



# Flourishing Families Clinic

*Roots to Grow. Wings to Fly*

Parenting Workshops for Sussex  
Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Staff

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# Welcome to the PAWSS Parenting Workshop

## Aims of the Course

- Provide you with **evidence informed approaches** to parenting, focusing on behavioural strategies and emotional development
- Thinking about how you can **apply** these approaches when faced with the challenges of being a working parent
- Thinking about how **working in mental health services** may produce unique challenges to parenting

## Goals

Before attending today, we asked you to think about a goal you would like to work on in the group.



Write down a goal you want to achieve. It is okay to choose something you are already working towards.

It can be a specific behaviour you are struggling with, something you want to do more or less of, something you want to increase your understanding of etc.

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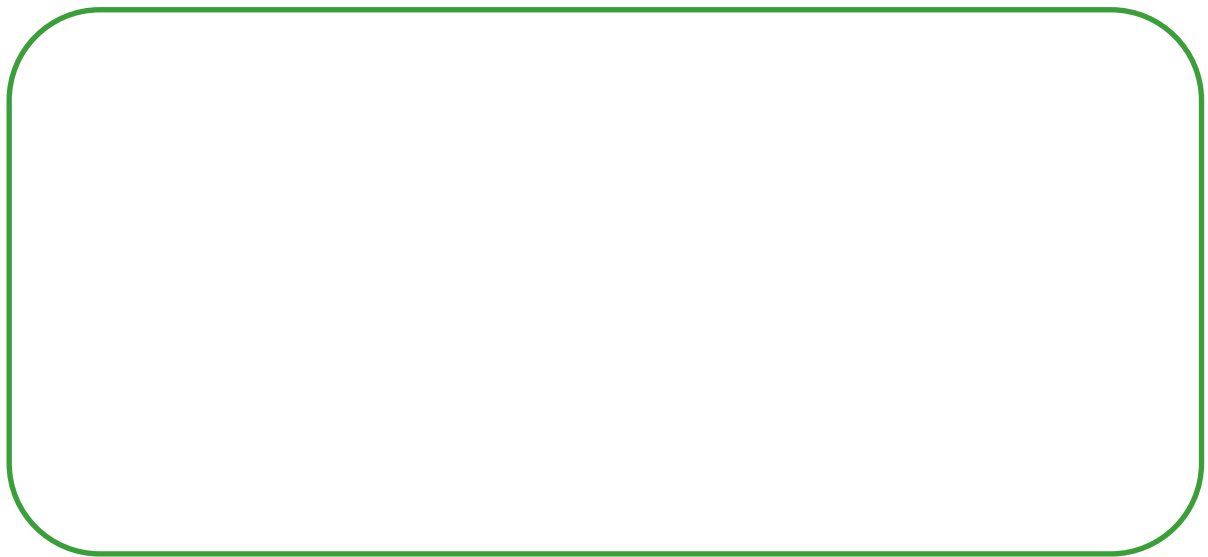
Rate your current progress (0 - no progress made, 10 - goal completed):

0 | 10

## Identity



## Parenting - Rewards and Challenges





# Parenting Hotspots

## What Are Your Hotspots?

All parents have hotspots. Every one of us. The best parents are not hotspot-free; They just know where their hotspots are and try to rub the corners off them.

*When completing this section, please remember that there is no such thing as the perfect parent.*

