

Limit setting approach

A – Acknowledge the feeling

e.g. 'You like throwing' or for older children 'I can see you are happy throwing the blocks'

C - communicate the limit

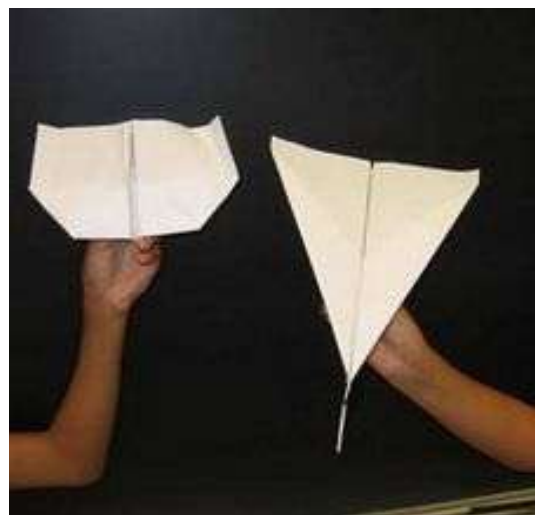
e.g. 'no throwing blocks' or for older children 'the blocks aren't for throwing'

T -Target the alternatives

e.g. 'throw ball or scarf' or for older children 'you can throw the ball or the paper aeroplane'

Stay calm throughout and give time for your child to respond to the choices e.g. give repeated chances for younger children; and two chances for older children by repeating the steps. If your older child doesn't stop the unwanted behaviour say clearly 'I can see you aren't listening, you have chosen to stop playing with the blocks'

Then calmly redirect to another activity, game, or toy.



Conflict Resolution steps for home

1. **When children are using hurtful behaviour approach quickly and calmly stopping any hurting** – consider your body and facial language, put yourself in-between children, firm voice (not angry) ‘stop’ – ‘no hurting’
2. **Acknowledge the children’s feelings** – ‘you look sad/cross/scared’ – let the other child know how each might be feeling
3. **Gather information** – ‘what happened’ – ask each child (if very young then tell them what you saw e.g. ‘Thomas was playing with the train, Ethan wants the train, Thomas you were hurt on the head, Thomas is hurting’)
4. **Restate the problem** – repeat and clarify the events avoiding laying blame e.g. you were hit and that hurt you, you want the train...
5. **Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together** – e.g. sharing, waiting for a turn, using a kitchen timer for turn-taking, finding another toy the same, (again if the children are younger you will need to suggest some options)
6. **Give follow up support** – praise positive behaviour – be specific – ‘You’re sharing well’, ‘You both look happy now’. Give a reminder of the solution if needed. Do not expect children to be able to play positively for long periods of time without support. They need you to help them to learn this way of playing. This needs to be repeated and repeated over time in a positive way.



Help children to manage their feelings

- Talk about feelings (your own, your child's and other people's) in day-to-day experiences e.g. 'I'm happy we're going to the park today' or 'I'm sad we've run out of milk'.
- When children are struggling to play together calmly use the conflict resolution approach to solve the problem together. (see separate sheet)
- Explaining feelings helps children to begin to understand their intense feelings and learn new ways of managing next time.

Help children to learn about the results of their actions

- Every experience is a new one for young children, they are learning all the time. Very young children will need lots of support and sometimes physical guidance to stop themselves being tempted e.g. to put things into the video!
- Help children to learn about how the world works through setting boundaries/giving fair warning **before** events change and praising their achievements. Some useful phrases to use could be: **first** we will tidy up, **after** we can play another game together.'
- Support children within a situation to make positive choices then move on to a fresh start.



Positive Parenting

- Remain calm; parenting isn't easy, be positive and start afresh next time!
- Be consistent e.g. bouncing on the bed isn't met with laughter one day and a cross face the next.
- Warm encouragement does not spoil children; have clear boundaries and tell children what they have done right.



These ideas have been taken from the leaflet 'Helping children with their behaviour' by Jennie Lindon from the learning together series

Useful Publications:

- Dorman (2002) *The social toddler: promoting positive behaviour*, London: The Children's Project.
- Bayley (2006) *More than Happy and Sad: Young Children and Emotions*, London: British Association for Early Childhood Education.

Useful Contacts:

- Family Information Service (FIS): can let you know of services dealing with this subject e.g. through a Children and Family Centre. To get details on how to contact visit Childcare Link: www.childcarelink.gov.uk
- Parentline Plus helpline: 0808 800 2222

Positive Parenting: Helping Children to Make Choices

Children become frustrated and cross for a variety of reasons

- They are learning to manage their feelings.
- They are finding it difficult to be understood.
- They have not got the experience to cope with new situations.
- They have intense feelings which are new to them.



How to help children learn

- Try to see things from their point of view – understanding how children see the world will help you to help them as they learn.
- Be playful – you can enjoy childhood alongside your child.
- Feelings matter – be aware of your child's mood as well as your own in different situations.
- Don't expect to be perfect – children can be forgiving as long as we are thoughtful most of the time and are ready to explain and say sorry when we should.



Children learn from the people around them

Be clear about what you want

- The most helpful adults are 'firm but fair' people.
- They stick to 'no' when it is important.
- They tell children what they 'can do' rather than what they can't.
- They explain their feelings 'I'm cross with you because'.

Focus on the positives

- Make the effort to catch children 'being good' – these may be very small things.
- If there are things your child is struggling with focus on one change at a time.
- Make sure children are confident of your affection e.g. resist the temptation to say 'I won't like you any more if...' Talk about what has happened e.g. 'Sunil is hurt, he is sad'.

Give clear information e.g. 'Well done, you let Gary have some of your bricks'.

