

Encouraging Positive Behaviour

Behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour is not a direct result of deafness/hearing impairment. However, it may be caused by a child's frustration over difficulties in communication.

Deaf children may exhibit some of these behaviours, as may hearing children:

tantrums	aggression
poor turn-taking skills	shyness
immaturity	inappropriate responses or actions
clinginess	inattention
under-achieving	erratic performance at school
not obeying instructions	

Positive management

Deaf children need clear rules and routines as a source of security. They need to understand 'why'. They need consistency.

Rewards work better than punishment. These can be praise, approval, hugs. Your child loves you and wants to please.

Spend time with your child. Make time regularly to play, listen and explain.

Be a good role model. Children learn by watching and talking, and will share your values.

What allowances should we make?

Except in the areas of speech and language you should assume that your child's development will be the same as that of a child who can hear normally. It is important to bring him/her up as you would your children who can hear well.

Bear in mind the child's level of language and understanding, and make sure s/he can understand what you expect.

Use gestures and facial expressions - your child may not be able to distinguish your tone of voice, but will be able to tell by your face when you are pleased.

Children do funny things, but remember if it is behaviour you don't want you need to look cross. Laughing while saying no isn't going to have the effect you want.

Make up your minds as a family about the kind of behaviour you will accept from your child.

keep your rules simple

make them clear

apply them to **everyone**

apply them right away and wherever you are

Remember: children have 'bad days' and sometimes it is better to ignore the small things.

Distraction - Help your toddler be 'good' by redirecting them to another task.

Pay more attention when your child behaves well - Notice the positive things they are doing. Catch the child being good. If you ignore a child who is being no trouble but pay attention to fussing or tantrums you are encouraging the very behaviour you would like to stop.

Think before saying "No" - avoid battles you can not win.

Tantrums!

Don't reward the tantrum with a lot of attention or by giving in. Any link between the tantrum and getting his/her own way is bound to encourage quicker outbursts next time.

Try changing your routines if there are some situations which always cause tantrums e.g. long shopping expeditions.

Try to distract the child away from things that always 'set them off'

Keep calm, remember you are the adult and do not come down to toddler-level and join in the tantrum.

If you are embarrassed by being in a public place try to remove the child quickly to somewhere less obvious

At home put the child on his own in a place where he is safe

In conclusion:

Be positive

Ignore bad behaviour whenever possible

Stick to the rules

Reward good behaviour