***What Are My Hotspots?...***



## The Seven Confident Thoughts

The world is a fairly **safe** place

I can **cope** with most things

Bad things **don't usually happen** to me

Bad things **don't usually pop up** out of the blue

I have **some control** over the things that happen  
to me

People are pretty **nice** really

Other people **respect** me

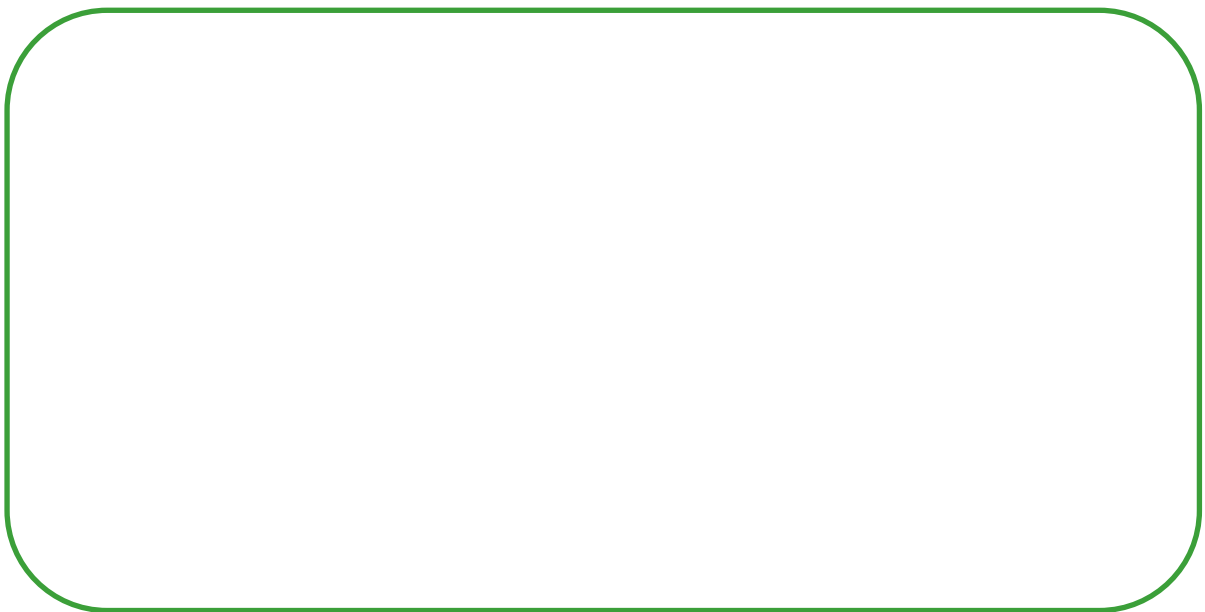


## What can you do About Your Hotspots?

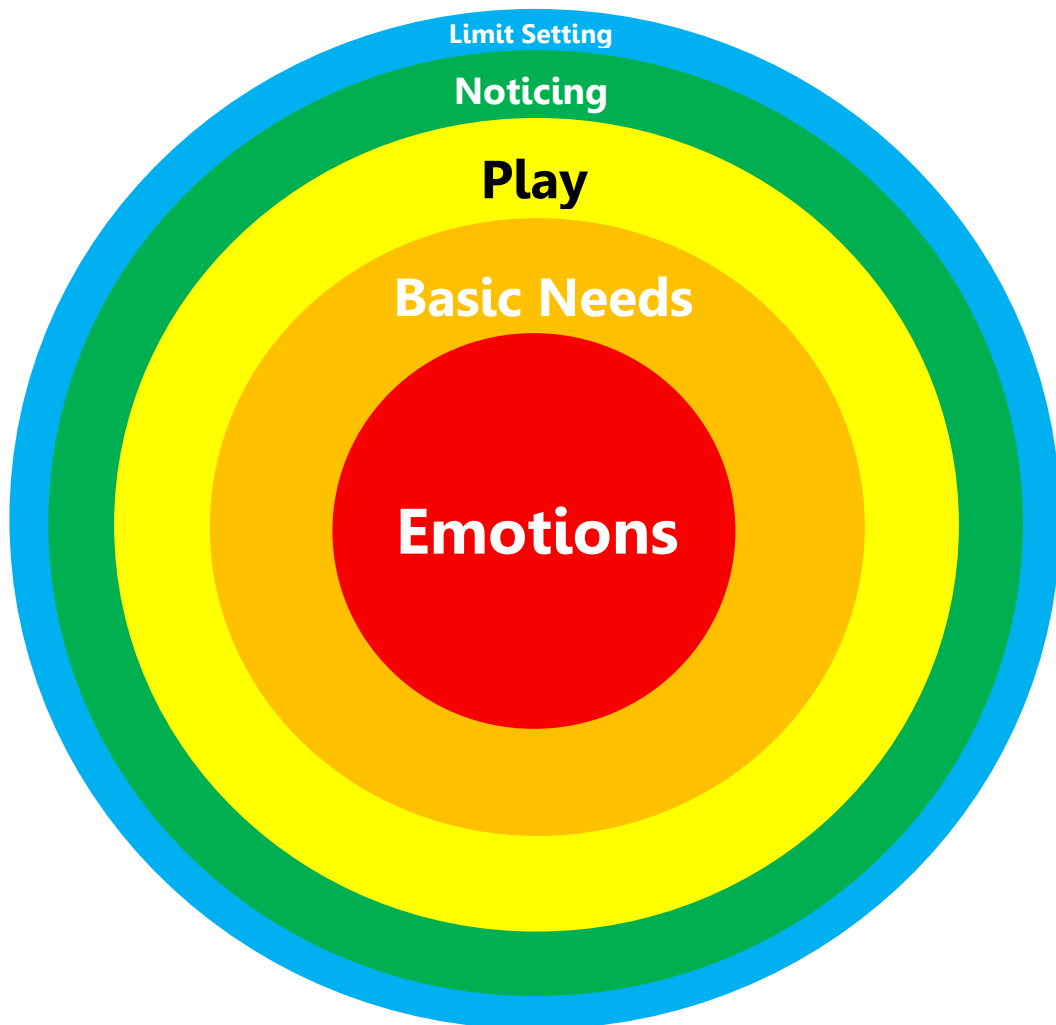
- Become **aware** of them
- Use the ideas we cover in the **workshop**
- Talk to **other parents**
- Talk to **professionals** who work with children (e.g. teachers)
- **"If I was a confident parent....."** What would you do if you were a confident parent? Call to mind a confident but sensible friend and think what they would do.
- **Keep your fears and worries away from your children** if you can:
  - Try not to worry out loud in front of your children. It's good to talk about your worries, but only to other adults. Make sure children are well out of the way and can't hear.
  - If you find yourself in a situation where you are scared, think about whether you want your children to know this. If you are scared but coping, it's OK for them to see that. If you are scared and not coping, try not to let them see. Get yourself out of the situation as soon as you can.
  - But, if you have to get yourself out of the situation, remember that your children might be learning that it is good to avoid this scary thing. Make a note to try our 'compensation' idea below.
- Get a friend to help you do **'compensation'**.

