



Epsom and Ewell – Over 5s

POSITIVE PARENTING

Workshop notes

REMEMBER : There is a reason behind every behaviour. All behaviour is emotion driven.

Use Empathy

Try to put yourself in their shoes. What is the emotion driving the behaviour?

Steps for giving Empathy

1. Stop what you're doing
2. give full attention and listen
3. give appropriate eye contact/body language and facial expressions
4. Try and find the feelings behind the words
5. Tentatively suggest the feeling behind the words, or actions, e.g “It sounds like....you seem.....”
6. Allow them to tell their story if they want to, or walk away, or be silent as they wish.
7. Avoid questioning, commanding, giving advice or instructions
8. Do use gentle touch if appropriate
9. Keep focused on the person's *feelings*
10. Avoid fixing it or over reacting
11. Pause after the empathy (give time) to allow the child to come back (it could open up the conversation).

Empathic phrases that can help

“I'm wondering

“You seem.....

“It sounds as though.....

“You sound.....

“You look.....

“It can be hard when.....

“I can see.....

“It seems as though.....

“I can hear that.....

PRAISE IS MAGIC!

Praise is a magic ingredient in relationships. It gives children information on how we would like them to behave. It also fosters a positive atmosphere in which both parents and children can relax. It helps children feel capable and confident, boosting self-esteem. Praise is one of the most powerful ways to help children with their behaviour.

Steps for giving Effective Praise

- **Give the child all your attention.**
- **Move close to the child.**
- **Look pleased and share their pleasure.**
- **Be specific: describe what you like.**
- **Ask the child what he/she thinks.**
- **Seek eye contact.**
- **Mean it – be sincere and let it show in a warm tone of voice.**
- **Touch the child gently.**
- **Give the pride to the child (“You deserve to feel proud of yourself”)**

Remember to praise them for being as well as for doing. This indicates that your approval and love is not just on condition they achieve.

Doing

‘Well done for sharing’

Thank you for playing so well together

That was very kind!

Thank you for putting the shopping away. You are very good at helping mummy.

What a good cook you are! Great job mixing!

Thanks for all your help!

Being

‘You’re sooo cuddly!’

‘I love spending time with you’,

‘You have a lovely smile’

‘I love it when you giggle’

‘you are fun to be with’

KINDNESS CHART

Rather than having a sticker chart for each child (which can get competitive), have a chart that each member of the family adds to so that you support each other

A chart for kindness is a good idea e.g. a black piece of A5 paper, with silver stars. Explain that you will work towards a family treat, that everyone will enjoy. Each member of the family spots each other being kind and that person sticks a star on the chart. So even mummies and daddies can get stickers, and the children can give each other stickers. When the chart is full the whole family gets a treat. Stickers can be given for helping feed the pets, being patient, helping lay the table, being gentle etc.

DISCIPLINE

The word 'discipline' can have negative implications. It is best to think of it as meaning **GUIDANCE**. Our aims as parents should always be to guide our children (without criticism), keeping the end in mind. Our long term goal is to encourage children to respect others, and to learn to make responsible choices – foundations for self-discipline that they will need as adults.

Setting Clear Boundaries

What sort of boundaries are in place in your home? Sometimes boundaries are very restrictive, sometimes there are no boundaries. For most of us, the boundaries are inconsistent, depending on our own moods. What we need to aim for, are clear, fair consistent boundaries. Some children will test the boundaries to see where they are. Children feel safe when boundaries are **consistent** and fair.

Rules, Rewards and Penalties



Family rules help create a safe, fair consistent home environment for EVERYBODY in the family, both children and adults. They help to clarify what behaviour is acceptable, and what is not.

It is good to discuss with the family how they want to feel at home, and what gets in the way? What issues would benefit from having a rule? E.g. shouting.

'Dos work better than Don'ts'

When thinking of a rule, use DOs, backed up by DON'Ts.

e.g. **Do speak kindly and respectfully to each other. (Don't shout or argue)**

Family Rules apply to adults as well as children, which means you have to follow the rules too! Remember children learn more from what they observe rather than what we tell them. We are their role models. There should only be about 5 family rules.

