

Practical alternatives to support children during challenging times



Children enrich our lives with their joyful energy, their laughter and their uncomplicated spontaneity. As they develop, they need to explore, experience and discover as they learn and get ready to become more independent. However, like adults, they too get tired, and do make mistakes and do push our buttons. Here are some practical alternatives recommended by Barnardos to support children when you feel pushed that little bit too far

- *Take a deep breath and gather your thoughts*
- *Show your child what they can do instead of what they can't*
- *Take them outside for a run*
- *Say lots of positive things when they are skilful*
- *Walk away, think about what you are going to do, but keep them in your sight*
- *Think about whether they are tired or hungry; remember, all behaviour is a type of communication*
- *Keep your expectations and rules simple*
- *Accept mistakes and show your child how they can fix them*
- *Clap one to get their attention and then give a simple explanation*
- *Explain the consequences*
- *Put your child in a quiet safe place so they can calm down (create a calm down area with a calm down box with your child when they are*

receptive so that they have a safe space to go to. Let them choose the things they want to go in there)

- *Get down to their height to avoid being threatening*
- *Put precious things out of reach*
- *Sing some loud songs together*
- *Ring a friend or a neighbour*
- *Share stories with other parents*
- *Turn tasks into a game*
- *Speak softly*
- *Be firm, fair and friendly*
- *Ignore tantrums*
- *Act as you want your child to act*

It is only natural to want to 'fix' the problem immediately. This is not always the best time and can often lead to us saying things we can never retract, or doing things we never would have expected ourselves to do. Try to avoid escalations. If your child is not ready to talk, listen or comply, wait until they are. 'Strike while the iron is cold'.

Have a try at some of the strategies and review the impact on your child, you and your relationship.



I would like to take this time to thank you all for your lovely Christmas wishes, letters of gratitude and generous gifts. I hope you all had a lovely festive time.

working together to keep our children safe and happy.