

Parenting Top Tips



Family

Links

We'd like to thank

Sarah Hinkin of Brookes Day Nursery; Lisa Birch, Penny Buswell, Rachael Hedger and Sally Joyce of Cherry Tree Nursery; Maria Lucibello of Turbo Teds Nursery; Vikki Callaghan, Thamima Mian, Sally Rose and Julie Turner of Acacia Nursery for the inspiration and ideas contained in Parenting Top Tips

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The Parenting Puzzle

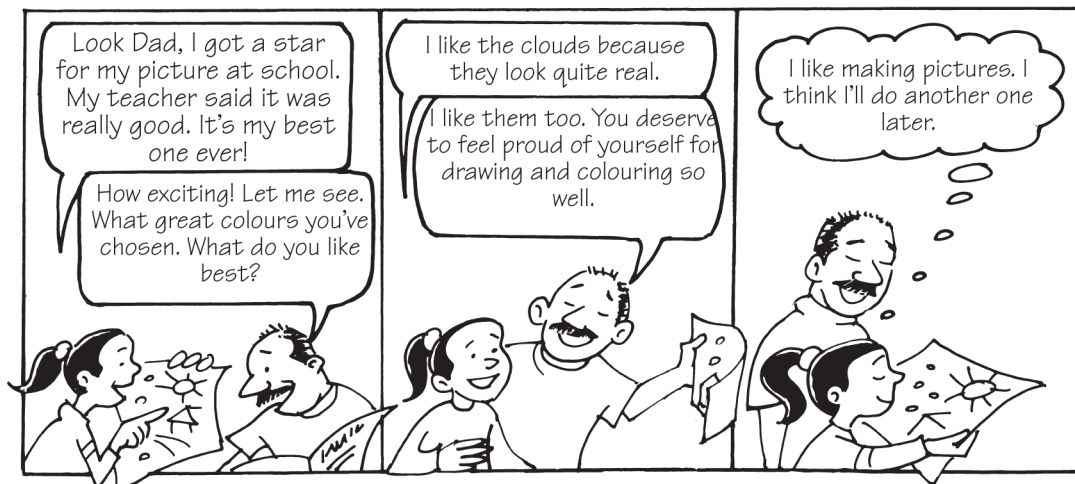
- Available as a book, animated DVD or audio CD
- Booklets with *The Parenting Puzzle's* key messages available: Interpreters', Polish, Somali, Urdu and Welsh editions
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Praise is magic!



😊 Helpful praise



Top tips

Praise helps children feel good about themselves,
so they are more likely to behave well



Praise helps us to notice all the good things about our children,
rather than mostly focusing on their faults



Praise helps children to remember what we'd like them to do



Praise helps us to feel good too—it's no fun
having to tell children off all the time

PRAISE WORKS WONDERS!

Creating boundaries



Top tips

We all want our children to grow up confident, independent and responsible. Developing clear, fair consistent boundaries helps them do this



Children need to test the boundaries in order to feel safe.

When they do, we need to be firm without being harsh



Boundaries are a family affair—everyone needs to agree them and be prepared to stick to them



We need to parent with elastic—boundaries need to stretch as children grow

CLEAR, FAIR RULES
HELP US ALL FEEL SAFE

Time to calm down



Top tips

When emotions are running high, a cooling-off time gives everyone the chance to calm down



Allowing time to calm down helps us to hold on to clear boundaries without nagging or adding our own angry outbursts



Sometimes our children need to release their frustration or anger safely before they can calm down



Parents can show children how to calm down by taking time to calm down themselves

WE ALL NEED TIME TO CALM DOWN

Using rewards



Top tips

Children like to please us, but some of the ways we want them to behave aren't easy for them to learn



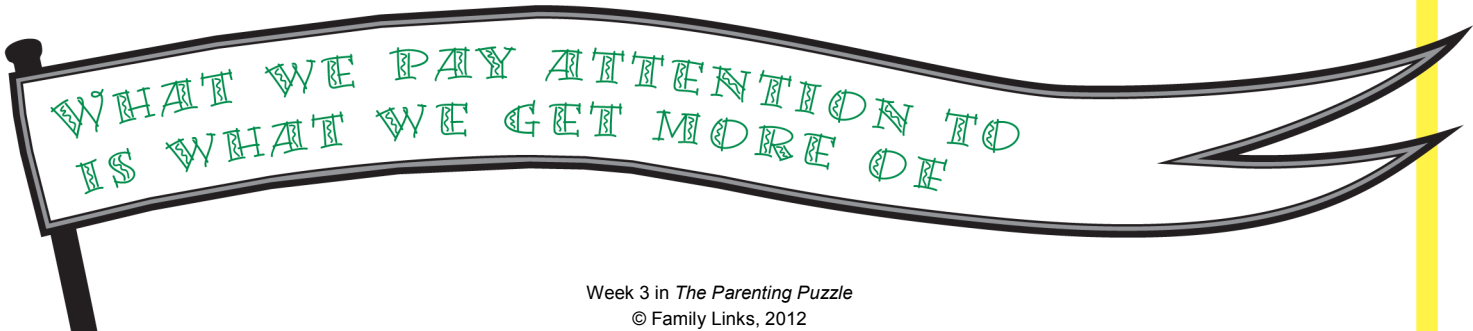
It's easier to learn a new behaviour if we are appreciated when we remember it



