

# Behavior is a family business

- ☞ Talk with your partner about how you want to bring up your kids. Don't undermine each other.
- ☞ Listen to your children and respect their points of view. Work out family rules together.
- ☞ Set reasonable limits for behaviour – depending on your child's age and stage.
- ☞ Share the care between the adults and support each other to have regular 'time out'.
- ☞ Family life can also be fun. Spend time with your kids playing a game, kicking a ball, cooking a meal, and eating together as a family.

## Self-care for Parents

- ☞ List everything you're doing well as a parent.
- ☞ Find time for yourself each day – 15 minutes to put your feet up.
- ☞ Meet up with other parents regularly – form a support network.
- ☞ Try to get enough sleep – being tired makes everything harder.

### For more parenting information and support:

Parentline ACT	(02) 6287 3833
Parentline NSW	1300 1300 52
Parentline NT	1300 30 1300
Parentline QLD	1300 30 1300
Parent Helpline SA	1300 364 100
Parenting Line TAS	1300 808 179
Parentline VIC	13 22 89
Parenting Line WA	(08) 9368 9368 (metro) 1800 111 546 (regional)

Parenting lines provide a telephone service providing information and good ideas about caring for babies and children.

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### Supported by:

The Australian Government Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

NAPCAN is an independent charity and the leading advocacy body for prevention of child abuse and neglect.

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PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

## ALTERNATIVES TO SMACKING CHILDREN

# Alternatives to Smacking Children



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Kids can drive you mad!  
But smacking doesn't help in the long run and can cause serious harm

## Why smacking is a bad idea

- 👏 Hitting teaches children that violence is the way to get what they want.
- 👏 Hitting children means they don't learn to manage conflict.
- 👏 Children have a right to feel safe. They deserve the same level of protection as adults.
- 👏 If you hit your children, they will be afraid of you when they are young, and angry when they are older.
- 👏 Smacking can become a habit. When it doesn't work most people hit harder.
- 👏 Adults are stronger than children. Hitting in anger often causes serious injuries.

## Helping kids to behave without having to hit

- 👏 Recognise the problem – is your child feeling tired, hungry, cold or worried? Fix the problem and behaviour may improve.
- 👏 If your child is 'in a state' there is no point reasoning, or hitting. Give everyone some space.
- 👏 When your child has calmed down, discuss things calmly and quietly with no distractions.
- 👏 Tell your child clearly and firmly what they have done wrong. Be clear that it is the behaviour you don't like, not your child!
- 👏 It is important the child knows what they should do, not just what they shouldn't.

If their behaviour has caused problems, ask them how to make things better. With your help it could be positive for you both!

Children need attention. If kids are 'good' we ignore them, if they are 'bad' – they get our attention. Catch them doing something good and tell them.

### Remember: children see – children do!

Your children learn by watching what you say and do...every day. What your children learn from you, especially in the first years, is with them for life, affecting how they deal with other people as adults...If you hit them, they'll think it's OK to hit too.

## Things to try if you are at the end of your tether!

Whatever you do, make sure your child is in a safe place!

- 👏 Take a few deep breaths. Count to 50! Or recite the alphabet.
- 👏 Walk around the house – go outside.
- 👏 Do some stretching – exercise is great for relieving stress.
- 👏 Don't be afraid to ask for help. Phone a friend or relative.
- 👏 Make yourself a cuppa and relax.
- 👏 Congratulate yourself on not smacking.
- 👏 Remember the special things about your child and talk about them later.