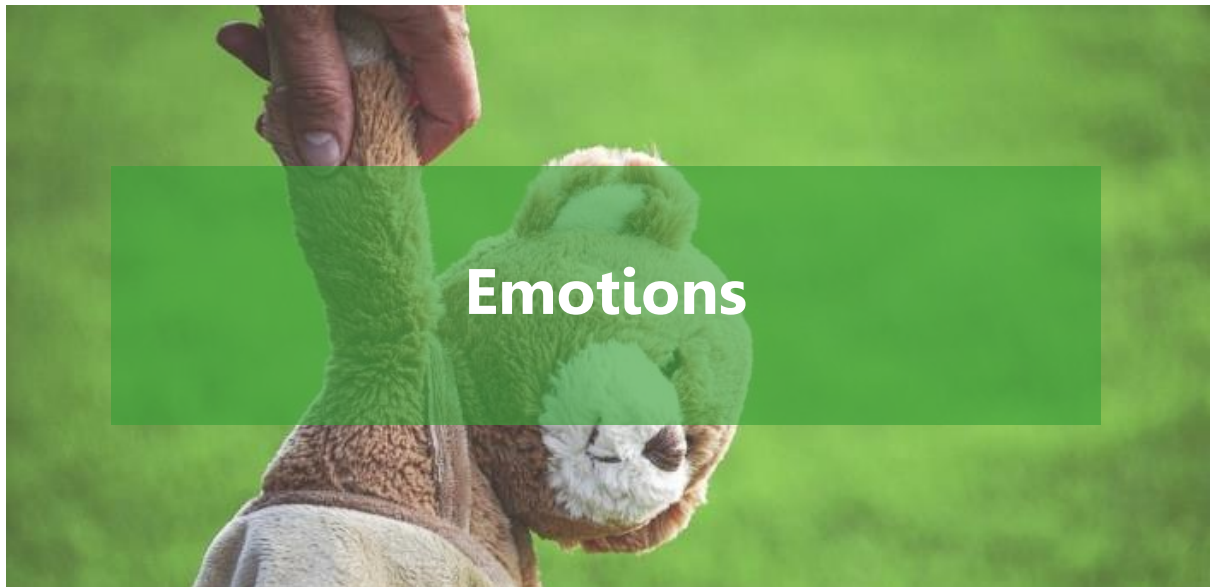


- Kids can learn to be afraid of things that you are scared of. So, if you are scared of spiders, there is a chance that your child might learn to be scared of them too. BUT children can copy brave behaviour too! If they see someone being really confident with spiders, they can learn to be confident around spiders too.
- Model being **imperfect**









# Emotions

## Attachment Theory

What do you know about attachment theory?

### *Responsiveness*

### *Accessibility*

### *Attunement*

## Responding to Emotions



### PACE

#### *Playfulness*

*""Playfulness brings fun and laughter to relationships. It provides reciprocal enjoyment and in the process helps a child to learn to regular positive emotions.....it also helps develop confidence".  
**(Creating Loving Attachments, Daniel Hughes & Kim Golding, p15)***

#### *Acceptance*

*"Acceptance creates psychological safety. The focus is on acceptance of internal experience - the thoughts, feelings, wishes, beliefs and desires and hopes that each person has. In accepting the internal experience, we are letting them know that we have an understanding of their experience, we are okay with knowing that and we are not going to dismiss or challenge it.*

*It is really important to accept that their experience is their experience. It is important to see the difference that in parenting, this does not mean tolerating certain behaviours. We can accept the experience, the emotion underneath, but it doesn't mean we accept the behaviour".  
**(Creating Loving Attachments, Daniel Hughes & Kim Golding, p15)***

## Curiosity

*"This is directly related to understanding. Who is the child we are accepting? When we curiously explore within a relationship, we are expressing interest in the other and a desire to know him more deeply.*

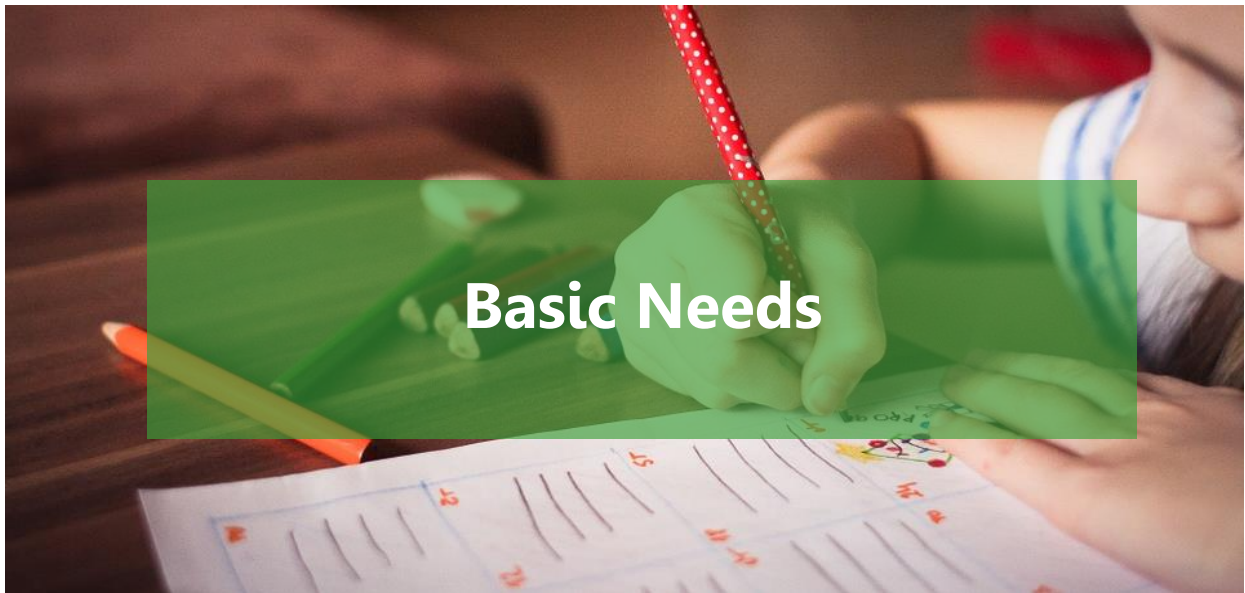
*When we direct non-judgemental curiosity towards the child's experience of themselves, others and events, they are more likely to respond to understanding their experiences with us. The child starts to experience these things with us rather than on our own which strengthens the relationship" **(Creating Loving Attachments, Daniel Hughes & Kim Golding, p15)***

## Empathy

*"Empathy communicates our curiosity and acceptance. We stand in the other person's shoes and recognise and respond to their emotional experience. With the experience of empathy, the child is more likely to experience the child as being with them and exploring both positive and negative experiences with them" **(Creating Loving Attachments, Daniel Hughes & Kim Golding, p16)***

## How to Manage Emotions



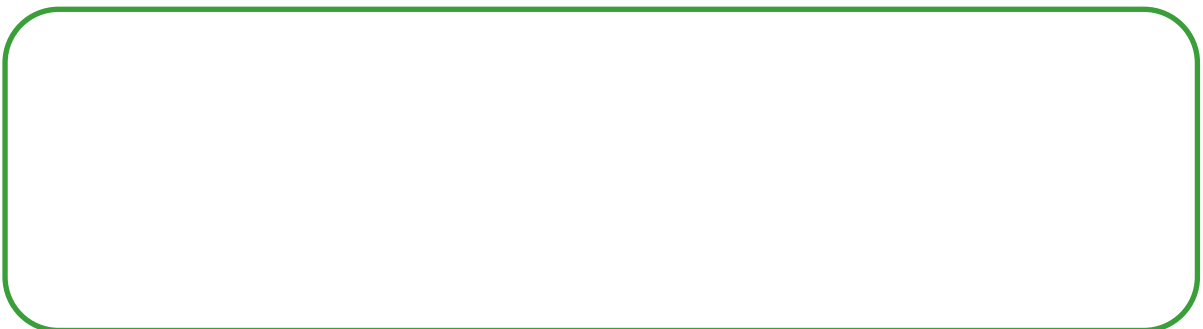


This section may be stuff that you already know. You may do it already, you may do this for yourself and you may think about it with your clients. But it's a **helpful reminder** that you do know stuff and you are already doing good parenting!

### Exercise

We all know that we should be getting lots of exercise, but few of us do. However, for some children, their exercise levels are so low that this could be contributing to their anxiety. If a child is cooped up in a house, and never has the chance to go out and burn off energy (and stress chemicals), we think that this can contribute to anxiety problems.

Even if a child does do a bit of running around, there is evidence that doing even more can help with emotional health. Several studies have now shown that doing regular, fun, aerobic exercise, is as good at treating mild anxiety and depression as a few sessions of CBT. Although this research has been carried out on adults, there is every reason to think that regular, frequent exercise will have the same positive benefits on mental health for children.



## Sleep

We are increasingly seeing the vital role that sleep plays in mental health. We know that people who do not get enough sleep are very vulnerable to mental health problems, including anxiety. Although there is less research in children, the same is almost certainly true for them. In fact, good sleep is probably *even more important for children*, because their brains are developing so fast.

