***Top Tips to Reduce Behaviour and Frustration at Home***

* Talk in short sentence, you may even have to use one or two words depending on their level of understanding, for example: Kind hands, Kind feet, Good Listening or Finished. This is because children at a young age may not be able to process long sentences and lots of questions.
* Avoid asking too many questions without giving them time to respond. It takes a child 10 seconds, to be able to process what you have said. If it is too complex, then they will lose interest and may start to cause unwanted behaviour. Think of their brain as a marble run.
* Giving the child two choices helps them to feel independent and can help with speech and language. The use of Makaton signs and speech also helps to reduce frustration.
* We use the therapeutic approach for children which means that we name their need and use empathic responses, use phrases such as: I wonder how you’re feeling…, Stay close to me, I can see you are struggling…, I wonder if…, I know you have a kind heart… or I can see you are angry/ sad.
* Using a now and next card can help children to feel like they are in control and will reduce anxiety when going to a new activity or place. Let the child know how long until you will be changing to the next activity. As taking the child away from play without warning can cause unwanted behaviour. Using a minute sand timer or an egg timer can work, you can get these from the pound shops etc.
* Remember to pick your battles, especially if you don’t have time to follow through with the behaviour.
* Positive praise is key, Praise the child even when you feel like you don’t want to disturb them in their play. This gives them reassurance that they are doing well and following your expectations.
* Make sure that you work together with behaviour, sitting down without the child and discuss together what your expectations are is beneficial. This is so that the child can not triangulate between the adults in the home. The same boundaries and expectations really help the child to know what is expected of them. I would also give them an instruction rather than making a request. A request can be interpreted as an option or a choice, this can confuse the child and make communicating difficult. Instead of using the phrases such as can you tidy up? Do you want breakfast? I would say I need you to tidy up… or its time to have breakfast etc
* If a child is not doing what you have asked, they may need your support for example: use hand over hand to help them pick up toys if you have requested them to pick up. You can also use natural consequences this helps the child to understand cause and effect, with nurture in mind. For example: If the child refuses to put a coat on to go out then the natural consequence would be that they are cold, and this would help them to realise why they needed a coat in the first place. Once you have shown him that it is cold by perhaps helping them to touch their skin with their hand, you would offer the child something warm and nurturing. A natural consequence would not be that the coat is removed for a week.
* Instead of time out we would suggest time in, this is when you would say “stay close to me, I can see you are struggling”. This gives the time to self-regulate. If you can see that they are going to struggle with what you have asked them to do, then this is a great way of supporting your child before they get to the state of high anxiety and reduces behaviour. You could get the child to help you make it right with or they could help you with something in the home or wherever you may be. This gives them the understanding that you are here to keep them safe and can understand how they are feeling. It also shows them that they still have to make things right after, we can show sorry this can be with a cuddle or helping and then you can explain to them calmly what the behaviour was that had made you sad.

Please let us know if there is anything else, we can support you with and if you have any questions with using some of these strategies. Remember behaviour can sometimes get worse before it can get better but stick to it and you will see a difference. Remember these children are very young add some playfulness into your day with them, All the best.

P.A.C.E.

Is a great way to look at our children

P=Playfulness

A=Acceptance

C=Curiosity

E=Empathy.

More information is available about PACE please ask if you would like more details.