

Positive Home Management Strategies

1. Effective home-based behaviour management programs only work well when there is a strong, loving, healthy and positive relationship between the parent and the child. **This relationship is necessary to be able to endure the difficulties which will arise when change strategies are introduced.** It is important for the parent to be as much a friend and “buddy” to their child, as it is to be their parent.
2. Spend some quality time with him each day if possible doing something he likes e.g. Playstation, water pistols, etc. Show that you are interested in things that he is interested in.
3. Establish some simple home rules, which are agreed to by both partners– examples below (make up your own). When he follows these let him know how well he is doing. As he gets better at them allow him more choice e.g. he can stay up until 9.00 pm on a Thursday, hire out a special DVD or Playstation game, have a friend over etc.



- I WILL BE A FRIEND TO MY FAMILY
- I WILL TALK CALMLY
- I WILL KEEP MY ROOM TIDY
- I WILL SHOWER EACH DAY
- I WILL DO ONE THING TO HELP MUM AND DAD EACH DAY



4. Play the “good behaviour” game. Catch him being good (at anything) and let him know – even if he’s just being a nice kid, or just watching TV calmly or eating his dinner nicely, or playing appropriately with his sister. Look for the good to reward and pay attention to this.
5. Reduce the times you focus on him being naughty – try and ignore a lot of his “irritating” behaviours as this only serves to reinforce him with your attention. Even yelling at him can be reinforcing. Try and remain calm.
6. As behaviours escalate (get worse) make sure you get calmer and quieter. Don’t compete with his behaviours and don’t get caught up in his behaviour outbursts. Your job is to help him to be calm and if possible direct him to more appropriate behaviour.
7. Establish firm and age-appropriate home routines for morning, after school and evening: Breakfast at a set time, activities to do after school and dinner no later than 7.00 pm followed by shower or bath. TV should be monitored and limited with lights out by a certain time.



8. Make sure his day is predictable so that he can anticipate what is going to happen next. If his days are too random, this can become very confusing and create anxiety. If possible create a daily calendar so that he knows what activities will take place during the day. On weekends he may be able to choose some activity options to place on his calendar.



9. Whatever you do **DON'T** give in when things get tough. This is the science of “digging in and weathering the storm”. His poor behaviours may get worse before they get better as you introduce new ways of working with him. If he learns that you will change your mind when he becomes more angry or determined then he will move straight to this level of behaviour very quickly.

10. Make consequences for poor behaviour **fair and reasonable** and if possible relate them to the rules. The removal of preferred activities, the limiting of choice, exclusion from high preference activities, “fining” of pocket money, are good general punishers. If possible apply punishment ASAP and for a short time only. Don't ban something for many hours or days. Also, target his behaviour not him e.g. “I don't like you shouting at me” rather than “you're a rotten kid”.



11. Consistency is very important to your child learning how the game is played. Don't forget he has been playing by his own set of rules up until now so the new changes must be followed each and every day, even when you are tired. Parents, close family and friends must back each other and not undermine each other. Remember, it will be tough at first as his behaviour will get worse before it gets better due to his options being reduced.