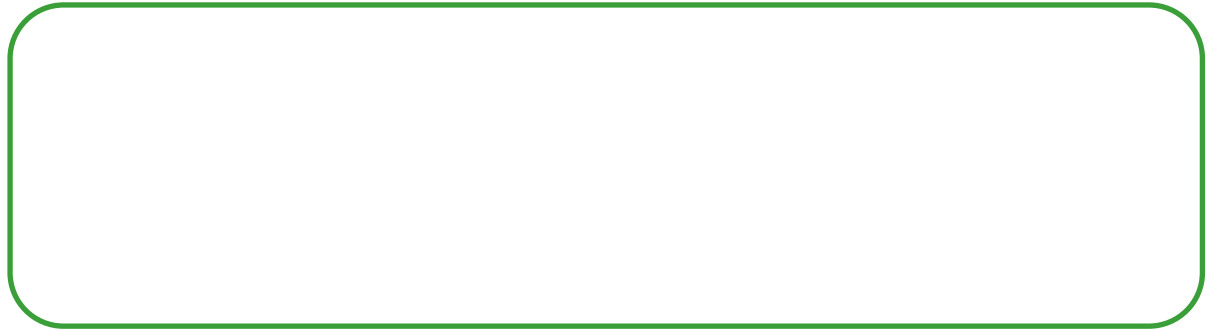


### Sleep Hygiene Tips:

- **Routine** - same bed time and wake up time each day, a set routine to get ready for bed and wind down (30mins-2hrs). E.g. warm bath/shower, story, warm drinks.
- **Reducing caffeine** after lunchtime
- **Food** - try not to give them a big meal just before bed
- **Limit naps**
- **Exercise** - exercise is good to burn off some energy and to help them feel tired. But avoid it directly before sleep
- **Environment** - safe and secure. A place to sleep, not play or do homework. If they do have toys in their room, try to make sure they are not distracting them, do you need to remove them. Make sure room is correct temperature and free from distractions
- Try and **reduce screen time and stimulating activity** before bed to try and wind down. This is due to light these screens emit but also it is over stimulating. If they are using them to fall asleep, try consider something else e.g. a book, music.

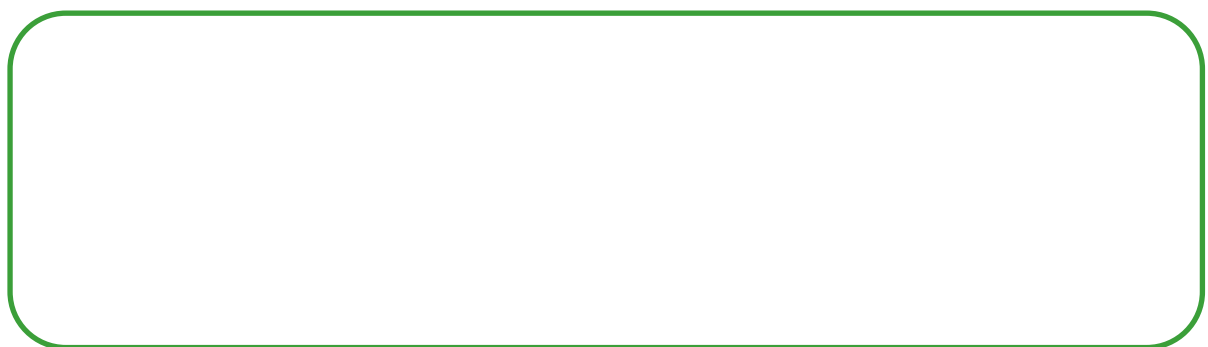
## Caffeine

Long story short, caffeine is really bad for children's brain development. It can also cause anxiety directly. The jury is out on whether it's bad for adults, but we know for sure that it's really not good for kids. Children should not be having any caffeine at all



## Food

We are just starting to get an understanding of the role of gut health and mental health. The two are surprisingly closely linked. The research is in its very early stages, but there are strong signs that starting life with healthy gut bacteria sets us up for good mental health. Starting life with unhealthy gut bacteria seems to put us at risk of poorer mental health. So, how can you give your child the best start with a healthy gut? Well, it's the same old story of a healthy diet, with lots of fruit and veg, lots of whole-grain foods, and not too much sugar. Boring, but true.



## Rough and Tumble Play





Play is much more than just having fun. It is where children learn how the world works and how other people work. Play helps develop a confident, happy child.

### Reasons to Play...

- It's in the **PAWSS Parenting Model**
- It comes through in all the **evidence**
- Children learn through play
- It **builds the relationship**:
  - Play comes up in lots of areas. Play helps to build that bond and relationship between parent and child.
  - Playfulness is also a core part of the PACE model developed by Dan Hughes in working with children who have experienced difficulties in attachment.
  - Playfulness is about more than play but just about having a playful attitude, having fun with your children.
- It develops **speech and language**
- Develops **social skills**
- **Rough and tumble play**:
  - There is research showing that engaging in rough and tumble play with parents (with siblings and other children, but also with parents) is very



good for building children's confidence and for helping them to manage aggressive feelings.

- Many parents, particularly mothers, find it unpleasant to watch and try to stop it. However, they should be encouraged to leave their child to it, even if they get a few bumps and bruises – as long as they are enjoying it.
- Builds the **7 Confident Thoughts**
- It can be **fun** (trust us)

## Special Play

This is just about play. Not about learning or development or fears or worries. Just being, playing and enjoying your child.

