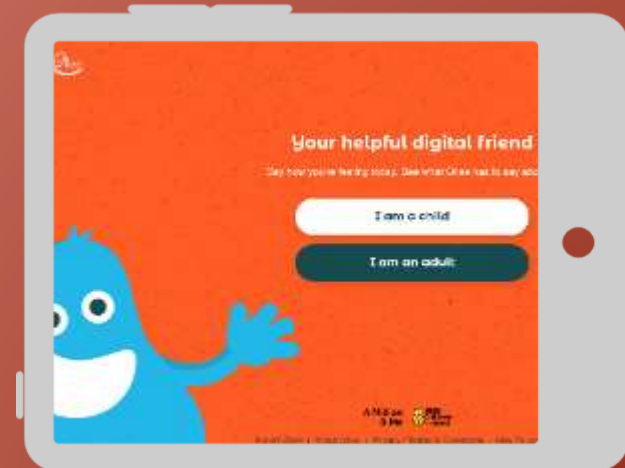
Uses heart rate and calming activities to promote wellbeing in children.



An app designed for 10-18 year olds that is based on CBT principles and also provide a mood tracker and top tips.



A science-based approach to improving happiness and wellbeing for adults.



Ollee

Currently only a web app Ollee is a 'digital friend' to help children reflect on how they feel.

Other Apps for family organisation and co-parenting:

