

**MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY  
AND  
FAMILY WELFARE**

**7th Floor Newton Tower  
Sir William Newton Street 11328  
Port Louis  
Mauritius**

**For any queries:  
Tel: (230) 405 3300  
(230) 206 3700**

**MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY  
AND  
FAMILY WELFARE**



**Being Inquisitive about Positive Parenting  
and  
Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child  
An Interactive Booklet**



**Child Development Unit**

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### ➤ What is Parenting?

- Parenting is both a biological and social process. Parenting or child rearing is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. It shapes a child's attitudes, behaviours and emotional functioning. Parenting also encourages a child's growth, ensures the child's protection and guides the child's development.

### ➤ What does Parenting aim at?

- Providing care;
- Managing personal stress;
- Ensuring the child's health and safety;
- Encouraging a child's independent decision making;
- Fostering skills for future economic survival;
- Promoting the child's holistic development;
- Promoting interpersonal skills;
- Promoting self-regulation and self-actualisation;
- Transmitting cultural values;
- Establishing and maintaining reasonable limits and
- Promoting intellectual pursuits (teaching children about themselves).

### ➤ What is Positive Parenting?

- Positive parenting is the continuous structured relationship building between a parent and a child based on aspects as caring, teaching, leading, communicating and providing for the needs of a child consistently and unconditionally.
- Positive Parenting teaches discipline in a way that builds a child's self-esteem and supports a mutually respectful parent-child relationship without breaking the child's spirit.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### ➤ What are the features of Positive Parenting?

\*

Caring  
Guiding  
Leading  
Teaching  
Nurturing  
Empowering

Open to communication while providing  
Emotional security  
Emotional warmth  
Unconditional love  
Affectionating and be;  
Always non-Violent  
Consistently empowering  
Setting boundaries for the child  
Supporting the Child's best interest  
Showing empathy for the child's feelings &  
It is also about sensitive to the child's needs



## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child



- The most common caretaker in Parenting is the mother and/or father or both biological mother and father of the child.
- A surrogate parent may be an older sibling, a step-parent, a grandparent, a legal guardian, an aunt, an uncle or another family member or a family friend.
- The Government and the society also have a role to play in child-rearing. The Government in itself provides the legislative frameworks for regulating good practices in child rearing. Orphaned or abandoned children receive parental care from non-parents or non-blood relations.
- Children are also adopted or raised with foster care parents or placed in orphanages.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### Types of Parents and Parenting Styles

#### Parents with the Authoritative Parenting Styles

#### Authoritative Parenting



- Authoritative Parenting is characterized by high responsiveness and high demands. Authoritative parents are responsive to the child's emotional needs, while having high standards towards the child. Authoritative parents set limits and are very consistent in enforcing boundaries.

- Authoritative Parents in a nutshell:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Are warm &amp; Nurturing</li><li>➤ Listen to the child;</li><li>➤ Use effective communication;</li><li>➤ Involve in decision making</li><li>➤ Allow autonomy;</li><li>➤ Support exploration;</li><li>➤ Encourage independence;</li><li>➤ Set clear limits;</li><li>➤ Set clear behaviours;</li><li>➤ Reward &amp; encourage positive behaviours</li><li>➤ Consistently enforce boundaries;</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Attend to a child's emotional expression;</li><li>➤ Earn children's respect</li><li>➤ Provide adequate supervision and monitoring;</li><li>➤ Act as positive role model and</li><li>➤ Make positive family experiences a priority.</li></ul> |
|--|--|

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child



### What are the outcomes of Authoritative Parenting?

- The children are seen to develop:

**secure parental attachments;**

Good social skills;

be happy and content;

Better psycho-social functioning;

**Good self-esteem;**

Higher optimism;

Be independent and self-reliant;

Have good emotional regulation and self-control;

**Express warmth and cooperate with peers;**

Explore new environments without fear;

Are competent and assertive;

Have better school adjustments;

**Achieve higher academic success;**

Engage in more school activities;

