

PARENTS

Managing Behaviour

Just like adults, children can experience a range of emotions and can behave differently from time to time. Feeling sad, angry or frustrated at times, is a normal and healthy part of their lives. However, when we talk about 'challenging behaviour' or 'distressed behaviours', this refers to behaviours that are persistent and difficult for both you and your child to manage. This can include behaviours such as shouting lots, frequently hitting, biting or physically hurting others in some way and damaging property.

It can be helpful to view your child's behaviour as trying to communicate how they are feeling. Picture an iceberg – the tip is the challenging behaviour that you can see, and hidden underneath are a range of emotions they could be feeling but finding it difficult to express.

The tips below are some general strategies to support with your child's behaviour on a day-to-day basis. If you are finding that your child's behaviour is becoming increasingly difficult to manage beyond these strategies below, reach out for support. You could get advice from your GP, a health visitor or share your concerns with your child's school or nursery. Your child's teacher may have found something that works, so it may be useful to try the same strategies at home for consistency.

Top Tips for children of all ages:

- Try to keep your **instructions simple** and as **consistent** as possible.
- Clearly explain and/or show your child the behaviour you would like to see them do. Explain to them what they *should* try to do rather than what they *shouldn't*.
- Be available and **make time for your child**, so they will come to you when they feel something is wrong or they are upset.
- Spend **quality time with your child** and show interest in the toys and activities they enjoy doing the most. This can help increase your child's confidence, strengthen your bond and also help you to better understand their needs.
- Keep **talking and listening to your child** even if at times it feels like a challenge.
- Try to **validate and label how they might be feeling**, and model that back to them e.g. "You are frustrated, this must be difficult for you".
- Recognise and praise their attempts to change their behaviour and be specific e.g. "I noticed that you have really tried to..."
- Try to **keep as calm as possible** and maintain a neutral tone of voice and positive body language.
- Remember that it is the behaviour that you are critical of not your child!

Useful contacts for further support :

- **Hackney CAMHS:** City and Hackney Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Alliance (cityandhackneycamhs.org.uk)
- **Family Lives** provides help and support on all aspects of parenting and family life 0808 800 2222 [Parenting and Family Support - Family Lives \(Parentline Plus\)](#) | [Family Lives](#)
- **NSPCC** have a helpline for parents/carers to call for support 0808 800 5000
- **Cry-sis** provide help for parents of excessively crying, sleepless or demanding babies. Lines are open seven days a week, 9am-10pm. 08451 228669 [Support For Crying And Sleepless Babies](#) | [Home](#) | [Cry-sis](#)

Speech and Language Therapy

Room 31, D Block,
St. Leonard's Hospital,
Nuttall Street,
London, N1 5LZ.
Tel: 0207 683 4262

Email:

hello@gethackneytalking.co.uk

Web:

<http://gethackneytalking.co.uk/>

Twitter:

[@HackneyTalk](https://twitter.com/HackneyTalk)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/gethackneytalking/>

