

# Positive Behavioural Support in the Home

## What is challenging behaviour?

- It interferes with new learning skills
- It socially isolates the child
- It could result in injury to others
- It could cause damage to the environment
- The most challenging behaviour has a learned element
- It is purposeful - it means something
- Can be a deliberate way of fulfilling certain needs/communicating something
- Inappropriate behaviour is almost a solution for the child

*Begin by establishing a positive relationship with the child!!*

## How to build positive relationships?

- Greet your child by his/her name every day
- Take time to get to know personal qualities, interests and strengths
- Notice signs of worry/stress
- Give encouragement for effort
- Delegate responsibility
- Say at least one positive thing to the child each day

*Use positive language:*

### **NEGATIVE:**

- Don't do that
- Stop messing
- You haven't listened
- You can't go out until...

### **POSITIVE:**

- Come and do this
- Get on with it
- Listen to me
- You can go out as soon as...

### *Try to give:*

- Smiles
- Nods
- Thumbs Up (to convey positive regard)

Allow the child to share responsibility for setting goals and ask them what aspects of their behaviour would they like to change, what would be the easiest things to change and what would be the most difficult things to change.

### **Reinforcement:**

- The key to changing behaviour is positive reinforcement (rewarding) of what is wanted.
- The reward has to be motivating for the child
- It has to be used consistently
- Most effective rewards are given especially after the good behaviour
- The child has to know exactly what s/he is being rewarded for
- Praise, praise, praise....*Catch the child being good!*

### **Ignoring Unwanted Behaviour:**

- A deliberate decision to withhold reactions (especially attention) as consequence of child's behaviour
- Usually most productive when a child deliberately winds you up to gain attention
- *General principle - firmly, decisively, ignore misbehaviour*
- Notice other children who are behaving appropriately and point this out to the child
- Often standing next to the child can be calming
- Sometimes gentle touch on the shoulder can serve to drain off frustration and relax the child

## Some final thoughts:

- Express your intent simply and clearly
- Be assertive and say exactly what behaviour you want
- When a child is reacting aggressively, *walk, don't talk* as everything you say will be wrong
- Avoid squaring up and making threatening gestures
- Think about what you say and be prepared to listen