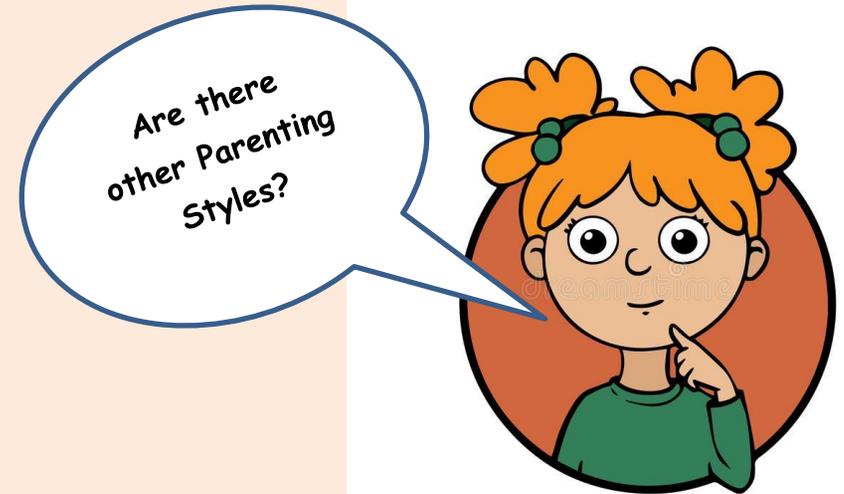
Have increased motivations;

Have better mental health - less depression, anxiety, suicide attempts, delinquency, alcohol and drug use;

**Exhibit less violent tendencies and**

Are well Adjusted.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child



Yes there are other parents with other types of Parenting Styles. They are the authoritarian parents, permissive parents and neglectful parents.

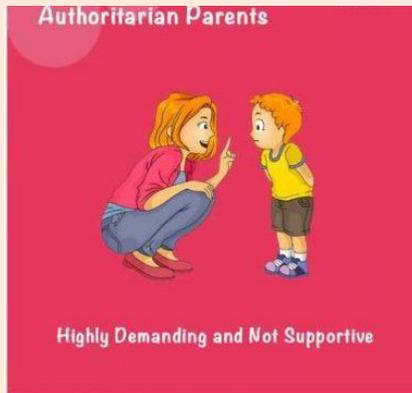
However research has shown that the 'authoritative parents' are the best parents.



## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### What are the other Parenting Styles:

#### ➤ **Authoritarian or Disciplinarian Parents:**



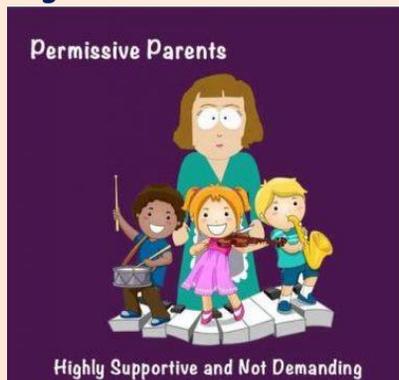
#### **Authoritarian Parents:**

- Use strict disciplinary style with little or no negotiations;
- Frequently use punishments;
- Use rigid rules and
- Are less nurturing and caring.

#### - **Effects on Children:**

- Less self-esteem;
- Have poor social skills;
- May suffer from mental illness;
- May use drugs and alcohol &
- May become less independent.

#### ➤ **Permissive or indulgent:**



## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

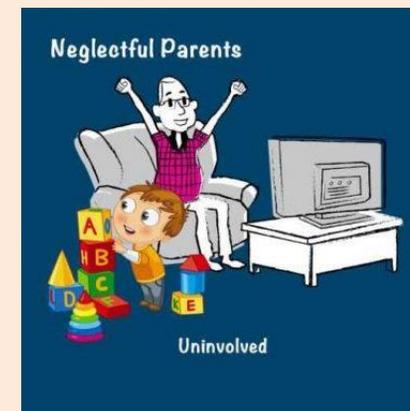
#### **Permissive Parents:**

- Set limited boundaries or no rules;
- Let children figure out problems on their own;
- Provide minimum guidance;
- Tend to be warm and nurturing and
- Have low or no expectations from their children.

#### - **Effects on Children:**

- Impulsive behaviours;
- Selfish;
- Poor social skills;
- Construct problematic relationships and
- Have less self-control.

#### ➤ **Uninvolved Parents or neglectful parents:**



#### **Permissive Parents:**

- Set no discipline;
- Leave children on their own;
- Tend to communicate less;
- Tend to be less warm and nurturing;
- Have few or no expectations from children.

#### - **Effects on Children:**

- Impulsive behaviours;
- May use drugs and alcohol
- May have suicidal tendencies.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child



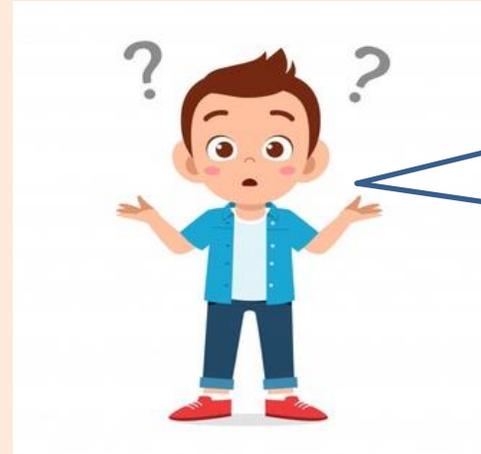
### ➤ What is discipline?

- Discipline is 'training that corrects, molds or perfects the mental faculties or moral character.' (Merriam-Webster, 2019)
- Discipline expects fashioning, creating or modelling for desired behaviours in the child. Discipline should not be confused with punishment but enables you to behave in a good and controlled manner. Discipline prevents you from having future behavioural problems
- Discipline is used by parents to teach children about certain expectations, guidelines and principles.

Children need to be exposed to regular disciplining sessions, so as to learn and differentiate between what is right and wrong, a measure which will help them stay safe and secure.



## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child



What are the Key Principles of Positive Parenting?

- Positive Parenting has amongst others, 10 positive principles of Discipline, namely:

Principles		Meaning
1	<b>Demonstrate Respect Principle</b>	Treat the child in the same respectful way you would like to be treated.
2	<b>Make a Big Deal Principle</b>	Use positive reinforcement in meaningful ways for desired behaviors. Reward such behaviors with praise, affection, appreciation, privileges, amongst others
3	<b>Incompatible Alternative Principle</b>	Provide the child with a behavior to substitute with the undesirable one, such as playing with a pet rather than watching TV consistently.
4	<b>Choice Principle</b>	Provide the child with two choices in respect of positive behaviors so that he/she feels a sense of empowerment.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

- (Cont.) - Positive Parenting has amongst others, 10 positive principles of Discipline, namely:

➤

5	<b>When/Then - Abuse it/Lose it Principle:</b>	Ensure that rewards are lost when rules are broken. For example, you might say "After you clean your room, you can play outside" (which means that a child who does not clean his/her room, will not get to play outside period).
6	<b>Connect Before You Correct Principle.</b>	Ensure that the child feels loved and cared for before behavioral problems are attended to.
7	<b>Validation Principle</b>	Validate the child's feelings. For example, you might say "I know you are sad about losing your sleep over tonight and I understand."

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

- (Cont.) - Positive Parenting has amongst others, 10 positive principles of Discipline, namely:

➤

8.	<b>Good Head on Your Shoulders Principle:</b>	Ensure that the child hears the equivalent of "you have a good head on your shoulders" in order to feel capable, empowered and responsible for his/her choices. This is especially important for teenagers.
9.	<b>Belonging and Significance Principle:</b>	Ensure that the child feels important and as if he/she belongs. For example, remind your child that he/she is really good at helping in the kitchen and that the family needs this help in order to have dinner.
10.	<b>Timer Says it's Time Principle:</b>	Set a timer to help children make transitions. This helps kids to know what's expected of them and may also involve giving them a choice in terms of the amount of time. For example, one might say "Do you need 15 or 20 minutes to get dressed?" Make sure to let the child know that the time is set.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

As a recap

- Dear Parents,  
'you love your child dearly, isn't it? So Say it and recite it as a mantra. I love my child dearly'

1. Treat your cherished child with respect;
2. Use positive reinforcements as praise, affection, appreciation and privileges on a regular basis;
3. Substitute the child undesirable behaviour with behaviour having universal valuable outcomes;
4. Allow your child to choose between positive actions;
5. Give love to your child before bad or behavioural problems are attended to;
6. Make your child feel important at home;
7. Set a timer to help your child make transitions.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child



The Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child are as follows:

### Negative Reinforcement:

- Place the Child in Time Out
- Take Away Privileges
- Ignore Mild Misbehaviours

### Positive Reinforcement:

- Teach New Skills
- Provide Logical Consequences
- Reward Good Behaviour
- Praise Good Behaviours

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child



Negative Reinforcement	
<b>Place the Child in Time-Out</b>	The child is kindly requested to sit on a chair, without talking.  When done correctly, time-out teaches kids how to calm themselves down which is a useful life skill.
<b>Take Away Privileges</b>	Take away the TV, video games, the favourite toy or a fun activity for the day.  This will set as a reminder, not to do the same mistake again.
<b>Ignore Mild Misbehaviour</b>	When the child tries to get someone's attention by whining or complaining, don't give it to him. Pretend you cannot hear him or her. The child will start behaving nicely.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

Positive reinforcement:

Dear Parents,

Positive reinforcement involves adding something pleasant to encourage a behaviour. For e.g. treating a child to an ice-cream cone, when he or she stays quiet and obedient during a shopping trip is a positive reinforcement.

