

## Positive parenting information

Children have 2 buckets- an attention bucket and a power bucket- that need filling; they need both.

### Attention

- Children will do anything to get your attention; if positive behaviours don't get enough attention, they will try negative behaviours which almost always works; children only continue the behaviours that work for them.
- Giving children attention for positive behaviours will ensure that they don't have to resort to negative behaviours to get the attention.

### Power

- The desire to have control is wired into all of us; the power bucket needs to be filled with positive power by encouraging children to be independent, autonomous and allowing them to have an element of control over their own world.
- If children don't feel that they have some control, they will act out with negative behaviour to get a sense of control; they will try to 'push your buttons' and prove to you who is boss. By angering you, they are getting a huge 'shot' of power.
- Meal times, bedtimes and toileting cause power struggles in younger children as they have legitimate power over these. These are the perfect opportunities children to 'dig their heels in' and show control.
- The decision on whether to behave is always their choice- we think we can make them behave but this is never a sustainable strategy so it results in endless cycles of power struggles.

### Discipline

- Discipline comes from 'discipulus', the Latin word for pupil (or learner).
- Giving a consequence to behaviour is not about 'punishing' the child (which can cause a child to shut down) but about the child learning from it which supports long term behaviour change. Children who get 'punished' tend to get really good at lying to avoid the punishment.

### Does personality matter?

- A child's personality plays a role in their behaviour and the adults' personalities do too; it can cause our children to fight back and can bring out certain behaviours in children.
- Adults play an equal role in children's behaviour; if we can stop doing the things that trigger the unwanted behaviour, then 50% of the behaviour struggles cease to exist.

### The five R's of Consequences

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| <b>Respectful</b> | Try to stay calm and respectful when dealing with a child's behaviour to avoid them shutting down. If you are angry and so find this difficult, wait a while until you are ready to discuss in this way.   |
| <b>Related</b>    | <p>The consequence must be related to the misbehaviour e.g. for not wearing a bike helmet, they don't get to ride their bike or for not cleaning their teeth, they don't get to eat sweet things etc. It is impossible to force a child to do something so instead, put the power in their hands by giving them choices- 'If you __, then __'.</p> <p>For example:<br/><i>'If you don't turn off the ipad, then you will not be able to go on it tomorrow'</i> n</p> <p>If the consequence is not related e.g. <i>'If you don't turn off the ipad, you will not be able to go to your friends party'</i>, children can feel totally justified in their challenging behaviour.</p> <p>If there is no obvious consequence that is related to the behaviour, a consequence is probably not the best solution and instead maybe just a conversation around the behaviour would be more useful.</p> |
| <b>Reasonable</b> | The consequence given should be based on the child's age and development. If the consequence that you have given is not working, it is not beneficial to make it longer or more severe; it will mean that it is probably not working and that a different approach is needed for this situation.   |
| <b>Revealed</b>   | Children need to know the consequence ahead of time, so they can make the decision and determine the outcome. Giving them the power doesn't mean that they 'get their own way' but they need to be able to influence what happens.   |



**Repeated back** | Ask the child to repeat the consequence back to you so they are really clear on the decision they have to make.

## Script

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>State the problem</b>            | <b>'I've noticed that ...'</b><br>(be calm, smile and start don't raise your voice otherwise children can become defensive and shut down)   |
| <b>State the expected behaviour</b> | <b>'In the future, I expect that ...'</b><br>(Say what you expect them to do e.g. I expect that when I ask you to go to bed, you follow that instruction; once stated, make it clear that you won't be giving reminders)  |
| <b>Reveal the consequence</b>       | <b>'If you ____, then ____'</b><br>(Make sure that they are fully informed with all the information)  |
| <b>Ask the child to repeat back</b> | <b>'Just so I know you have understood, can you tell me what the rule is and the consequence for not following that rule?'</b><br>(You have established the rules but the child is in charge of the decision they make and have the power to influence the outcome) |