Reward effort as well as achievement



Reward little and often, and remember that our time, pleasure and attention are the best rewards of all





One of the greatest gifts we can give each other is to listen



In our busy lives it isn't always easy to stop what we are doing
so we can listen closely to our children and value what they say -
but it's worth it



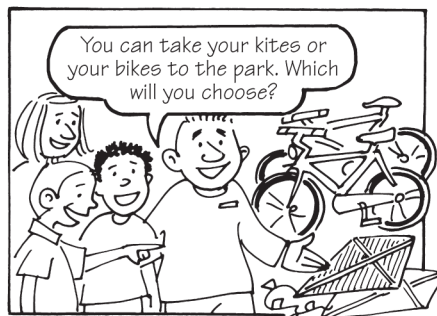
Taking time to listen to our children builds trust and honesty



If we listen to our children they will learn
to listen to us and to each other

WHAT CHILDREN NEED
IS A GOOD LISTENING TO!

Giving children choices



Top tips

We all want to feel that we are in charge of our own lives—though it's not always easy!



It is helpful for children to learn, gradually, how to make choices for themselves. We can offer them a limited choice many times during the day



The choices we offer children need to be ones we're happy to provide—and can describe to them clearly

GIVING CHILDREN CHOICES
MAKES THEM RESPONSIBLE

Understanding our own feelings



Top tips

Being aware of our own feelings and accepting all of them (even the difficult ones) is a positive and healthy thing to do



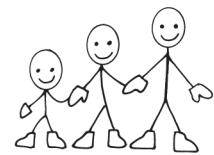
Feelings are never bad in themselves -
it's how we deal with them that counts



Children learn from what they see us do. If we can express our feelings appropriately, they will learn how to do this

FEELINGS ARE SIGNPOSTS

Understanding our children's feelings and behaviour



☹️ **Unhelpful**



😊 **Helpful**



Top tips

Noticing our children's feelings is important—tuning in to their excitement and distress (and everything in between!)



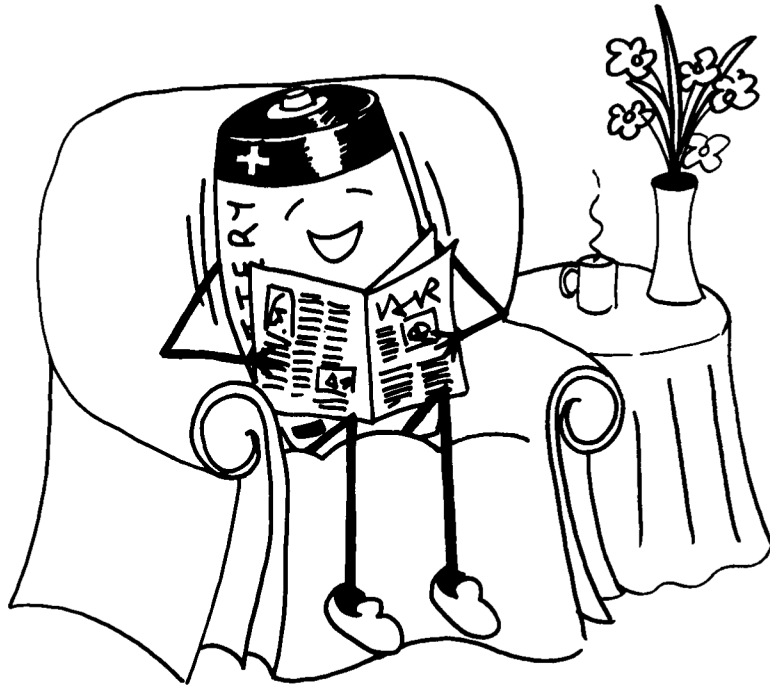
Responding helpfully often prevents explosive behaviour



It takes years to learn to manage our feelings. Many behaviours (such as tantrums) are a natural stage of development - so don't expect too much too soon

FEELINGS FUEL BEHAVIOUR

Look after yourself!



Top tips

When we are very busy it can be hard to find a moment for ourselves, and it's all too easy to put our own needs at the end of the list



