



nsw commission for  
children & young people

# Raising children

*Raising children is one of life's greatest joys and achievements. However it's not an easy job to raise a child and the task can be very demanding. Some people find children's behaviour very difficult to cope with when they also have their own problems to sort out. There are a number of things you can do to prevent children being injured or hurt if everything becomes too overwhelming. Remember too, when children live in stimulating environments and receive positive attention, love and praise they will usually respond with good behaviour.*

## What to do about demanding behaviours

Divert a tantrum by suggesting another activity such as reading a story rather than yelling at your child. Join a parents group where you can talk to other parents or ask for help from your doctor or community health nurse.

Praise your child when he or she speaks to you in a "nice" voice or behaves well.

When your child wants to tell you something, stop what you are doing and listen. Use it as an opportunity to introduce concepts about good manners by teaching them to say "excuse me" or "can I just say something please?"

## What to do about feeding problems

If your baby has feeding problems, especially if he or she cries a lot, see your doctor, Early Childhood Health Centre or the Nursing Mother's Association as your baby might not be getting enough food.

Toddlers will start to try out their independence by feeding themselves so accept that it will be a messy but

## When you feel angry and frustrated:

- stop and think before you react to the situation
- step back from the child, sit down and count to ten
- make sure the child is put somewhere safe for a couple of minutes eg. cot or bedroom
- walk around the house or go outside until you calm down
- make yourself a cup of tea
- ring a friend or relative
- ask for help

## What to do when your child cries

Crying is a child's, especially a baby's, way of communicating a need to you. Some babies cry more than others especially if they have colic. Try feeding, a warm bath, changing, gentle massage and wrapping your baby in a soft blanket.

Ask a friend or relative to look after your baby or child for a couple of hours so you can take a break.

If you are concerned there may be something wrong ask your doctor or community health nurse for advice or call the Parenting Line in your State or Territory.

necessary experience for them. It helps if a plastic sheet is placed under your child's high chair or chair to catch spills.

Just like adults, children like and need a variety of foods with different flavours, colours and textures to keep them interested in eating so experiment with different food groups according to their age.

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information

## Work with children not against them

Children are better behaved when following a good example and you can encourage good behaviour by telling the child when they do something that pleases you.

Try to listen to the child and respect their point of view but explain when it is their behaviour that makes you angry.

Set limits that are sensible and reasonable, keeping in mind the child's age and level of understanding and development.

Children love having your attention so spend some special time with children every day doing an activity like drawing, reading a book or playing outside.

## Remember

- All parents become frustrated sometimes
- All parents need help and a break from their children
- A support network of friends and relatives will help ease your stress
- Children go through stages when they have tantrums and are disobedient
- Children take time to be toilet trained
- Children learn from their parents. Whether you mean to or not your child will learn about love, sharing, self-control and how to get help just by watching you

## Danger signs for parents

- Feeling out-of-control anger and hitting your child
- Telling your child she's ugly, stupid, useless
- Telling your child he's no good, bad and you wish he wasn't born
- Threatening to hurt your child
- Feeling isolated and alone and taking it out on your child
- Taking out your bad moods and frustrations on your child

## Do you need help?

Nobody can cope with the pressures of parenting all by themselves and it's important to ask for help. If a friend or relative can't look after your child for a few hours or even a day ring your local council and find out about child minding facilities.

It's very important to take time out for yourself regularly so that you are better able to give children the love and care they need. Although caring for children is a special job we all need time away from work to rest or do something for ourselves.

## Preventing child abuse

Childhood is about growing and learning. Children trust adults and should not be hurt by them.

If you have hurt a child – or think you might – you should get help straight away to learn better ways of dealing with children.

Hitting or injuring children in anger or for discipline, doesn't teach them anything. Physical punishment destroys a child's dignity and teaches children that problems are best solved by using violence. It does not lead to improved behaviour.

Children learn self-control and good behaviour when those around them treat them with respect.

## Where to get more information and help

Parent Line	13 20 55
Tresillian (for babies)	02 9787 5255 1800 637 357 (freecall outside Sydney)
Karitane (for babies)	02 9794 1852 1800 677 961 (freecall outside Sydney)
Kids Help Line	1800 55 1800
DoCS Help Line	13 21 11
Domestic Violence Line	1800 656 463/ 1800 671 442 TTY
Website	<a href="http://www.parenting.nsw.gov.au">www.parenting.nsw.gov.au</a>