Ignoring Misbehaviour

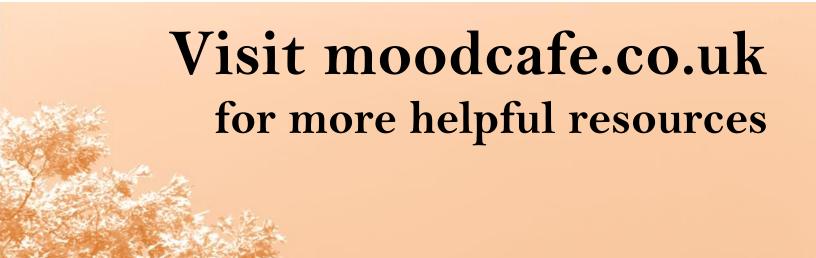# Help Yourself @ moodcafe.co.uk

Ignoring Misbehaviour

Inappropriate behaviour that are not dangerous to the child or other people such as whining, arguing, swearing, smart-talk etc can often be eliminated by being ignored.

Ignoring is one of the most effective techniques that can be used with children. This is mainly due to the 'attention rule' – behaviours that received attention (either positive or negative) are likely to occur again. Therefore by eliminating attention the misbehaviour will reduce.

Misbehaviour may get worse at first but if you give in at this point, the child will learn that misbehaving is an effective way of getting what they want.

Tips on ignoring misbehaviour:

- Avoid discussion and eye contact when ignoring misbehaviour.

- Try to maintain a neutral facial expression and avoid making angry comments.

- Use distraction techniques (such as choosing a cereal, give the child tasks) as soon as the child starts behaving more appropriately and praise this behaviour.

- Do not withhold attention, support and approval for too long.

- As soon as the misbehaviour stops praise this more appropriate behaviour.

- Physically move away from the child but stay in the same room so you can reinforce appropriate behaviour as soon as they stop misbehaving.

- Try to limit behaviours that will be ignored, chose one or two at a time.

- Do not ignore behaviours that are destructive to child, others or property. In these situations stronger consequences such as time out or loss of privileges should be used.

- Do not take ignoring to the extreme and threaten to leave or abandon the child. If the behaviour makes you feel this cross perhaps try another discipline technique such as time out or loss of privileges. These strategies are preferable as they teach your child that the relationship is secure.

- Remember ignoring only works if you give attention and praise to more appropriate behaviours.

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