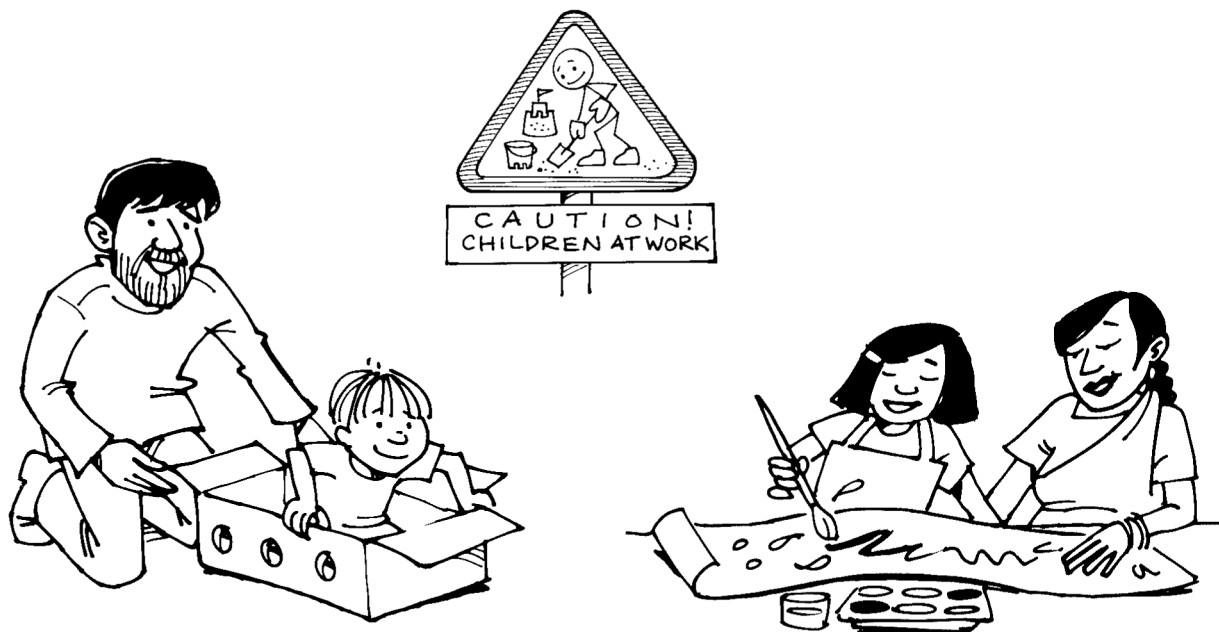
If we neglect ourselves we become exhausted and stressed and then it's much harder to enjoy family life



We owe it to ourselves to recharge our batteries and our families will benefit too

A RECHARGED BATTERY MEANS
A FAMILY FULL OF ENERGY

The power of play



Top tips

Children do most of their learning through play



Play can be messy but it's very important



We need to give time to let children play by themselves
and also to join in with them sometimes



Playtime is their chance to be in charge -
and it's fun for us and for them!

CHILDREN AT PLAY
ARE CHILDREN AT WORK!

Diverting and distracting



☹ Unhelpful



☺ Helpful



Top tips

Young children easily switch their attention to something else that interests them



By offering a different object or activity, we can often avoid difficult situations without mentioning any unwanted behaviour



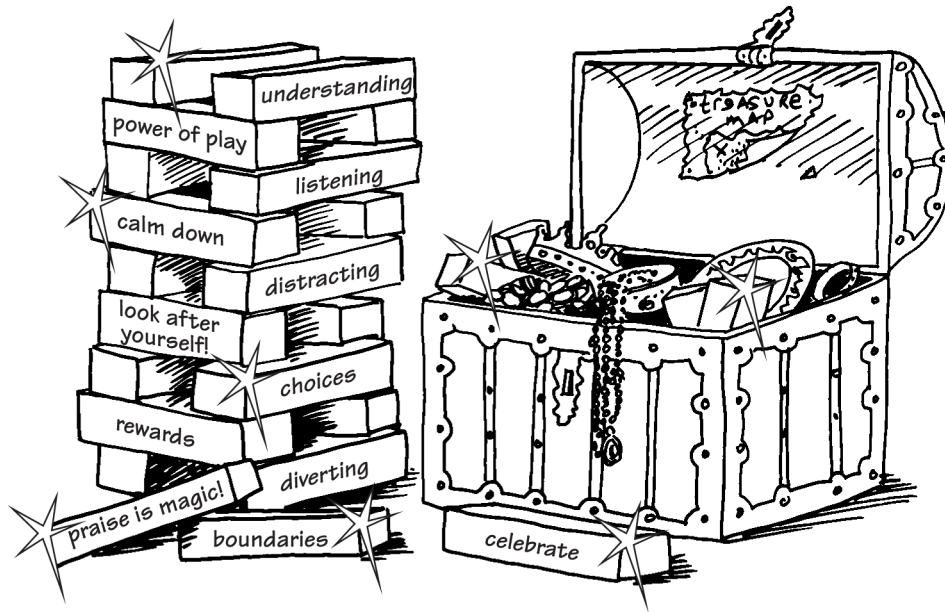
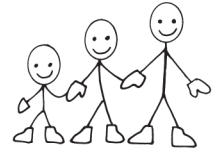
If you are going out it can be helpful to take some small toys or everyday objects for children to play with



If we think about the feelings driving children's behaviour, we can respond to the feeling without mentioning the behaviour

DIVERSION - HAZARD AHEAD!

Celebrating family life



Top tips

Family life is like a treasure hunt—full of hazards, adventures and discoveries to make along the way



If we keep using the skills we have discovered
we will face the hazards more confidently



When family life seems like a struggle it can be hard to find
the energy to keep going. Making sure our own batteries
are charged up will give us the boost we need

THERE'S NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT,
AND NO PRESENT LIKE TIME!