
CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

When it comes to children's behaviour, there are many times during childhood when parents try to make improvements. Maybe it is about bedtime or homework routines, or maybe it is about us, as parents, trying to deal more calmly with provocative behaviour.

Whatever it is, we probably expect the situation to change quickly. Just because we have some idea of what may work better, and are putting this in place, it does not mean that we will get an instant fix. Be prepared to wait for changes in behaviour or attitude to take some time. The longer a difficulty has been around, the longer it will take to sort out.

If you feel confident that a new method of dealing with behaviour is likely to get the desired results, then be patient. Be realistic in your expectations. If you see small improvements which seem to be on the path to the goal you want, then stick with it.

Use whatever support you can find to give you the encouragement and reassurance you need. This will boost your confidence which, in turn, will help you to be more effective.

Q:

We have had dreadful problems in school with our seven year old. He can take a real dislike to his teacher and be very uncooperative. This year, the teacher and the school have been really helpful, and he seems to be a little better. The problem is his homework. He will do it most nights, but then we will have a night where he refuses. I suppose it is better than it was when he didn't do any. What can I do?

A:

Frustrating as it sometimes is, we have to be satisfied with taking 'baby steps' - as long as they are going forward and not backwards!

You are fortunate to have the full backing of the school, and are able to work on this jointly. The fact that he is doing homework is to be applauded. It shows he can deal with it when he chooses.

If the sanctions sufficiently bother him, they will act as an incentive. However, make sure that there is lots of encouragement when the homework is completed. Whatever you have done to change the behaviour is working most of the time. Give yourself lots of pats on the back for that.