Positive Reinforcement	
<b>Teach New Skills</b>	Parents should teach their child how to solve problems, manage their emotions and compromise.
<b>Provide Logical Consequences</b>	If the child does not eat his or her breakfast, do not let him or her have a bedtime snack.  Or if he/she refuses to pick up his/her trucks, do not allow him or her to play with them for the rest of the day.
<b>Reward Good Behaviour</b>	Rewards help kids focus on what they need to do to earn privileges rather than emphasise on the bad behaviours that they are supposed to avoid.
<b>Praise Good Behaviours</b>	When the child is playing nicely with his siblings, point it out positively.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

Dear Parents,

Tantrums are natural, frequent and positive steps towards a child's development.

### Baby

(a baby can be used to refer to any child from birth to age 4 years old), thus encompassing newborns, infants and toddlers)

#### Tantrums:

Tantrums are a normal part of the baby's development. Tantrums may happen when the baby is tired, hungry or uncomfortable. The Baby may have a 'meltdown' when he/she cannot get a toy or his/her parents' attention.

#### What are the solutions?

Dear Parents, you need to:

- give plenty of attentions;
- distract the baby;
- make the baby learn new skills
- keep objects out of sight and out of reach and
- seek help from a pediatrician (whenever required)

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### How to cater with tantrums for both boys and girls?

### Toddlers / Infants

(02 to 05 years old)

#### Tantrums:

Tantrums are common during the 02nd year of life, especially when the language skill is developing. As the language skills improve, tantrums tend to decrease.

At this age, your child will have unpredictable behaviours, for e.g. he/she will want to play with you, even though some guests are at home. Refusal on your part to play with the child, will automatically lead to tantrums.

Toddlers concern is to do what they want and they want to do it immediately.

Here your infant may display proximity behaviours such as crying and clinging, that will keep you close. The infant may grow fearful and insecure in your absence.

Toddlers feel extremely confused and terribly frustrated. They are spontaneous. Frustration generates tension and the toddler expresses it by hurling himself/herself to the door, thrashing wildly and screaming. For the toddler, this is the only way of releasing the tension immediately.

There are several things that will frustrate your toddler, for e.g.:

- not having your attention;
- not being able to voice out;
- not being given a sweet or toy;
- not being allowed to help (e.g. choosing the groceries);
- not being able to choose (e.g. taking tea at the table or playing with his/her friends) &
- not being able to control everything.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### How to cater with tantrums for both boys and girls?

#### Toddlers / Infants (02 to 05 years old)

#### Tantrums:

Your toddler may also feel misunderstood, including being laughed at, when the situation was not funny.

Physical conditions may also frustrate your toddler, such as illness, tiredness and hunger.

Dear Parents,

You may also need to understand, that your toddler no longer needs you to feed or dress him/her like before, but he/she needs to feel loved, reassured and protected. He/she needs you to order his/her mind as well as use actions and words to make sense of what he/she feels and thinks.

Dear Parents,

Your toddler favourite word is 'no.' Even when the latter means 'yes,' he/she will still say 'no' and 'no' is the only way to gain control. In this situation, the first step is to understand, why he/she is saying 'no.' May be:

- he/she has been asked to do something that he/she can't;
- he/she has been held back from something he/she cannot;
- he/she has been interrupted and
- he/she is angry or embarrassed.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### How to cater with tantrums for both boys and girls?

#### Toddlers / Infants (02 to 05 years old)

#### What are the solutions?

Dear Parents, you need to:

- observe your toddler and find the warning signs - for e.g. pay attention to your toddler's angry feelings,
- tell your toddler, that its 'ok' to be upset and to take some deep breaths. Also another way to keep the toddler calm is by talking to him/her and by describing what is going on with him/her.
- seek help from a pediatrician (whenever required);
- respond calmly and in a soothing manner;
- adopt a pleasant smile and provide contact comfort, as this operates like a releaser, which will diminish the feeling of distress in the infant;
- allow the child to play, so as to foster his/her imagination. This will allow your toddler to have complete control over his/her imagination which will be of use in real life;
- If you have to say no to your toddler, offer him/her 02 choices, so that he/her still feels in control. Choices may give your toddler the chance to escape with dignity;
- Give your toddler lots of attention - for instance, if you are busy looking after your another baby, your toddler may feel unloved and will express it, by throwing tantrums

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### How to cater with tantrums for both boys and girls?

