

## Webinar 5

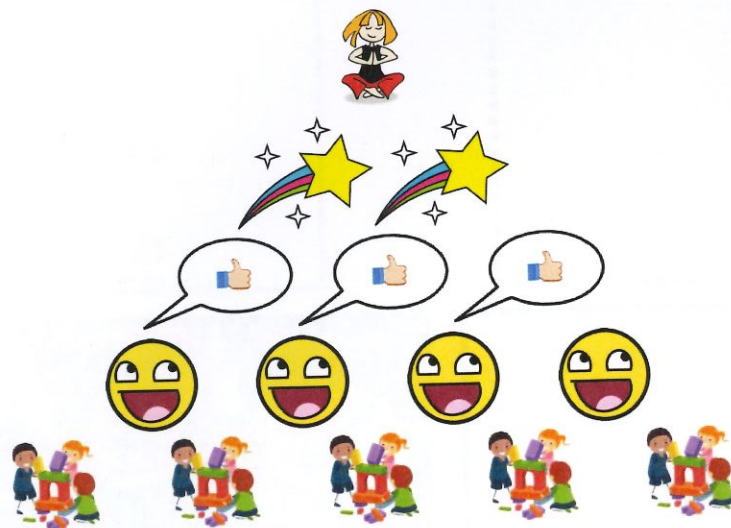
Time to Talk

about ...



Consequences

### The Big Picture



- **Lots** of play to build strong and positive relationships with the child
- **Plenty** of praise for the things that the child does well
- **Frequent** use of positive commands to encourage appropriate behaviour
  - **Occasional** rewards for changing persistent or challenging behaviour
- A **little** use of withdrawing attention or Calm Time, saved for particularly problematic or unsafe behaviour





## Consequences

As we discussed in Webinar 1, all children crave attention. It is the thing that they want most from parents and other adults. If a child cannot get positive attention, they will instead try to get negative attention. **This is because, from a child's perspective, negative attention is better than no attention at all!**

As we have discovered throughout our webinars, using play, praise, commands and rewards are all ways to encourage the child's appropriate behaviour by giving it positive attention.

However, these techniques do not always work for some of the particularly problematic or even unsafe behaviour that young children can present us with. When this happens, and if it is safe to do so, we may instead choose to **give inappropriate behaviour no attention at all**, or in the most extreme cases, remove our attention whilst also giving the child the chance to calm down.

## Withdraw Attention



In our busy daily lives, **ignoring inappropriate behaviour** can be one of the most difficult things to do. However, it is **an invaluable way to encourage the child to seek positive attention by displaying more appropriate behaviour**.

You may choose to ignore behaviours that are not putting the child or any others at risk of harm, such as repeatedly pulling at your sleeve and shouting '**BISCUIT! BISCUIT! BISCUIT!**' However, it would be unsafe to ignore a child throwing wooden blocks at the biscuit tin if another child was close by and could get hurt.

When ignoring inappropriate behaviour try to ensure that your body language reflects this, by avoiding eye contact or having an angry expression. This may be easier to do if you distract yourself, such as by looking at a magazine. This will also make it clear to the child that you have withdrawn your attention from them.

## Distract



When the child is continuing to behave inappropriately, distraction can also be an invaluable way of giving them positive attention. For example, as the child is shouting '**BISCUIT! BISCUIT! BISCUIT!**' you may look at your watch and say 'Oh look! Time to get ready for snack. Would you like to help me?'

With both ignore and distract techniques, it is important to give the child positive attention, such as eye contact, a big smile and **instant** and **specific praise** as soon as they stop shouting and pulling. This will help to reinforce the appropriate behaviour that they are now showing, making them more likely to comply again in the future.

It is also important **to move on from the inappropriate behaviour**, avoid referring to it again and reward your child by resuming happy and relaxed interactions with them.

## Calm Down



Occasionally, however, the child may present you with behaviour that causes them to become highly **distressed** or **unsafe**, such as tantrums that involve hitting, kicking or throwing. In these most extreme cases it is important not only to **withdraw adult attention**, but to give the child a **safe space** and the **time** that they need to **calm down**.

Once this has happened it is important to give **positive attention** to your child **straight away** by resuming happy and relaxed interactions, avoid referring to the inappropriate behaviour, **distract** with a new activity and giving **praise** as soon as possible for any appropriate behaviour that your child goes on to display.

**Use Top Tips for Setting Up and Using Calm-Time to talk to your child and practise Calm Time this week.**



# Top Tips



## for Setting Up and Using CALM TIME

### WHO?

Most children of pre-school age will benefit from the **effective** and **consistent** use of Calm Time by adults.

