

Parenting Revolution

Children Edition

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SESSION 1

The Start

SESSION 2

The Heart

SESSION 3

The Team

SESSION 4

The Strategy

SESSION 5

The Influence

SESSION 6

The Game Plan

The Strategy

ACTIVITY SHEET



When you think of the sporting or music team analogies for family, the only way to yield harmony when in a state of play is when everyone follows the rules. Whether it be the boundaries on the court or field that the ball has to stay within or the notes on the sheet-music that musicians adhere to when playing, guidelines are to help make the experience both functional and fun. In the same way, families excel when a game plan is pre-established. This session will help you create a developmentally appropriate strategy which combines your mission and objectives with your values and vision, to establish rules and consequences.



PROGRAM DESIGN AND OBJECTIVES SUMMARY

This session of the Parenting Revolution (Children Edition) is designed to help you:

- (a)** understand cognitive development and the best ways to help children learn to 'play well'
- (b)** effective strategies for dealing with incidental behaviours
- (c)** encourage positive conduct and irradicate problematic behaviours

Cognitive Capacity

In childhood, there are two classic styles of thinking; concrete and abstract. When processing information, younger children are dominated by their sensory motor cortex (concrete). However, as a child matures, their frontal lobes start to activate, giving them greater access to logical and rational thought styles (abstract).



CONCRETE THINKING

Prior to the age of 6-7 years, your child will largely process information using senses and emotions. As such, your child's behaviour is typically governed by what they like or dislike. Their decisions are often definitive, resulting in a strong need to do things their way. Like 'concrete', their will is generally inflexible with little room for negotiation. Knowing this will allow you to better plan behavioural influence strategies. Children at the developmental stage learn best by 'hands on' experience. Despite seeing things from a narrow viewpoint, guided learning through creative play in a sensory rich and rewarding environment will be advantageous.



ABSTRACT THINKING

During the middle-years of childhood, you may notice your child starting to absorb ideas, information and impressions that help them to see a bigger picture. As abstract thinking develops, your child's narrow viewpoint broadens. They'll process information not just by what they experience, but also by how they analyse information and concepts (i.e. the value and meaning of things). Knowing this allows you to relate to your child in deeper ways, which in turn, accelerates long term behaviour change. Having the capacity to understand the 'why' behind your disciplinary decisions, your child's insight will help drive self-motivation.

FACILITATE NEW LEARNING WITH GREATER EFFECTIVENESS. BY UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S COGNITIVE CAPACITY, YOU CAN TAILOR BEHAVIOURAL INFLUENCE STRATEGIES IN DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE WAYS.

Parenting Approach

Parenting the 'concrete thinker' typically involves establishing consequences that are sensorily and emotionally rewarding or unrewarding. Parenting the 'abstract thinker' typically involves establishing consequences that are advantageous or disadvantageous logically, rationally and socially.



Match the parenting examples below with their concrete or abstract thought-style target:

CONCRETE THINKING



"Do you want to know a secret to doing better on your exam? Clean up your desk before you start to study. An organised environment helps you learn and recall information better. Would you like me to help you clean, or would you prefer to do it on your own?"

"Who would like to share the last slice of cake? OK, now, it seems that one half is larger than the other. Who wants to be generous and allow the other person to have the bigger half? Well done, that makes me proud. Because you were kind, you also get to have the cherry on top."

"Good news; when you've finished your chores, we'll be watching a family movie. However, the movie starts in 20 minutes (I'm setting the alarm). If you haven't finished your jobs by then, you'll miss out on the start of the movie. So, you'd better be quick and do a good job."

"In this house, we share. If you fight over a toy, you'll both lose it. I will take it away and no one will be able to play. So, here's a plan. How about you take turns. The person who play's second can have a couple of extra minutes. Who would like to go play with it first?"

"I understand you'd like to stay and play with your friends. However, your Aunty would appreciate it if you came to visit her. You don't have a choice over whether you come, but you do have a choice about the attitude you choose to come with. Choices have consequences."

