

SAFEGUARDING

The Attention Meter

When children get enough positive attention from you, they don't need to act out to get attention. Remember to fill your children up with plenty of love and affection throughout the day, every day. A very easy way to do this is to spend quality time with them. **Playing with your children** for just 5 minutes will go a long way, especially right after getting home from **work or** after an errand. When playing with your children, let them pick the toy and lead the play. It's tempting to tell your children what to do or ask a lot of questions, but it is best not to do that. Try instead to just describe what your children are doing ("You are working so hard to build a tall tower" or "You are stacking those blocks") and **give specific growth-mindset promoting praise**: "Great job sitting so still while we are playing"; rather than praising the end product, praise the effort.

Another way is to give attention to children for good behaviour, yet not distract them while they are behaving, is to gently touch them in a loving way; for example, simply touch their shoulder or back. It is recommended you give children 50 to 100 brief loving touches every day.

You can decrease bad behaviors by ignoring them, but this only works if you are giving your children lots of attention for their good behaviours. The simplest way to do this is through planned ignoring. Ignoring means not talking to, looking at, or touching your children when they are behaving badly. The key to ignoring is making sure to give your children positive attention as soon as the bad behaviour stops, like saying:

"You are quiet now; it looks like you are ready to play."

It is important to not ignore unsafe behaviours that need immediate attention from you.

Working together to keep our children safe and happy.

Halina Rooney

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