Reward people who abide by the rules

Examples of rewards

A smile, Praise, Kind touch, Cuddles, High Five, Stars, stickers, objects, e.g. toys, Time-in with you, extra story, extra TV, Time on ipad, treat, family time in, extra games, responsibility

Those who don't follow the rules receive a **penalty** (a fair consequence).

Examples of penalties

No star/sticker, Loss of privilege, Less/no tv, No computer/ipad, removing toy/game, no treat, paying back for damage, time-out, grounding, parental disappointment, tidying after made a mess

**ALL CHILDREN NEED ATTENTION. THEREFORE,
WHAT WE PAY ATTENTION TO IS WHAT WE GET MORE OF.**

Time-In

More often than not children play up when they are bored or want your attention. If you allocate quality time to playing with your children, they will play up less when you need to do other things. Go on, make some good memories!

Give Limited Choices

Children have little choice, or control in their lives, and this can lead to frustration, stress and rebellion. Giving children limited choices where you can, enables them to learn to take responsibility. Over-control of children usually encourages dependency, or rebellion.

So, instead of the struggle of a 'logger heads' situation,

"Put your sweater on!", "No I don't want to!" "Put your sweater on", "No!"

Try to give a limited choice that you are happy with

"Do you want to wear your red sweater or your blue one?"

"How do you want your hair today? Pony tail, or a plait?"

'Choices and Consequences' (Strategy for inappropriate behaviour)

'Choices and Consequences' is a very useful strategy for helping children learn to take responsibility for themselves by encouraging positive use of Personal Power. Children quickly become more co-operative than when coercion is used. The strategy keeps the adult in charge, whilst also empowering the child. It is an excellent way of defusing power struggles. It works wonders with all age groups.

e.g. A child is refusing to tidy their toys away.

(calmly point out the choices)

George... you have a choice

You can...choose to help me tidy the toys away

Or you can....leave it for me to tidy up.

If you.... help me tidy up

We can do it quickly and have time to play another game before bed. (Positive consequence)

Ifyou leave it for mummy to do

It will take me longer and there will be no time for another game. (negative consequence)

It's up to you...

It's your choice.I'll give you a minute to think about it.

Always start by pointing out the positive choice (using an enthusiastic voice)

(Child's name)..... You have a choice

You can choose to (Positive choice)

Or you can (Negative choice – normally the behaviour they have already chosen)

If you choose.....(+) then(positive consequence)

If you choose to(-) then unfortunately(negative consequence)

It's up to you

It's your choice

I'll leave you to think about it for a minute.

This is much more effective than children ignoring repeated instructions and then it ending in confrontation, where both adult and child are likely to feel resentful and angry. This offers them a way out, and a clear choice between two ways of behaving.

- Choose consequences that mean something to the child or relate to the behaviour
- Don't use threats, or ultimatums
- Choose consequences you can keep to. (Don't say "you're not going on the school trip, party, etc. unless you are prepared to follow through)

Ignoring Inappropriate Behaviour

Minor, inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour (e.g. whining, thumb-sucking, tantrums, nagging, interrupting) is best ignored, unless it is dangerous or harmful to people or property. REMEMBER, 'What you pay attention to you get more of'. This does not mean you ignore the child. You just don't mention, or pay attention to the behaviour. You can try to distract them out of it by making something else seem exciting or interesting. **DISTACTION** is a very useful tool.

Labelling



Think of one label you had when you were a child and how it made you feel. We often carry the labels we are given to us as children, through to adulthood. Positive labels are less damaging, but all labels are limiting. A child labelled as 'sensible', may be burdened with the duty of never being light hearted and silly. A neat and tidy child may feel unable to play in the mud. Negative labels (clumsy, fat, stupid, nosy, bossy, bad-tempered) are always a burden. Children trust you and believe you. If you say they are "the naughty one" they will believe it, and feel that they don't have any choice.

Nurturing Yourself

Self-nurturing is very important. We cannot continually nurture other people without giving something back to ourselves. Looking after ourselves is not selfish. Our needs are as valid as anyone else's, and others benefit from the time we give to ourselves, as we cope better when our own needs are being met.

- Nice hot bubble bath with candles
- A cup of tea in a pretty cup
- Meet friend for a coffee
- Go for a walk
- Exercise
- Listen to music



How do you nurture yourself?