"Who would like extra cuddles and story time tonight? If you go right now and put your pyjamas on, brush your teeth and climb into bed right away, I'll go find our favourite story book. But, if you dilly dally and delay, we might run out of time for stories. So, go quickly now."

ABSTRACT THINKING



Hindsight Foresight +

As the term 'raising children' suggests, parenting involves helping children 'grow up'. Maturity comes with insight, and insight comes from education. Whether you are parenting the concrete or abstract thinker, teaching is not merely giving instruction, lectures, or advice to your children, rather it involves 'experience' and derives 'meaning'.



From the list of examples below, identify parental statements that are directed towards: ✓

1. Concrete thinkers (experience driven: focus on senses/emotions)
2. Abstract thinkers (meaning driven: focus on ethics/morals)

	CONCRETE	ABSTRACT
"How did it feel when you saw how much they liked it?"		
"Explain to me, why that's not OK?"		
"How would it feel if your sister did that to you?"		
"If you eat without spilling, should you deserve more?"		
"If it happens again, what would be better to do next time?"		
"Tell me why it is important to play nicely?"		
"Why do you think the game will be over if you do it again?"		
"What example does that set for your younger brother?"		
"Why is it important to ask before you take things?"		
"Wow, that makes me so proud of you! Do you know why?"		

Kids learn best when they do the teaching.

Rules and Regulations

In any team sport there are two different types of rules: incidental and serious. An incidental behaviour is like kicking the ball out of bounds, whereas a serious behaviour is like committing a personal foul. Every rule book features consequences which are proportionate to the type of rule established. However, the term 'consequences' as it relates to parenting is often misconstrued as punishments and rewards. In reality, it's so much more than that.



INCIDENTAL BEHAVIOURS

If the ball goes out of bounds, the logical consequence is that there is a handover, a free throw, or a change in play. No one is in trouble. The ball is not condemned for going out of bounds, and the player is not banished from the field of play. Rather than any kind of reprimand, there's simply a pre-established logical consequence applied, before play goes on. Because these boundaries and consequences are pre-established before play, each team member knows what to expect. When the call is made and the consequence applied, players simply fall back into position without anyone having to tell them what to do. Logical consequences will help your child become self-motivated to play well, and importantly, have fun.

SERIOUS BEHAVIOURS

If a personal foul has been committed, your child has not just bent, stretched or pushed the boundary, they've disregarded, crossed and broken it. Behaviours that are considered serious are usually at odds with your family core values. As such, when a player is working against the team, they're promptly removed from the state of play. In a parenting context, as the child is sent to penalty box or side-line bench for a specified time, it gives both the child or parent some time to calm down and carefully consider the lesson that needs to be learned. In order to be welcomed back out into the state of play, the child needs to be able to articulate (a) which core values they let themselves and their team down on, and (b) what they can do better.



WHEN YOU TELL A CHILD TO DO SOMETHING, YOU'RE GIVING YOURSELF AN INSTRUCTION AT THE SAME TIME. IF YOUR CHILD FAILS TO ADHERE TO AN INSTRUCTION, THE RESPONSIBILITY FALLS BACK ON YOUR SHOULDERS TO FOLLOW THROUGH.

Incidental Behaviours

Identify the top three incidental behaviours that you would like to see less of (behaviours to be discouraged) and the top three incidental behaviours you would like to see more of (behaviours to be encouraged). Identify any contributing factors that may reinforce or maintain these behaviours.

Behaviours to be Discouraged	Behaviours to be Encouraged
01. <i>EXAMPLE: Not cleaning up after themselves. (child knows parent will clean up after them)</i>	01. <i>EXAMPLE: Happy and delightful (especially when well rested)</i>
02.	02.
03.	03.

Less is more.

WHEN ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES, ONLY WORK ON TRANSFORMING A FEW BEHAVIOURS AT ANY TIME. IF THERE ARE TOO MANY RULES IN YOUR FAMILY RULEBOOK, YOUR INTERACTIONS WILL BECOME DULL AND BORING. RULES SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO HELP YOUR FAMILY CULTIVATE JOY, NOT DESTROY IT.

