



# Tips for Positive Discipline

Discipline is the process of teaching our children how to eventually manage their own behaviour by teaching them what behaviour is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Your child is learning how to behave appropriately – but they don't automatically know how to do this, and you will need to teach and remind them. You wouldn't yell at or punish your child if they couldn't swim straight away, it takes time, and learning about good behaviour is no different.

Using positive discipline means focussing on the positive behaviour we want our children to continue to use rather than bringing attention to the negative behaviour we are trying to get rid of. The aim is to teach, and reward reinforce the good behaviours while weaning out the bad behaviours.

## Top Tips

- Be a good role model. Children learn how to behave through observation. If you don't want your child to raise their voice, speak calmly and quietly yourself.
- Catch them doing good things. Make sure you watch out for your children doing the right thing and provide them with positive feedback. Heap on the praise and reward for your children when they follow the rules and do the right thing.
- Be warm, calm, and firm, when talking about behaviour. Children feel more at ease and secure when they know who is in charge. Fathers and father figures who are warm and firm have been found to have the most positive impact on their kids' behaviour.
- Be fair with your discipline. Children like things to be fair and for consequences to be reasonable. Discipline needs to be perceived as 'fair' by the child for it to be effective.
- Use simple, positive instructions. Instructions that are clear and age-appropriate are more likely to be understood and remembered.

## Why is positive discipline important?

Young children require warm, loving care to feel safe and secure. It's very important for our children to know, that if they have made a mistake, misbehaved, or broken a rule, that we may not like the behaviour but that we will always love them. When we are consistent with our rules, in a warm and caring way, it helps reassure our children that we are there to protect them and support them even if they make a mistake. Young children whose fathers who are consistently warm and firm in helping them recognise and change their behaviour, are far less likely to engage in bad, risky, or unhealthy behaviours later on in life.