

Parents and Carers Guide to Understanding Your Child



Based on the Solihull Approach
Parenting Programme.





Introduction



Well done for completing the Solihull Parenting Programme.

This guide has been created to support with reminders of how to keep the programme fresh in your mind and to allow you to make the most out of every interaction with your child. We wish you lots of success for the future.



How are you and your child feeling?

- Everyone feels differently in different situations.
- How do you feel right now?
- How does your child feel right now?



Now Try...

Look at the feelings and discuss with your child how they make you both feel physically. Putting feelings into words can help us to understand them better.

What other emotions can you come up with, how do they feel?





Tuning in to your child's development

- We all grow and learn at different rates... we are unique!
- Feeling loved, safe, secure and nurtured helps our babies' brains grow and develop.
- Have you noticed anything new your child/young person has done?
- What did you do when you noticed?
- How can you encourage your child / young person?



Now Try...



- Praise all effort and achievements, no matter how small or insignificant they may seem.
- Be specific when giving praise
- Think about age appropriate praise, your younger child may like a hug or a cheer, older children may prefer a high five.
- Ensure your child knows they have your full attention when you praise them.



Responding to your child's feelings

- We all express our feelings differently but how we are supported by others around us can make a difference to how we respond to situations.
- How do you respond when your child is upset?
- What could you do differently?

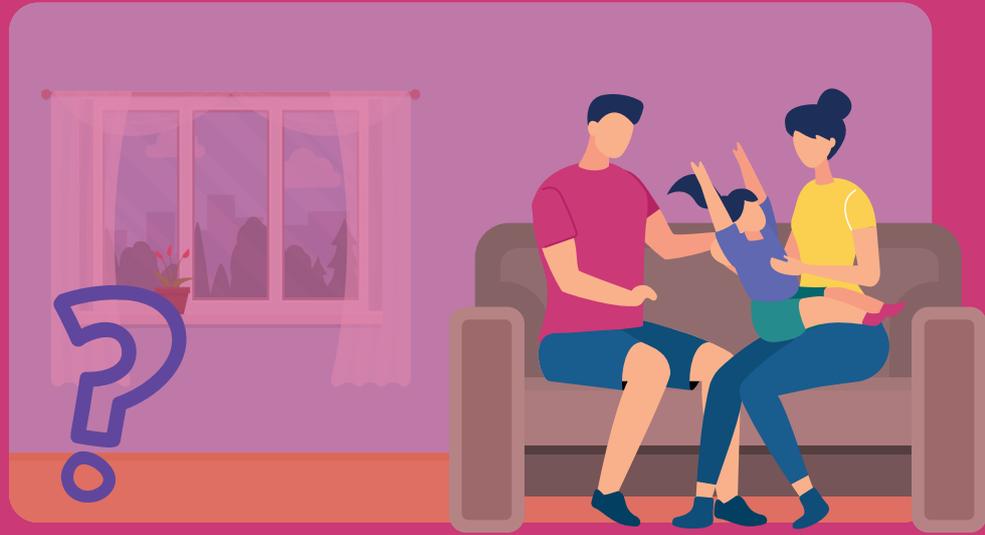




Now Try...

- Safe space to be alone, give your child time to calm down.
- Provide calming activities.
- Put their feeling into words e.g “It looks like you are upset/sad/angry, do you want to talk about it?”





Different styles of parenting

- Our experiences, both positive and negative, of how we were raised influences how we then raise our children.
- What kind of parent are you?
- What do you want to pass on to your children?



Now Try...

- Lead by example, you are your child's first teacher and your child will copy your behaviour.





Parent / Child Partnership - having fun together

- We all like to have fun and by doing this you are building better connections and supporting and encouraging development.
- How do you praise your child's creative fun? e.g. painting.
- How do you support your child's curiosity?
- It is ok to get things wrong.



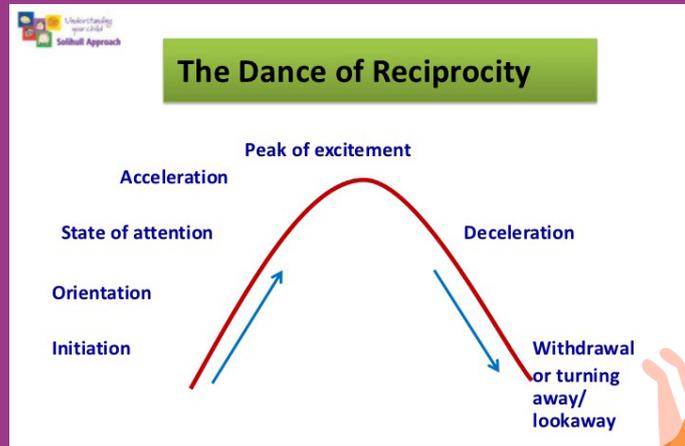


Now Try...

- Put aside some time to join in with your child's interests or hobbies, or find something new that you can learn together.
- Remember to praise when a new skill is learnt or something goes well.



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The rhythm of interaction and sleep

- The way we interact with our child is a rhythm / dance with a start, middle and end.
- The more you practice your dance the better you will become.
- Can you think how your interaction helps your child sleep.
- How does your child express their needs? (hunger, thirst, tiredness, boredom)

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Now Try...



- Watch how other people interact, this can be adults or children, can you recognise the 7 steps in the dance of reciprocity?
- Can you see when your child is ready to end the interaction.





Self regulation and anger

- We all need to offload. It's ok to be angry, how you deal with it is what's important.
- What does the word anger mean?
- When can it be helpful?
- What things make you angry?
- What helps calm you down?

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Now Try...



- Next time you are getting angry find an activity that calms you down, this could be as simple as walking away and putting the kettle on.
- Depending on the age of your child you can discuss what calms them down.
- Allow your child and yourself to calm down before trying to resolve the issue that made you angry in the first place.



Communication and attunement - how to recover when things go wrong

- Sometimes we are out of tune with others and we can get lost in our own thoughts and emotions. Our children are just the same.
- Can you think of a time when you and your child have been out of tune?
- How did you get back in tune with your child?



Now Try...

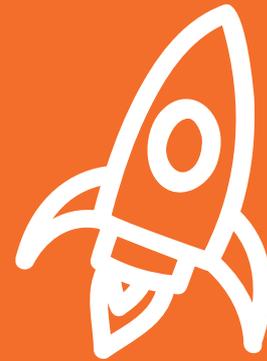
- It is ok to not be in tune all the time, in fact your child will learn a great deal about how to resolve issues when you fall out of tune.
- As a parent it is vital that you are the person to repair the break in attunement, even if you feel you are in the right and your child is wrong. Try words like “ I am sorry I got cross with you but I felt that.....”

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Celebration

- You are amazing and so is your child!
- Enjoy your child!
- Make the most of every interaction!





Containment is where a person receives and understands the emotional communication of another without being overwhelmed by it and communicates this back to the other person.

Reciprocity is the interaction between two people, where both are involved in the initiation, regulation and termination. Remember the dance?

Behaviour Management is the process in which adults teach their children self-control, enabling them to participate in society. This will include boundary setting.

Three Key Questions:

1. What is the exact age and stage of development of your child?
2. What changes have taken place in your child's /your life recently?
3. How well is your child able to communicate his/her needs to you?



Further support and guidance



You can contact us in the following ways:



parentingreferrals@tameside.gov.uk



Grow in Tameside or
Successful Families in Tameside.



www.tameside.gov.uk/Early-Help/Professional/The-early-help-access-point

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