Logical Consequences

A 'logical' consequence is simply the best matching response to a specific behaviour. For example, if a child is overtired, the logical consequence would be for them to have a rest. Please note, the child is not in trouble and 'rest' is not a punishment. The parent is simply matching the most 'logical' response to the behaviour being displayed.



For each behavioural example, circle the best fitting 'logical' consequences:

BEHAVIOUR	CONSEQUENCE - A -	CONSEQUENCE - B -
Child is caught cheating when playing a card game	Miss out on the next game.	Disqualified from playing with the family
Child says 'please' when making a request	Give them a cuddle; praise them for saying 'please'	Where appropriate, grant the request
Child came inside with muddy shoes on, dirtying the floor.	Require shoes to be thrown into the rubbish bin	Require the dirty floor to be cleaned up
Child appears happy and well mannered	Play and have fun together	Offer lollies or chocolate
Child feeling cranky, irritable and grumpy	Give choice between having a short rest or bite to eat	Refuse to grant rest or food until attitude changes
Child has misplaced school shoes and now running late	Go to school without shoes	Wear different shoes. Get organised the night before
Wet towel hung up after having a shower or bath	Enjoy a dry clean towel next time it's needed	Saved from having to do clothes washing this week



NOTE:

Logical consequences are not extreme reactions. For example, sending your child to school in their pyjamas (if not dressed on time), can cause psychological injury. When identifying logical consequences, be sure to prioritise the health and wellbeing of your child.

INSTEAD OF IMPOSING TERMS AND CONDITIONS, ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS. WHEN PARENT AND CHILD COME INTO AGREEMENT,

EVERYONE WINS

Serious Behaviours

Identify the three behaviours that don't line up with your core values (to be discouraged) and three behaviours that do line up with your core values (to be encouraged). Identify any contributing factors that may reinforce or maintain these behaviours.

Behaviours to be Discouraged	Behaviours to be Encouraged
01. <i>EXAMPLE: Back answering when given an instruction (I get lured into arguing with them)</i>	01. <i>EXAMPLE: Being generous in sharing toys (put in charge of looking after their sibling)</i>
02.	02.
03.	03.

CHILDREN RESPOND WELL TO SYMBOLS. THE LITERAL USE OF COLOURED CARDS IN ARRESTING AND REWARDING SERIOUS BEHAVIOURS HAS BEEN FOUND HIGHLY EFFECTIVE. EVEN AFTER JUST A FEW WEEKS OF USING THE CARD SYSTEM, YOU CAN EXPECT YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR TO BEGIN LINING UP WITH YOUR FAMILY'S CORE VALUES. SOME FAMILIES LIKE TO KEEP THE SYSTEM GOING OVER AN ENTIRE SCHOOL TERM, WHEREAS OTHERS SIMPLY REVISIT THE CARD SYSTEM WHENEVER BEHAVIOUR NEEDS ADJUSTING.





YELLOW CARD

A yellow card indicates that the child's behaviour will not be tolerated. The parent-referee offers no instruction or justification when holding up the card. All players know exactly what a yellow card means. The child must promptly take themselves off to a pre-established penalty-box location (e.g., chair, step, mat) for a specified time (typically one minute for every year of age). When the allocated time expires, the child is given the opportunity to earn their way back on the field. Because kids learn best when they teach, the child must articulate what they did wrong, what family core value they breached, how they will rectify things and what they will do better next time. Without intentional learning, 'time out' is ineffective.



RED CARD

A red card is issued when a child is delaying or refusing to comply with a yellow card. In the first instance, a red card means for every minute the child delays going to the pre-established penalty-box location, it will be added to their time. If they point-blank refuse to go, the RED card can also serve as a final warning before the parent intervenes with a more serious penalty (e.g. removal of privileges). Serious consequences are designed to help your child take you 'seriously'. Irrespective of your personal disciplinary practices, serious consequences need to be pre-established with your family team and executed with the self-discipline of a referee (in the absence of raised voices, physical threats or emotional manipulation).



