

Community Paediatrics

Phoenix Children's Resource Centre

40 Mason's Hill
Bromley BR5 2RJ

0300 330 5777

Managing your child's behaviour

- Be clear - tell your child what is or isn't ok.
- Be consistent—stick to your guns. Don't give in yourself or let others give in.
- Be positive—be on the lookout for ok behaviour to praise.
- Common pitfalls that lead to ineffective discipline:
 - Inadvertent rewarding of undesirable behaviour.
 - Failure to notice and reward desirable behaviour.
 - Insufficient attention given to good behaviour.
 - Inconsistent rules from day to day, situation to situation.
 - Uncoordinated approach between adults. For example one parent might reward behaviour that another parent is trying to reduce! Talk to each other and to the other adults that care for your child so this doesn't happen.
 - Too many punishable behaviours.

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The Community Paediatrics service is provided by Bromley Healthcare, an award-winning social enterprise working with the NHS, delivering a wide range of community healthcare services to people of all ages in Bromley, Bexley, Croydon, Greenwich and Lewisham.

We provide a wide range of nursing, medical and therapy services for adults and children. These include District Nursing, Health Visiting, Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy. 98% of our patients would recommend our services to their friends and family.

Tell us what you think

We want you to be happy with the service you receive from us, but we know that every so often something might go wrong. If you're unhappy with the care you receive or an element of our service, we want to hear from you.

Of course, we also want to hear from you if you're happy with the care you're receiving - it's good to be able to thank the team and let people know they're doing a good job, so if you have a compliment or congratulation, we'd like to hear from you.

If we are unable to resolve your concerns or you would like to take the matter further please contact us at the address below.

Central Court
1 Knoll Rise
Orpington BR6 OJA

020 8315 8880

bromh.contact@nhs.net

bromleyhealthcare.org.uk

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Ways to cope with your child's behaviour

Behaviour problems are common in children and research shows that one in five children may have difficulties. The advice we give you here helps you to develop well-tested ways of dealing with your child's behaviour.

Other places you can get help

Your health visitor

Your health visitor may refer you for further help from the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) perhaps for psychology and behaviour management. This service is based at the Phoenix Children's Resource Centre or the Child, Family and Adolescent Service (CFAS) based in Orpington.

Tactics and strategies

Praise

Including hugs and smiles:

- Praise your child as soon as s/he does what you want him/her to do.
- Always use praise even if you're using other sorts of rewards. Rewards can be tangible (ie., a small present) or symbolic (ie., star chart building to a tangible reward). It's not always necessary to use rewards if you're using praise.
- Always make it clear to your child why you're pleased with them.

Stay calm

This is really important too:

- If your child sees you/adults reacting to situations by being angry or cross - they'll think it's ok for them to do this.
- If you shout or smack your child when you're angry, they may think they can shout or hit when they're angry.
- Remember, when you, as an adult, remain calm, your child is likely to stay calm as well.
- If your child sees you praising their siblings for good behaviour, they may copy that behaviour.

Small steps

Don't expect too much in one go:

- Try to praise and reward your child for achieving small steps first. This will encourage your child to learn that s/he gets a lot out of doing good things and being good. For example, don't expect your child to get ready, go to bed and go to sleep before giving them praise. Praise him/her as soon as they've done one bit of a task!
- Perhaps reward your child for being good for a couple of hours at a time, rather than saying, 'If you're good today, you can go to the park tomorrow or at the weekend.'

Removing your child

A really strong tactic:

- Remove your child from the place they're being naughty and is getting the attention from, giving them 'time out'. The rule of thumb is one minute of 'time out' for every year of age.

- Putting your child in their bedroom may not be a good idea as often that's where they keep their toys and will simply play with them. Try making them sit in the hallway or on the stairs instead. When your child has stopped being silly you can bring them back into the room again - remember to praise him/her when s/he is being good again.
- Explain to your child why s/he's been given 'time out' and why they're sitting down. Don't pay any attention to your child during 'time out'.
- Remember, once you've decided on the behaviour you want, you're in charge - despite what anyone else might say. Don't feel guilty about disciplining your child in front others, however sorry they may feel for your child.

Ignoring

- It's best to ignore bad or annoying behaviour. Children often enjoy the attention they get for being naughty, even if it means being told off.
- It's important to be clear with your child why you're ignoring them but not telling them off, as this just gives them the attention they seek.
- It's also important to ignore your child every time s/he does it and make sure s/he doesn't get any attention from anyone else. Try to ignore bad behaviour even if it makes it worse initially.