How to Help Children Behave Positively

1. Put yourself in his/her shoes. Try to understand how he’s seeing things.

Remember his simplicity; he needs to learn about life from you.

2. Show you like him/her with smiles, thumbs up, specific praise … i.e.. good sitting, good walking, good sharing rather than good boy. ‘Good boy’ doesn’t inform him that you value his ideas only that you want him to please you. Would you like that?

3. Find things to praise e.g. what a great T-shirt, mmm you smell nice. Praise the behaviour that you want to see. Give praise whenever you can. We all thrive on it.

4. Keep spoken directions simple clear and repeat yourself. The less wordy

the better. This helps all those whose attention is distracted. Get his/her attention before making a request.

5. Use visual support to all you say. Hold up what you’re talking about, point,

show.

6. Make life predictable. We all feel happier when we know what’s happening

next. Get in the habit of explaining ‘It’s this and then it’s that’ as many times as it needs repeating. Use now and next boards where necessary to further support this.

As far as possible have a regular routine to your day so he/she gets used to what’s happening and how it happens. Use visual timetable and schedules where appropriate.

7. Use ’STOP’ rather that ‘NO’. It is less confrontational and more about being on his/her side as you can then explain why whatever he/she is doing may not be safe/appropriate.

8. Show you understand. Name the problem he’s having i.e. ‘you wanted the

car’, ‘you’re feeling busy’, ‘you’re feeling sad/happy/cross’ before you offer a

solution.

9. Give him an outlet for ‘busy’ feelings. Plan your day to include physical

experiences.

10. Explain what he can do to solve his problems e.g. ‘Ah you want the car’. Use words ‘Car please’ to provide the model of the behaviour you want to see.

11. Support sharing / turn taking and waiting: It’s perfectly understandable that

children get worried they will miss out or won’t get what they were hoping for.

Show you understand and are on their side offering solutions for them. You will find they are more willing to listen to you then, and as they see your suggestions work for them, they will hopefully learn patience and compromise.