

## **Guidelines for Promoting Good Behaviour**

**Apply the same rules for all children.** It can be tempting to make allowances for a child with additional needs but if you expect the child to behave properly he will most likely live up to your expectations. Having different rules sends a message to others that the child is very different rather than simply slower to develop in some areas. It's OK to make allowances for slower development, but not for 'bold' behaviour.

**View 'misbehaviour' as 'mistaken behaviour'.** Find out what the child is trying to achieve when engaging in 'difficult' behaviour and teach him to reach his goal appropriately. Simply punishing does not teach the child how to not repeat his mistakes later.

**Be consistent.** To make anything clear, we need to teach it the same way each time. If you want to help a child understand what is and is not acceptable, then you need to be consistent about the rules. If possible, that means that parents and other caregivers need to be on side.

**Be patient.** Children with learning disability need more repetition to learn. Do not be too quick to change strategies or give up. Stick to your game plan, it may take her a little longer to get the message.

**Follow unpleasant activities with pleasant ones.** When a child shows difficulty with tasks he does not like, it can help to point out positive events that follow (e.g. "when you've tidied the toys, we can go have snack")

**Use distraction wherever possible.** If a child resists an instruction, whines, etc, instead of pointing it out try changing the subject while ignoring the behaviour (e.g. child whines when told to tidy up, adult says "Let's see how fast you can put these away!")

**Let children know what is coming up.** It is easier for all of us to move from one activity to another and to feel secure when we know what is happening and don't feel as though we are passive pawns in someone else's game. Show and tell the child what is going to happen to prepare them for the changes.

**Forge a strong relationship with the parents.** Children come with families and the parents know their children best. You don't need to share all challenges, but working together is important for the welfare of all children.

**Praise and ignore.** Recognise the good behaviors and ignore the bad ones where possible. Spend more time and energy on good behaviors.

**Have clear rules and explain them through modeling and pictures where possible.** Make sure that the child understands what you expect and communicate it to him. Don't wait for bad behaviors to occur and then punish.

**Believe in yourself and the child.** You can make a large difference to a child, no matter what the biology. There will be times with ANY child that things seem overwhelming, but never lose faith in yourself and the child.