

COVID-19 PARENTING

Tips for caseworkers

to identify families at risk and give parenting support

Thank you for continuing to contact these families. Your support will really make a difference to them. Whenever you call, check if this is an OK time for them to speak.

Brief questions to identify high risk families

This situation is making families very stressed. Could you tell me how stressful you find parenting is now? 0 – absolutely fine 10 – unable to cope	High risk – 5 or higher
A lot of families are having arguments in lockdown, or feeling like their children are trying to make them angry. Are either of these things happening in your home? 0 – never 10 – all the time	High risk – 5 or higher
<i>Note</i> – you know your families. If you know they are at high risk then follow your knowledge or instinct on this. You are the experts here.	High risk – follow your expertise.

For all families: Would you be happy to get some free text messages for caregivers during COVID-19?
[if yes] Add their number to the text messaging system for parenting tips [available by end May]

Next steps: Evidence-based suggested guides for your calls



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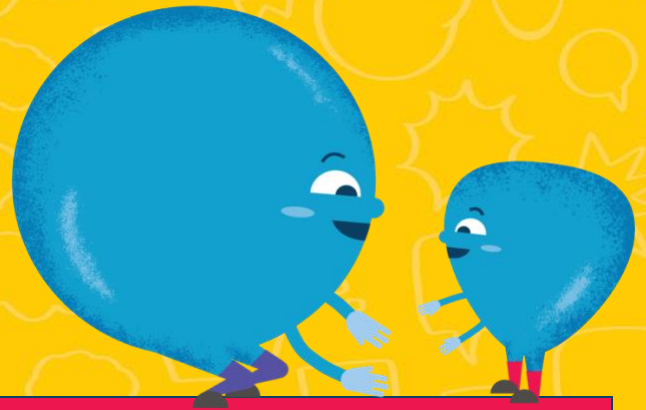
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Tips for caseworkers

For caseworkers: You deserve praise!
Thank you for continuing to support families in need, even in these difficult times. You are heroes.



Call 1

New tip: Take a pause

Taking a pause helps when you are feeling very stressed or angry with your children/teenagers. If you feel you might shout or hit, move away from them and take five deep breaths in and out, in and out. *[Some people like to sing a song – such as a gospel song – in their heads when they do this].* Millions of people find this helps a lot. Try it once today and see if it helps you!

Call 2

Asking about the last tip

Were you able to take a pause with five deep breaths? Did it help?

[if yes] Well done to you! You should be really proud of yourself!

[if no] Why was this difficult? Can we solve this together?

[Prompts: help them to think of their own solutions, share other families' solutions, break it down into steps, praise them for trying, encourage them not to give up.]

New tip: One-to-one time

If you can build a strong relationship with your child, they will want to behave better. Can you have 20 minutes each day when you give them your full attention? It works well if they choose what they want to do with you. If you have no time, you can do a household chore together such as cleaning or cooking, and sing as you do it! This will make them feel important and loved.

[Here it is also good to ask: are any of your children very quiet? We sometimes don't give as much attention to a child who is withdrawn. Use one-to-one time to support them – they may prefer to use drawing or games to communicate.]

Call 3

Asking about the last tip

Were you able to spend 20 minutes of one-to-one time each day with your child?

[if yes] Fantastic! You are doing great even at this very hard time. How about taking a pause when you feel upset or angry?

[if no] Why was this difficult? Can we solve this together?

[Prompts: help them to think of their own solutions, share other families' solutions, break it down into steps, praise them for trying, encourage them not to give up.]

New tip: 'Spot and praise'

We often give our kids attention when they behave badly, and we don't when they are being good because we think 'oh, now I can get on with the washing'! But if we can spot them being good and PRAISE them for it, kids will want to get more of the praise and attention and will be good more often. Can you try to praise your child once a day this week?



