

Children need discipline so they learn how to behave and get along with other people. Sometimes children do things that parents don't like and parents can get frustrated and angry at these times. There are many things parents can do to help their children learn to do the right thing, but hitting children is not good for them and does not really teach them how to behave well. Physical punishment can hurt children at the time and cause problems for them later in their life.



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

Paediatrics & Child Health Division

The RACP trains, educates and advocates on behalf of more than 14,000 physicians, including around 4,000 paediatric Fellows and trainees. Beyond the drive for medical excellence, the RACP is committed to developing health and social policies which bring vital improvements to the wellbeing of patients.

This information was put together by doctors and parents who want to encourage alternatives to physical punishment for children.

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How to manage your child's behaviour without smacking

Tips for parents



TIPS FOR PARENTS

Instead of "Don't snatch!", try saying "First it's Johnny's turn, then Mike's turn."

For a two year old who draws on the wall, tell the child that "We draw on paper, not on the walls." Sit and draw with your child on some paper. Make lots of fun and fuss over the activity.



Turn a blind eye to a messy bedroom if your child is playing nicely in the garden.

Removing the child from the situation and distracting them can help. For example, if siblings are fighting, move them into different rooms and distract them with different activities.

You can try to take deep breaths, or remember the special things about your child.

1. Teach your child what they should do, not just what they shouldn't.
2. Make good rules for them and stick to those rules.
3. Take account of their age and what they can be expected to understand.
4. Notice the good things your child does. This helps them learn what you like.
5. Sometimes you need to let the little things go and choose your battles.
6. Be clear that it is the behaviour of which you disapprove, not the child. That way your child knows you love them, even if you don't like how they're behaving just now.
7. Sometimes you need to do something at the time to teach your child how you want them to behave.
8. Make sure any consequences for your child directly relate to the behaviour.
9. If you are feeling angry, take a moment to calm down. When things are calm, you can talk about what you want them to do differently next time.
10. There are people you can ask for help if it is getting hard or if you just need some advice.

Children learn by example: hitting children teaches them that violence is a way to resolve conflict

Have a set bedtime that is the same every day. When bedtime is close, turn off the TV and start packing away toys together.

Praise your child if they put clothes in the wash, even if it takes them a while.

"A kind girl like you shouldn't pinch your little brother, it's not a nice thing to do."



If your child is not playing safely with a toy, put it away out of their reach.



Talk to your GP or early childhood nurse as a start.

There is lots of good information at <http://raisingchildren.net.au/> or <http://www.skip.org.nz/>