#### Toddlers / Infants

(02 to 05 years old)

#### What are the solutions?

- Get down to his/her level - understand what he really wants;
- Demand that you play with him/her, when you are feeding your baby;
- Instead of saying an outright 'no,' to him/her, turn it into a 'yes' or 'later' - for instance, 'I can see that you are in a hurry. Let me just dry my hands first' (which means a bit late).

#### Child

(5 to 9 years old)

#### Tantrums:

During this phase, tantrums and meltdown still occur. These feelings are expressed in the form of aggressive behaviours and frustration provokes aggression.

In some instances, you parents often respond to such behaviours by paying attention to your child and even by giving to your child's demands, so as to be left in peace for a little while. This tends to reinforce your child's aggressive behaviours.

Other problems such as overactivity, show-offs, temper, resisting bedtime, ect are quite common during this period.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### How to cater with tantrums for both boys and girls?

#### - Child

- (5 to 9 years old)

#### Tantrums:

By now the child will learn, that it is not 'cool' to 'act out' at school. He or she will 'act out' as soon as he/she steps into the car or the house. Your child may even cry or kick. The signs are easily seen on your child's face.

On the positive, from around 08 years old, most children:

- have developed their communication skill;
- have developed their feelings;
- are able to delay their gratifications
- Have learnt to regulate their feelings of anger and fear and 7
- Are able to understand the complex concepts such as future rewards and other people's point of view.

#### What are the solutions?

Dear Parents, you need to:

help your child find solutions to these emotional breakdowns. Also encourage your child to describe how he/she feels and why he/she is feeling like this;

use tips such as visual imagery to control his/her emotions. Its very empowering for the child to understand that he/she is in charge of his/her emotions and not the other way around;

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### How to cater with tantrums for both boys and girls?

- Child  
(5 to 9 years old)

#### What are the solutions?

explain things in a more positive way;

calm your child down and explain to him/her, what is good or wrong;

regulate their emotions, by making sure that their basic needs are met, so that they are not hungry, thirsty, tired or too hot;

stick to gentle routines and boundaries, to keep them simple and achievable to your child. - the less stress in your child's day, the less out of control he/she will feel;

stay calm and sensitive even though its hard to face for a roaring physical child. But the safer your child will feel, the sooner the tantrum will blow out;

if you child's behaviour become particularly extreme, then it is advisable to seek for professional help and

if your child cannot calm down or injures himself/herself, or even damages property, it's worth getting professional advice from a mental health professional.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### How to cater with tantrums for both boys and girls?

#### Onset of Puberty/Early Teens

(The onset of puberty varies among individuals.

Puberty occurs in girls in-between the aged of 10 and 14 and in boys in between the ages of 12 and 16).

#### Tantrums:

Joy, sadness, anger, disgust and fear are perfect metaphor for pubescent and pre-pubescent behaviors. The pre-adolescent's mood can change quickly.

The pre-adolescent cannot always handle changing feelings and reactions. This can lead to over-sensitivity, which can result in grumpiness or rudeness.

The pre-adolescent's brain development can also affect the child's ability to empathise and understand other people's perspectives, including that of parents.

Not all Teenagers are rude or disrespectful, but disrespect is a common feature of teenager's growth and development. Sometimes disrespectful development is assigned that the teenager is feeling particularly stressed or worried.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### How to cater with tantrums for both boys and girls?

#### Onset of Puberty/Early Teens

##### What are the solutions?

Dear Parents, you need to:

- to be flexible;
  - adjust your expectations;
  - draw the line;
  - set clear guidelines;
  - communicate clearly;
  - become an emotional coach
  - properly manage feelings;
  - use authoritative parenting;
  - use lots of negotiations, compromise and reasoning;
  - allow autonomy and encourage independence
- 
- consider creating a formal 'Respect Plan,' that lays out a roadmap for respectful behaviours.
  - Start by writing down the goal (for e.g. to treat one another with respect) and then specify the behaviours that are out of bounds (for e.g. hitting, throwing things). Also make sure, you also write down what the reward will be, if the goal is met for a specific number of days and appropriate consequences, if not and
  - shift the sphere of responsibility: the first step is to always maneuver the situation, so that the child has to take the responsibility and solve their own problems. instead of saying in an accusatory tone, 'why are you hitting your brother?' - parents should say something like: 'Hmm, I wonder why you hit your brother?' - if the tone is merely curious rather than sarcastic or

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### How to cater with tantrums for both boys and girls?