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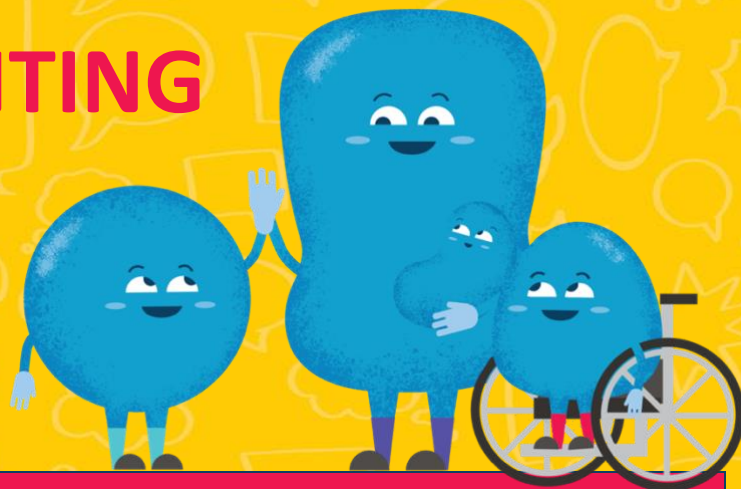


UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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For caseworkers: Thank you for your dedication and commitment to keep contacting these families. We are so grateful to you.



Call 4

Asking about the last tip

Were you able to spot and praise your children for behaving well?

[If yes] Well done!

[If no] What made this difficult? Can we solve this together?

[Prompts: help them to think of their own solutions, share other families' solutions, break it down into steps, praise them for trying, encourage them not to give up.]

New tip: Take care of yourself

How are you feeling? It's important to look after yourself too. When your children are asleep, is there something you could do for yourself that makes you feel happier? Can you try this week to give yourself some healthy breaks?

[Prompts: talking to someone, singing, having a cup of tea.]

Call 5

Asking about the last tip

Were you able to give yourself some breaks this week? What did you do?

[If yes] Well done – you deserve it. How is praising your children going?

[If no] What made this difficult? Can we solve this together?

[Prompts: help them to think of their own solutions, share other families' solutions, break it down into steps, praise them for trying, encourage them not to give up.]

New tip: Say go rather than stop

Try telling your child exactly what you want them to do – rather than what you don't want them to do (which we do a lot!). Try saying, 'please tidy up' instead of 'don't make a mess'.

Call 6

Asking about the last tip

Were you able to tell your child what you wanted them to do, rather than what you didn't want them to do?

[If yes] Well done – tell me about a time you did this! Are you taking a pause with deep breaths when you feel upset or angry?

[If no] What made this difficult? Can we solve this together?

[Prompts: help them to think of their own solutions, share other families' solutions, break it down into steps, praise them for trying, encourage them not to give up.]

New tip: Preventing anger

Our children can make us really angry. But often that anger is also about our situation. Many parents are more likely to feel angry when they are hungry or tired or feeling lonely. Is there something that always makes you less able to be calm? Can we think about ways to help with this? *[Prompts: talk to someone if feeling lonely, take a rest.]*



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For caseworkers: Thank you for keeping in touch with these families. Remember to look after yourselves too. You are stars.



Call 7

Asking about the last tip

Were you able to work out times when you feel angry, and something that can help?

[If yes] Well done – that’s great! Are you giving yourself some breaks to help with stress?

[If no] What made this difficult? Can we solve this together?

[Prompts: help them to think of their own solutions, share other families’ solutions, break it down into steps, praise them for trying, encourage them not to give up.]

New tip: Make handwashing fun

Is there a song you could sing together when you wash your hands? For young children this can be a silly song, or add new words to the tune of a favourite song for teenagers. You can add actions and make it fun!

Call 8

Asking about the last tip

Did you try the handwashing song?

[If yes] Well done to you! How about spotting when your child or teenager is being good and praising them? Are you able to keep doing this?

[If no] Why is this difficult? Can we solve this together?

[Prompts: help them to think of their own solutions, share other families’ solutions, break it down into steps, praise them for trying, encourage them not to give up.]

New tip: Using calm consequences

When children behave badly, calmly giving them a consequence for their action (such as taking away a toy for a short while) can work better than shouting at them or hitting them. Try these steps: 1) give your child the choice to follow your instruction before giving the consequence, 2) choose a consequence which is realistic 3) afterwards, give your child the chance to do something good, and praise them for it.

Call 9

Asking about the last tip

Were you able to use calm consequences this week? How did it go?

[If yes] Be proud of yourself! How about taking a pause with deep breaths when you feel upset or angry?

[If no] What made this difficult? Can we solve this together?

[Prompts: help them to think of their own solutions, break it down into steps, praise them for trying, encourage them not to give up.]

Recap

We’ve talked together about things that have helped other caregivers with children. Looking after yourself, taking a pause, spending time every day with our children, praise, saying the behaviour that we want, and giving calm consequences. Would you like to talk through any of these again?

Every time you say something positive, or stop yourself from shouting or hitting, you are increasing your child’s brain development. You deserve to praise yourself!