### WHAT?

Calm Time is giving the child a **safe space**, **ways to help them calm down**, such as counting out loud, or squeezing a stress-ball and the **time** that they need to regulate their feelings and emotions and resume appropriate behaviour.

### WHEN?

Calm Time should be saved for use when the child presents you with behaviour that causes them to become highly **distressed** or **unsafe**, such as tantrums that involve crying, shouting, hitting, kicking or throwing.

### WHERE?

Calm Time should **not be fixed** to one spot, such as a chair or a stair. The child may begin to connect feelings of shame with being told to go there. Calm Time can instead be used by adults in **any place** and at **any time**. An effective Calm Time spot will be **safe** and **free from distractions**, so that the child can remain focussed on calming down.

### WHY?

Calm Time is a way of **withdrawing attention** from a child when they are behaving **extremely inappropriately**. Over time, young children soon learn that the adult attention that they crave is given for appropriate behaviour only.

### HOW?

#### When the child is calm ...

- ✓ **Talk** about Calm Time, when it is used and how it works
- ✓ **Practise** with the child by showing them where they might go and what they might do
- ✓ Find out what **calm down strategies** work best for the child and allow them to practise

#### When your child needs Calm Time ...

- ✓ Use **IF-THEN** statements to give them warning that they may require Calm Time: *If you cannot play with the blocks safely, then you will need some Calm Time*
- ✓ If the inappropriate behaviour continues, give a **positive command** or lead the child to a safe space: *Please go over and sit on the chair for some Calm Time*
- ✓ Use **WHEN-THEN** statements to explain how Calm Time will work: *When you are calm and ready to play gently again, then you can go back to the blocks*
- ✓ Give a **calm down strategy** if required: *You can squeeze your ball to help you calm down or You could count out loud to help you calm down*
- ✓ **Withdraw attention** until the child is calm enough to resume appropriate behaviour. This is **not time bound**: it may be seconds; it may be minutes. Then give another positive command: *Now that you are calm again you can come off the chair and go back to play.*
- ✓ Remember to give the child **instant** and **specific praise** as soon as you see them behaving appropriately again.



Dear \_\_\_\_\_ ,

All of the grown-ups at home and in my school are working together to help me to be the best behaved and happiest that I can be!

*You can help me too by ...*

 Playing with me	Play with me <b>lots!</b> Let me lead the play and do all of the talking.
 Praising me	Praise me <b>straight away</b> when I do something good. Tell me <b>what</b> you are praising me for. <i>'Well done for sharing your toy!'</i>
 Giving me positive commands	Tell me <b>what</b> to do. Instead of 'Don't run!' ... <i>... say 'Walk please.'</i>
 Rewarding me	A reward comes <b>after</b> I have done something well. <b>'First</b> tidy up, <b>then</b> you can pick a sticker.'
 Helping me to calm-down	Have a quiet, safe space, with few distractions, where I can go if I am tantruming and need to calm-down. This is called <b>Calm-Time</b> .

Thank-you for helping me to be brilliant!

From \_\_\_\_\_ x



## Adult Instructions for Using Fivel's Special Behaviour Treat Sheet

- ✓ Tell the child what Fivel's 'special behaviour' is going to be. This is the appropriate behaviour that you want to focus on with the child. Write the child's name and this 'special behaviour' in the space provided at the top of the chart.
- ✓ Explain to the child that every time you see them do this 'special behaviour' that they can colour in one of Fivel's bananas. When they colour in all 5 bananas, they have reached The Treat Tree!
- ✓ Explain to the child that once they reach The Treat Tree they will receive a special treat.
- ✓ You may wish to create a Treat Box from which the child can pick their Treat Tree treat. This may be an old shoe box, decorated by the child, or wrapped-up in funky wrapping paper.
- ✓ Give the child a choice of suitable rewards that you have already picked out, for example 3 small, fun items, such as stickers, a small toy or a new pencil. Write or draw their choice onto the Treat Tree Scroll.
- ✓ Display the chart and the child's treat in a place where they can easily see it.
- ✓ Once the child has achieved their reward, you can add another small item to your shoe-box from which they can pick their treat the next time.
- ✓ Remember to regularly chat to the child about how the reward chart works.
- ✓ You can also refer your TOP Tips for Choosing and Using Reward Charts handout for any further help and advice on using this reward system effectively.

# Five's Special Behaviour Treat Sheet

\_\_\_\_\_ 's special behaviour is \_\_\_\_\_.

