

Helping children by providing warmth and structure

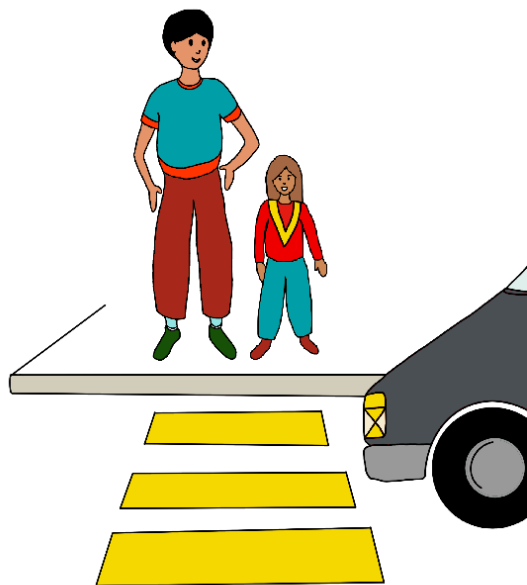


There's a great deal in life that we can't influence, can't choose, can't decide. For example: we can't determine whether a country is at war. Sometimes we can't even decide where and how we live. We can't decide for ourselves what kind of identity papers we are given.

But there are many small things that we can influence and decide for ourselves.

For example: we can decide how to show our children that we love them. We can decide how we speak to one another within the family. We can decide how to help our children get to sleep.

These little things are really important for our children. Even if many things in life are difficult, it's important that parents always concentrate on those things that they can influence and decide for themselves.



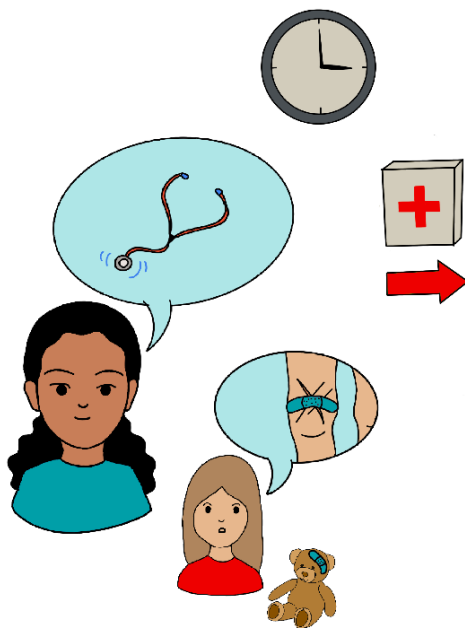
Explain the rules

Children need information and guidance so that they can find their place in the world and understand their everyday life.

Children need parents to set a few simple, easily understood rules.

Parents should explain the rules to the children and give reasons why the rule is important. Parents stick to the rules even when the children don't want to. It's also important at school that children are able to keep to the rules.

For example: At a pedestrian crossing, you have to stop and look to see if a car is coming. Why? Because a car could injure a child if the child simply runs out into the road. The child must always look to see if a car is coming. They must always keep to that rule.



Prepare for new situations

Children need information and guidance so that they can find their place in the world and understand their everyday life.

Parents can prepare their children for new or unpleasant situations and explain what happens in such situations. That makes children less anxious.

For example: We're going to see the doctor. We'll go on the bus to see the doctor. We'll wait there in a waiting room. The doctor will ask us where it hurts. The doctor will look at your body. He has special things that help your body to get better.



Keep to routines and rituals

Children need information and guidance so that they can find their place in the world and understand their everyday life.

It helps children if certain things are always the same, every day. Parents can build routine into the day by always doing things in the same way at the same time.

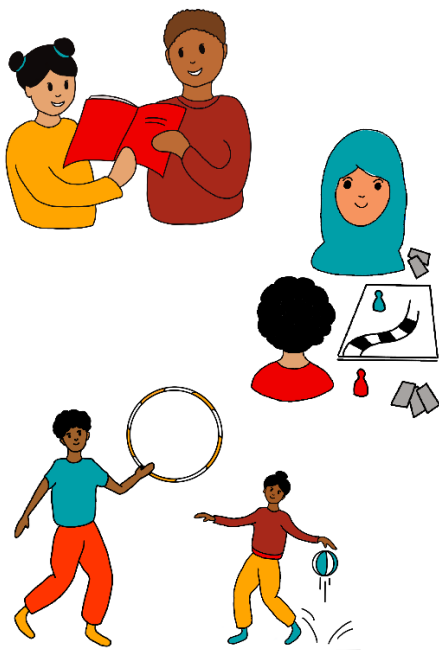
For example: Clean teeth and read a story every day in the same place before going to bed. Say a prayer before eating every day. Always clear away toys after playing.



Give love

A child needs love and affection from its parents. There are many different ways that parents can show a child that they love them just as they are.

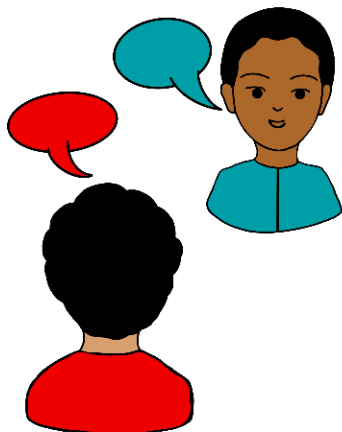
For example: Say the words “I love you” to your child. Cuddle your child. Praise your child. Smile at your child. Give your child treats.



Play and have fun together

A child needs love and affection from its parents. It does children good to spend time with their family. Even if life is sometimes hard, you need time to do nice things together.

For example: Look at picture books together. Play a card game. Sing a song. Tell each other jokes. Make something. Draw pictures for each other. Do sport together.



Talk to each other

Children are full of feelings, thoughts and ideas. It's good for children to talk about them. Parents can talk to a child about anything that is concerning the child. They can ask the child for their opinion and their thoughts.

It can also help the child if parents give a name to the emotions that they see in the child (“I can see that you are sad/angry/happy...”)



Cultivate traditions in your family

Every family has its own traditions and rituals. It is good for children if the family traditions remain the same wherever they are and the parents pass these traditions on to the children.

For example: Rituals before eating. Cooking a special dish. Celebrating birthdays. Festive activities on certain days. Prayers.



Showing appreciation

Children want to make their parents proud. They go to a lot of trouble to please their parents. But sometimes children do things wrong, something gets broken or they are tired and in a bad mood. Then parents need to be very patient. It's good for children if parents say thank you when children help them. Or if parents stay calm (instead of swearing) if the child does something wrong or is tired. It's good for children if parents show them that: "I can see that you actually mean well and are doing your best. I appreciate your help".

Personal ideas

On this website you can find lots of free information about health and education, in your own language: www.savethechildren.ch/parents

Copyright: Save the Children Switzerland; based on: Save the Children Sweden, Joan E. Durrant (2016). Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting / CIP Centar za interaktivnu pedagogiju & Save the Children International Serbia - Parenting on the Move