GREEN CARD

A green card is issued when your child's behaviour is in line with your family's core values (when they effectively contribute to your objective/mission). A green card indicates that the child's behaviour is worthy of celebration (equivalent to scoring or saving a goal). A green card is an opportunity for you to communicate descriptively (a) what was good about your child's behaviour, (b) why it was so good, and (c) how it made you feel to witness their successful play. A green card is also accompanied by an intrinsic reward (e.g. a marble placed in a jar representing a special privilege or time spent with mum and/or dad doing fun activities). The spending of 'special' time can take place as often as you determine.

Common Questions

Where is the best location for you to establish a penalty box or side-line bench?

Choose a location (e.g. step, chair or mat) in a neutral part of the house where your child can still see you. The location should be an unfavourable place where the child wouldn't like to spend any length of time. For this reason, never send your child to their bedroom. Bedrooms are safe havens where positive emotions are cultivated.

How long should the penalty box duration be?

The developmental age of your child will determine how long they're able to sit still and be quiet for (generally, one minute for every year of age, or less, depending on your child's specific needs). Yet, rather than the length of time spent in the penalty box, it's the quality of discipline exhibited that is most important.

What if I need to send more than one child simultaneously from the state of play?

Each child should have their own preestablished penalty box location, so if for any reason more than one child needs to be sent from the state of play, they will go to different locations. Given that length of time will vary by age, unless your children are twins, they will have an opportunity to articulate their reason for being there at different times.

What if my child starts talking, crying, playing in the penalty box before their time is up?

Time in the penalty box is to be spent in silence: no talking, playing or moving from the specified location. The goal is self-discipline. If your child breaks the penalty box code of conduct in any way (including asking if their time is up yet), their time simply starts again (logical consequence).

If my child keeps acting up and I must continually re-set the clock, how long is too long?

The most important thing to understand is that you do not keep your child in the penalty box, they do! They can come out whenever they like – just as soon as they've served their allocated time and communicated the lesson learned. So long as you NEVER give in, an initial 'battle of the wills' need only ever take place one time.

What if my child's too young to articulate why they were issued a yellow card?

If your child genuinely doesn't understand what they did wrong or is too young to articulate which core value they breached, how they'll rectify things, or what they can do better, simply ask simple multi-choice questions. In understanding that kids learn best when they teach, have your child provide appropriate answers (e.g. "Are you here because of <A> or ?").

Positive Reinforcement

Investing all your energy into correcting unwanted behaviour doesn't always bring about the desired transformation you seek. Research shows that positive reinforcement is even more powerful than negative reinforcement. Praise communicates to your child not only which choices are wise, considerate and helpful, but also which behaviours are in line with your family's core values. Strategic praise is not a feel-good comment to boost a child's ego, it is a tool used for learning.

GENUINE TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES METAPHORICAL 'HEART SURGERY', WITH UNCONDITIONAL LOVE BEING THE CHIEF SURGEON. YOU CAN'T GET TO YOUR CHILD'S HEART THROUGH THE MERE CORRECTION OF BEHAVIOUR. SUSTAINABLE CHANGE TAKES PLACE FROM THE INSIDE OUT.



The Praise Sandwich

01

WHAT

Telling your child WHAT specific behaviour was good not only captures your child's attention, it also pinpoints what's worth celebrating.

02

WHY

Telling your child WHY this specific behaviour is so valued allows for learning (especially if reinforcing core values). It's the meaning in the middle that matters.

03

HOW

Telling your child HOW their positive behaviour makes you feel (how it impacts you emotionally), builds empathy and reinforces motivation.

Your Family Rule Book

	Negative Consequences	Negative Behaviours (to be discouraged)	Positive Behaviours (to be encouraged)	Positive Consequences
INCIDENTAL BEHAVIOUR		1.	1.	
		2.	2.	
		3.	3.	
	Negative Consequences	Negative Behaviours (to be discouraged)	Positive Behaviours (to be encouraged)	Positive Consequences
SERIOUS BEHAVIOUR	YELLOW CARD  PENALTY BOX	1.	1.	GREEN CARD  PRAISE SANDWICH
		2.	2.	
		3.	3.	



NOTE: Transcribe your top three 'Incidental' and 'Serious' behaviours (from pages 7 and 9).