### Do

- **Descriptive commentary** - it shows they've got your attention
- **Praise** - "I like playing with you"; "Well done for staying calm when that went wrong"
- **Affection**
- **Imitation** - e.g. if they make a train noise, join in
- **Prepare for ending** - link to a concrete activity e.g. let's go around the track one more time
- **No criticism** e.g. it's not silly for the dinosaur to drive a train
- **No leading** - the child leads and controls the play
- **No testing or questions** - e.g. what colour is that. You can label things yourself but not ask them to repeat
- **No messages of threat or danger**

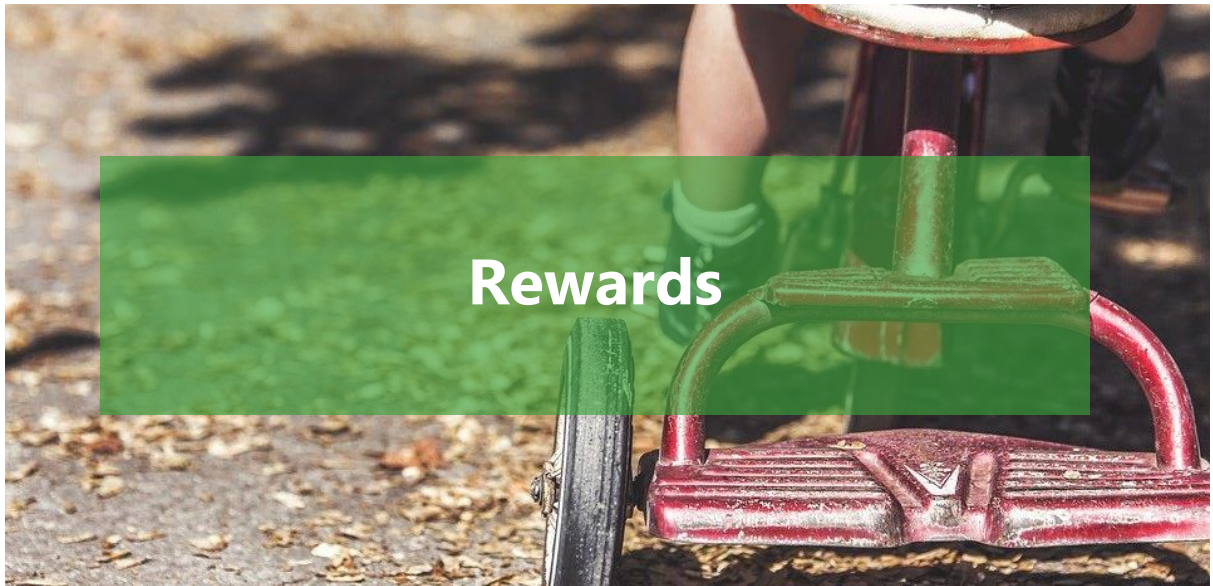
### Challenges

- **Battles ending play** - they're enjoying it so may resist but prepare them for endings, stick to what you say (boundaries and consistency) and follow the emotions section ("I can see you feel really sad we have to stop playing as we've had such a lovely time together, but we have to stop now. I'm looking forward to us playing again tomorrow")
- **Multiple children** - try to allow special play for each child on their own
- **TIME** - Playfulness can come in anywhere but special play only needs to be 10 minutes



We can use praise to encourage more *good* behaviours and more *confident* behaviours. However, to get the most out of praise, there are a few things to remember:





However, we think that there are still certain situations when rewards can be really useful. These fall into two categories:

*1. Situations where the child is completely stuck with something*

*2. Natural rewards*



## Top Tips for Good Rewards



What might be some good rewards for your child?

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## Star Charts

Star charts are great...but there are so many ways to get them wrong!

Here are our top tips!

### Do:

#### Be specific about what you are giving stars for

- If you are hazy about the behaviour you want to see more of, the star chart won't work well.
- Being specific about the behaviour you want will make it easier for you to know when to give a star.

#### Choose small steps

- Parents often make their expectations of their child too big.
- This makes the task seem impossible to the child and they give up before they have even begun.
- By making the steps small, you can gradually help your child to reach their goal.

#### Focus on positive behaviours

- It is important to focus on the behaviour you want to see more of, not on the behaviour you are trying to stop.
- E.g. reward your child for 'playing and sharing with brother', rather than for 'not fighting'.

#### Get your child involved in setting up the star chart

- The ultimate goal of your star chart is to teach your child to take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Getting them involved in the choice of rewards and the design of their star chart is great for getting them more motivated to earn the stars.

#### Cheap or free rewards work really well

- Rewards don't have to be expensive.
- How about a comic, something little from the pound shop, or extra privileges, such as staying up half an hour late at bedtime?

#### Get the behaviour first, then give the reward

- Rewards should be given **AFTER** the good or brave behaviours that you wanted to see.

### Make sure the stars are given as soon as possible

- It is a good idea to give the star as soon as you can, after your child has done the good or brave behaviour.
- This keeps kids motivated - and means that you don't forget to do it.

### Make sure that you set an achievable target... And make sure that the first star comes fast!

- It is important that your child is able to achieve the target number of stars to gain their reward. Usually this is no more than 5 stars to get the reward.
- We always leave dates and days off the chart so that there is no time limit in which a child has to achieve their goal.

### Give a star every time

- For the star chart to work, give your child a star every time the behaviour happens.
- This way your child will be clear about the behaviours you want to see in them.

### Keep it simple

- If the reward system becomes too complicated, your child will become unclear about what is expected of them.
- The simpler you can make it, the better!

