

# 21 practical alternatives to smacking

Children enrich our lives with their joyful energy, their laughter and their uncomplicated spontaneity. They need to explore, experiment and discover as they learn. But children do get tired like us, and they do make mistakes, so try:

- taking a deep breath and gathering your thoughts
- showing them what they can do instead of what they can't
- taking them outside for a run around
- saying lots of positive things when they are good
- walking away, thinking about what you are going to do, but keeping them within your sight
- thinking about whether they are tired or hungry
- keeping your expectations and rules simple
- accepting mistakes and showing them how they can fix them
- clapping once to get their attention, then giving a simple explanation
- explaining consequences (for example if they throw a toy it might break)
- putting them in a quiet safe place so they can calm down
- getting down to their height to avoid being threatening
- putting precious things out of reach
- singing some loud songs together
- ringing a friend or a neighbour
- sharing stories with other parents
- turning tasks into a game
- speaking softly
- being firm, fair and friendly
- ignoring tantrums
- acting as you want your child to act.

**Barnardos promotes loving parenting and effective positive discipline**

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