

Nurturing Children



Give Time

Participate in children's lives: activities, sports, special events. Include children in your activities.

Encourage and support

Encourage children to follow their interest, teach them new skills, recognise improvement and let them make mistakes to support new learning.

Give affection

Express verbal and physical affection, be affectionate when your children are emotionally and/or physically hurt.

Care for yourself

Give yourself personal time, keep healthy and maintain friendships, accept love.

Trust and respect

Acknowledge children's right to have their own feelings, friends, activities and opinions. Promote independence. Allow for privacy.

Promote emotional security

Talk and act so that children feel safe and comfortable when expressing themselves. Be gentle. Be dependable.

Provide physical Security

Provide love, food, shelter and clothing. Maintain a family routine whenever possible.

Provide calm but assertive discipline

Be consistent, ensure rules are appropriate to age and development of the child. Use discipline to give instruction not to punish.

www.duluthmodel.org



Useful contacts



If you do have any concerns around your child's behaviour and want guidance on effective discipline methods and you would like some help or advice do not hesitate to contact Linda Parry or Kate Wakeford, your Wavell Cluster PSA

The Wavell Cluster Group includes:

The Wavell Secondary School
South Farnborough Infant School
South Farnborough Junior School
Talavera Infant School
Talavera Junior School
St Peter's CE Junior School
North Farnborough Infant School
Marlborough Infant School
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School
Rowhill Secondary School

Further contacts for information:



www.nspcc.org.uk
www.familylives.org.uk
www.kidsbehaviour.co.uk
childlawadvice.org.uk
www.lawandparents.co.uk
www.hants.gov.uk

Linda Parry and Kate Wakeford
Linda.Parry@wavell.hants.sch.uk
01252 785008

General support and information (information correct at time of update) - August 2023 ©

Over-chastisement
Over-punishment
General advice and guidance for parents



Parenting in the UK

Whilst it may be considered appropriate in some families to hit or use implements as a form of discipline in the UK it is considered a form of assault and child abuse. Seen as causing intentional harm to your child.

Is it legal to smack my child?

Parents have the right to make choices about reasonable punishments/chastisement. However, there is a fine line between what is reasonable chastisement, which is a defence in law, and assault, which is a criminal offence.

So what does that mean?

At the moment it is not illegal for a parent to smack a child, but if the smacking goes beyond the line of 'reasonable chastisement' a parent could be charged with assault. In such cases it is possible that a parent could be prosecuted and their child/ren could be taken into Local Authority care.

So what is unreasonable chastisement?



It is considered unreasonable or over-chastisement if there is use of a weapon such as a wooden spoon, belt, slipper, stick or any other implement, **including hands**. Leaving marks such as a visible handprint, bruise, minor swelling, grazes, scratches, abrasions, swellings, reddening of the skin and superficial cuts all cause harm and could be considered a common assault.

There is also the concern of the impact on the child's emotional and mental health and wellbeing.



Smacking and the Law in the United Kingdom

The European Court of Human Rights decided that the law did not adequately protect children's rights and so the Children's Act of 2004 sought to clarify the laws surrounding smacking. Under Section 58 of this Act a parent can be charged with an offence under:



[Sections 18 and 20 Offences against the Person Act 1861](#) which states it is an offence to wound and cause grievous bodily harm

[Section 47](#) states it an offence to assault causing actual bodily harm

[Section 1 Children and Young Persons Act 1933](#) states it an offence to act cruelly to persons under 16 (**behaviour that causes fear, physical or mental harm**)

A reminder

Whilst it may be considered appropriate in some families to smack/hit or use implements as a form of discipline or punishment it is considered, by UK Law, a form of assault and child abuse to cause physical, mental or emotional harm to your child.

NSPCC states that physical abuse is defined in simple terms as *'any way of intentionally causing harm to a child, and this can be through hitting with a hand'*.

Smacking/hitting can impact a child's mental and emotional health, how they build trust, develop relationships. It could teach older children aggression is how things get done and possible lead some children into to criminal behaviours.

Potential impact of over-chastisement

Smacking a child may be a contradiction to the values and behaviours that parents seek to prevent.

- ◆ It sets a bad example of how to handle strong emotions
- ◆ It may teach your child this is how things are controlled leading your child to hitting or bully others
- ◆ It may stop your child trusting you, encourage them to lie or hide feelings to avoid smacking
- ◆ It can make defiant behaviour worse, so discipline becomes even harder
- ◆ It can lead to resentful angry children, and damages family relationships if it continues for a long time.

What else could we use?

Set clear rules and expectations

Keep rules simple, clear to follow and not too many as this will seem challenging for all to remember. We want to teach our children to succeed.

Set clear boundaries and consequences

Remind children what the boundaries are. Teach them choices and consequences if crossing boundaries (rather than you expect them to know). Consequences should be fair, realistic and logical.

Be aware of your emotions and escalation.

When children pester or escalate if the parent starts giving in or escalates this can lead to a loss of control, the parent becoming annoyed and over-reacting. Can you give yourself time to calm down?

Everybody likes praise:

What do you pay attention to? When the child is doing well or getting it wrong? Try telling your child when they are doing well, describe exactly what you are praising them for, this will reinforce the behavior you want to see and **helps keep you calm**.