## Things to Avoid (Otherwise known as Crimes Against Star Charts):

**DON'T** mark fails on the chart: no crosses or sad faces

**DON'T** remove any stars

**DON'T** punish your child for not getting a star



There are many mistakes that parents can make when setting limits on their children's behaviour:

- 1. Vague Commands*
- 2. Failing to get the child's attention before giving the command*
- 3. Long strings of commands*
- 4. Tone of voice*
- 5. Questions, questions...*



## Top Tips for Using Commands







# Managing Difficult Behaviour

## Using Emotion Coaching to Manage Difficult Behaviours

### *1. Empathise, Label the Emotion, and Listen*

### *2. Explain and Listen*

*Remember – any emotion is acceptable; any behaviour **is not***

### *3. Come up with a solution, jointly with the child*

### *4. Consequence (if necessary)*



#### **If this is a frequent problem...**

If this behaviour crops up lots, it is useful to think what other skills you could use to try to reduce it:

- Think how you could use praise and rewards to get more of the behaviour that you want.
- Think of any practical ways you could avoid the problem in future, e.g. sitting child at a different place at the table (away from irritating behaviour...)



Now re-rate your goals:



Remind yourself of the goal you wanted to achieve:

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Rate your current progress (0 - no progress made, 10 - goal completed):

0 

└─

┘─

 10



## Information for SPFT Staff

### Staff Intranet

<http://staff.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/health-and-wellbeing/family-friendly>

The 'Family Friendly' Wellbeing Page, which can be found on the staff intranet, contains a wealth of information on special leave, childcare support, maternity leave, discounted swimming classes etc.

You can also navigate to key policies from here.

### Key Policies of Interest to Staff who are Parents

- **Policy number : TPWF/233**  
Special Leave Policy
- **Policy number: TPWF/220**  
Maternity, Adoption, Maternity Support (Paternity) and Additional Paternity Leave Policy

### On Site Nurseries

There are a number of nurseries available across various sites within SPFT. These are independently run.

- **Butterfly Nursery** : Hove Polyclinic Site, Marshall Way, Neville Avenue, Hove, BN3 7HY
  - o *Tel: 01273 67558*
- **Hilltop Nursery** : Brighton general Hospital, Elm Grove, Brighton, BN2 6NE
  - o *Tel: 01273 696011 Ext.3302*
- **Rainbow Nursery** : Crawley Hospital, West Green, Crawley, RH11 7DH
  - o *Tel: 01293 600300 Ext.3790*

## Further Reading

### Cybersecurity

- **GOV UK:** *"Child Safety Online: A practical guide for parents and carers whose children are using social media"*  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/490001/Social\\_Media\\_Guidance\\_UKCCIS\\_Final\\_18122015.pdf.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/490001/Social_Media_Guidance_UKCCIS_Final_18122015.pdf.pdf)
- **NSPCC:** *"Online Safety"*  
[https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=GEN\\_Safety\\_-\\_BMM\]&utm\\_term=safety\\_online&gclid=EA](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=GEN_Safety_-_BMM]&utm_term=safety_online&gclid=EAlalQobChMI_rrQk8i_5glVR7TtCh3rSgr-EAAYAAEgJaRvD_BwE&gclid=aw.ds)  
[alQobChMI\\_rrQk8i\\_5glVR7TtCh3rSgr-EAAYAAEgJaRvD\\_BwE&gclid=aw.ds](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=GEN_Safety_-_BMM]&utm_term=safety_online&gclid=EA)

### Books

- ***"How to Talk so Kids will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk"*** - Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish
- ***"Overcoming Your Child's Fears and Worries"*** - Cathy Creswell and Lucy Willets
- ***"Creating Loving Attachments"*** - Dan Hughes and Kim Golding

*(Please note the original research for PACE was from working with children who have experienced significant disruption and trauma in their early attachment relationships. However, clinicians who have worked with the PACE model have often said that this approach is really relevant for any parent)*

## **The Flourishing Families Website**

We've recently launched our Clinic Website with lots of tips and resources to support parents; you can visit this here-

[www.flourishingfamiliesclinic.nhs.uk](http://www.flourishingfamiliesclinic.nhs.uk)



## **Protection or Overprotection...?**

Most parents we work with say that this can be a problem for them. This is not surprising.

### **How do you know whether you are being overprotective?**

#### ***1. Talk to other Parents***

The rule of thumb is that if 2/3 of the parents in your kid's class think something is OK, then it is probably OK! For example, if two thirds of your child's class let their children walk to school (and your walk is similar to theirs), then it is probably ok for your (typically developing) child to do the same.

#### ***2. Talk to professionals who work with children***

If your child has a sensible teacher, ask them what they think. For example, if a teacher thinks it's OK for your child to walk to school alone, then it probably is!

#### ***3. "If I was a confident parent..."***

What would you do if you were a confident parent? Call to mind a confident but sensible friend, and think what they would do.

## How do you stop being overprotective?

Start thinking of the pros and cons of overprotection...