#### Onset of Puberty/Early Teens

##### What are the solutions?-

- aggressive, then there is no power struggle involved.
-

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### **The Existence of an Emotional Body and the Impact of Good Emotional Management**

Dear Parents and Children,

Over and above our physical body, we have an emotional body. You are all born with a body primed and ready to express our needs through emotions, and they influence whatever we feel, think, do, and say. Everything we encounter triggers on emotions which then impacts our health, relationships, perspective and perception of the world.

Children develop their emotions in their earliest years, from birth to the age of two years. During this stage, a great deal of initial learning occurs for the child, about their general environment and the people that are in it. Much of this learning occurs through interactions with parents and observations of parental relationships, who are the first and most prominent figures in a child's early life.

Happiness, distress and disgust are amongst the initial emotions to appear in children just a few months after birth. Later on, social emotions appear followed by the emotion of fear between the ages of two and four years. Generally, emotions start to differ as a child begins to mature.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

Dear Parents,

Anger Management, Building Resilience, Reward System, Negative Reinforcement and the Choice Principle are all inter-linked. Hence good emotional management and anger management will be interlinked in this booklet.

---

### **Anger Management:**

Anger is a normal, natural and healthy emotion. Many children understand the difference between angry feelings and aggressive behaviours. Frustration and anger can quickly turn into aggression and temper tantrums in kids when they do not know how to handle their emotions.

Dear Parents, the 05 strategies listed below can help improve anger management skills:

<b>Label Feelings</b>	Parents, you can teach your child to label his/her feelings, so that he/she can verbalise feelings of anger, sadness, frustration, embarrassment and disappointment.  Emotions can also be used in that regard. Try saying 'It's OK to feel angry but it's not OK to hit.' But then it is not OK to stay angry for long time. If you feel angry for a long time, then you should move towards the emotional existence.
<b>Modelling</b>	The best way to teach your child how to deal with anger is by showing him or her how to handle emotions when you, yourself you are angry or frustrated. - for example, if your child sees you handle your strong feelings in a more gentle way, your child will do the same.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

<b>Talk about Feelings</b>	Talk to your child about the moments when you feel frustrated, so that your child understands that adults too can get angry. Verbalising one's feelings also teaches one's child how to talk about his/her feelings.
<b>Take Responsibility for your Feelings</b>	You should take responsibility for your child's behaviours, when he/she loses his/her temper. Apologise and discuss what you should have done instead. For instance, say <i>'sorry that I yelled today. I should have gone for a walk to calm down, instead of raising my voice.'</i>
<b>Set Down Rules</b>	Set down rules about which behaviour is acceptable and which is not when it comes to a certain situation. Negative behaviours such as physical aggression, swearing and destruction of property should not be the norm.

Dear Parents,

You can also identify strategies that will help your child with his/her smooth growth. Preparing a box with items that will help him/her cool down when disturbed such as colouring book, water colours, crayons, perfumes, surprises and soothing sounds are proven to provide for. Engaging their senses to help him/her cool down.

Positive consequences as reward system or token economy system can motivate and reinforce your child to use anger management skills when he/she is upset. However, when your child anger problems seem to be getting worse, it is important to seek professional assistance.

## Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

### Building Resilience in Children and Parents

Resilience here is defined as a 'child's ability to cope with ups and downs and to bounce back from the challenges they experience during childhood - for example changing homes, changing schools, studying for an examination or dealing with the death of a loved one or the divorce of their parents. There are many actions that can build personal resilience such as:

- Give Yourself a Pause;
- Keep a Self-Care Diary (e.g. make a checklist);
- Seek Out Connections (e.g. seek out for community support);
- Talk and listen;
- Look for opportunities to go for an outside walk;
- Try to relax
- Plan a treat for yourself;
- Look at the bright side and
- If need be 'get enrolled into a stress management programme.

Positive Parenting and Alternative Ways of Disciplining the Child

Dear Parents and Children as well,  
We Just Hope that You Enjoyed the Little  
Interactive Booklet, for knowledge Based and for  
Practical Information.



