

## Diversity

The rich cultural diversity in our community is reflected in the way families bring up their children.

Approaches to being a parent can vary within families, ethnic groups and communities.

British society acknowledges and affirms cultural diversity but children, whatever their cultural background, always have a right to be protected.

**Anything** that causes harm to a child, whether part of a cultural or faith tradition, is never acceptable.

Some practices that may be culturally acceptable in some countries are **banned by law** in the United Kingdom.

*If you would like information about parenting support or childcare please contact the Families Information & Outreach Service on 0208 921 6921.*

### For more information please see:

- *AFRUCA 's Manual on Child Protection for Parents in the UK available at: [www.afruca.org](http://www.afruca.org)*
- *NSPCC's Encouraging Better Behaviour available at: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)*



# Disciplining Your Children

## A Guide For Parents



## Child Protection – What's it got to do with you?

Parents and carers want the best for their children. They help their children by giving clear and consistent messages about their behaviour.

Discipline is important to help our children grow into well-balanced and responsible people.

Sometimes parents can respond too harshly to situations and a child might suffer an injury or emotional harm as a result of the methods used.

In some circumstances this may result in a referral to Children 's Social Care and Police who may be called to investigate.

This results in great stress for the whole family.

The aim of this leaflet is to support parents and carers to feel able to manage their children's behaviour and to seek advice if they are having difficulties.

## The Law – How it applies to you

UK law protects every child up to the age of 18 years from cruel and abusive treatment by their parents and carers.

- It is against the law for a parent to use physical punishment on their child that causes marks.
- It is illegal to use an implement to hit a child.
- Parents who cause deliberate harm to their child could face criminal prosecution.
- It is against the law for anyone who is not the child's parent to use ANY form of physical punishment.

## Positive Parenting

### Ten Key Points:

- Have clear, simple, consistent rules and limits
- Listen to your child
- Lead by your own example
- Praise and reward good behaviour
- Ignore behaviour you do not want repeated
- Criticise behaviour you do not like, NOT your child
- Reason and discuss matters with your child
- Show your child as much love and support as possible
- Do ask for help before you feel overwhelmed

## Boundaries

We all know that children test our limits at times. We set 'boundaries' about what we expect of our children and family. If these boundaries are too loose and parents are inconsistent, children can become confused. If they are too harsh, then children do not develop their own sense of responsibility.

Think about the rules in your house and explain these to your children. Give them a chance to discuss the rules and to know when things might change. For instance, during school days you may expect a fixed bedtime but at weekends this could be later or negotiated.

## Consistency

It is important that children have routine and predictability. They need to know that there are consequences for how they behave. Rewarding positive behaviour is generally more effective than punishing challenging behaviour. Praise and encouragement are powerful tools for developing good habits.

However challenging your child 's behaviour is, it is important to be as consistent and fair as possible.