	PROS	CONS
<b>KEEP OVERPROTECTING</b>	<i>My child will be safer.</i>	<i>My child will keep having fears and worries, as I won't be pushing them to 'go up the mountain'.</i>
	<i>My child will know that I love them.</i>	<i>My child won't be a confident adult.</i>
	<i>I won't have to feel anxious myself.</i>	<i>My child might 'go wild' when they get away from me.</i>
	<i>It's easier to keep things the same.</i>	<i>My child might want to get away from me as soon as they can.</i>
	<i>My child won't have to get upset.</i>	<i>Chips away at the Seven Confident Thoughts.</i>
<b>STOP OVERPROTECTING</b>	<i>My child will learn valuable skills.</i>	<i>I will feel that my anxiety has meant that I didn't do the best for them.</i>
	<i>My child will grow in confidence.</i>	<i>They will be teased by other kids.</i>
	<i>I will feel great about my parenting.</i>	<i>They will become overprotective parents themselves.</i>
	<i>I will find out what my kids are capable of doing themselves.</i>	<i>My child could come to harm.</i>
	<i>My child will have more fun.</i>	<i>I will find it difficult and upsetting.</i>
	<i>My child will have freedom.</i>	<i>It will be a hassle to do things differently.</i>



Then...

### **1. *Baby Steps***

It can be difficult to stop yourself overprotecting your child. So, be kind to yourself! It's fine to do it in little steps. You could even draw yourself a bravery ladder!

E.g. maybe you want to work up to letting your 11-year old go to the park on her own. Perhaps start by walking her to the park and then sitting a good distance away, just keeping a vague eye on her. Next time could sit nearby, but in a place where you can't see her, even if just for a few minutes. Next time maybe you can walk her to the park, but then leave the park entirely for ten minutes before returning. And so on - you get the picture!

### **2. *Remember the Stats!***

While you are 'going up the mountain' and reducing an overprotective behaviour, remind yourself of the facts and figures. Britain, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a very safe place for children to be growing up.

### **3. *Behavioural Experiments!***

If you have had any CBT for anxiety, you may have come across the idea of 'Behavioural Experiments' before. Behavioural Experiments are where we test out our fears, to see if they come true. So, if you worry that your child will take silly risks if you let them on the zip wire at the park...test it out. See if they do. If you think your child won't cope having a sleepover at a friend's house without you (but they are keen to try) give it a go! They will probably surprise you.



#### **4. *The "Be Careful" Challenge***

All parents say this, every day! But what are we really saying when you say "BE CAREFUL"? Yes, really we are saying "it's not safe", "you won't manage it", "I don't trust you".

The challenge is to halve the number of times you say "BE CAREFUL!".  
Give it a go.

#### **5. *Suck it up for your kids!***

Many parents agree that they overprotect their child, at least in part, to protect themselves from feeling anxiety. Most parents would do anything for their kids. Think of the awful stuff that parents do on a daily basis – changing vile nappies, getting woken up in the middle of the night, going to soft-play centres... Parents are a hardy lot. Sometimes, we just have to 'suck it up' for our kids. This means tolerating a bit of anxiety in order to allow our kids to grow and flourish. But remember, you don't have to completely fix this hotspot. Just loosening your overprotection, even a little will really benefit your child.

### **Is it ever OK to overprotect?**

We think that there are two areas where it is OK to be very protective of children.

#### **1. *Road Safety***

If there is one thing that is a genuine risk to the safety of British children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, it is roads. Parents have our full permission to really go to town in training their children to be as safe as humanly possible around roads. If this means letting them know how very dangerous the roads are, then that's OK.

## ***2. The Media***

The world would be a better, happier place if we were not constantly bombarded with stories that tell us that world is a dangerous place that awful things happen. The news media do their best, on a daily basis, to undermine the Seven Confident Thoughts. We think that children should be protected from the news media for as long as possible. As a rule of thumb, the last year of primary school is a good time to start letting children see a bit of the news. Before that, children barely need to know that 'the news' even exists.

A good place to start is BBC's NewsRound. They think very carefully about how they present difficult stories, and have a child psychologist to advise on tricky areas. When children start watching/reading the news, be on hand to help them make sense of it. Point out, very clearly, that the media presents a biased view of the world, and is trying to make things seem as scary as possible.



## Perfectionism

Are you a perfectionist? If not, you can skip this section. If you are, read on!

Many perfectionists have told us that they don't want their child to be a perfectionist. Although doing things to a very high standard can be good sometimes, if you are a perfectionist about lots of things, it can be a real problem.

***So, what can you do to encourage your child to be less of a perfectionist than you?***

### **1. Show your child that it is OK not to be perfect. For example...**

- a. Show your child that you can do just an OK job on things.  
So, for example, you could leave the kitchen a bit of a mess after dinner for once. In your child's earshot, say "That'll do for now, I don't feel like any more tidying up right now".
- b. Let your child see you making mistakes. E.g. when writing a birthday card, you make a mistake and just cross it out, instead of reaching for the tippex or starting again. Say something like "Ahhh, it's fine, no one will mind".

If your child isn't naturally much of a perfectionist, that's probably all that you need to do. However, if your child seems to be a bit of a perfectionist too, try Step 2 as well:

### **2. Encourage your child to be just good enough. For example...**

- a. When your child does a reasonable job of their homework, instead of a completely perfect job, notice this, and praise your child for this.
- b. When you see your child make a small mistake, e.g. a spelling mistake, or some work that is a bit untidy, don't mention it. Try really hard not to criticise it!



