

WAMHS Newsletter

Welcome back to the WAMHS newsletter, we hope you had a lovely half term break and enjoyed all the sunshine! We know that some of you are very busy trying to juggle working from home with looking after your children and children are finding being indoors tough sometimes. With these things in mind this issue of the WAMHS newsletter covers play and making the most of special time, including some creative ideas for spending time together during lockdown.

Making the Most of Special Time

Special Time

Special time is a one-to-one time for you and your child.

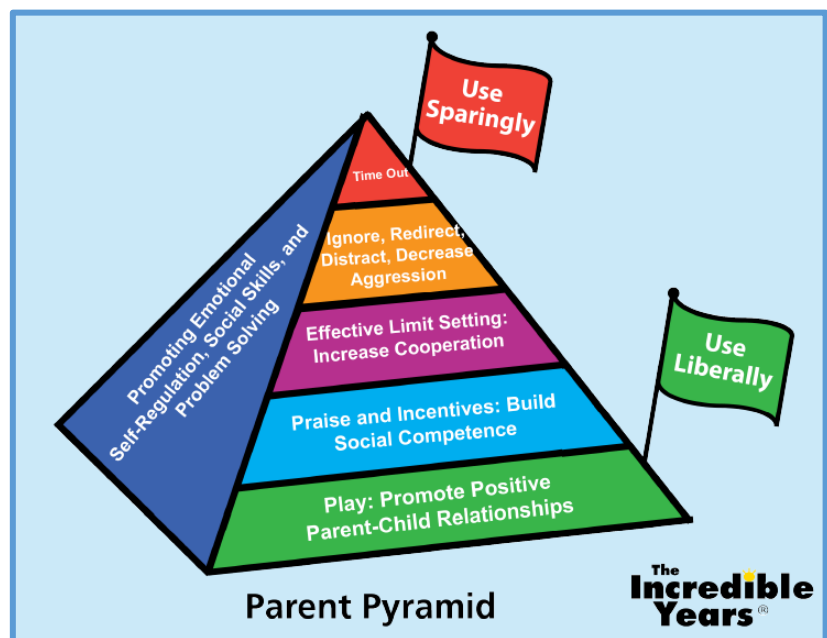
Special time reconnects us and gives children the experience of having their parent's full attention.

It gives the child a safe place to play out everyday issues that kids experience such as feeling powerless or upset.

Parents say that special time leads to significant changes in their child's behaviour.

Top Tips for Special Time

1. Let your child know that you want to have special time with them for 10 minutes or more a day – as often as you can, but ideally, at least once a week
2. Choose a time when other children can be looked after by someone else or keep other children distracted with an audio book or drawing materials
3. Set a timer for 10 minutes – or however long you have chosen - only finish when the buzzer goes off. If your child gets upset remind them when their next special time will be
4. Say "today you get to decide what we do with our special time and tomorrow I will – what shall we do today?"
5. Give them 110% of your attention with no agenda or distractions (turn off the TV, leave your phone in another room, silence your emails etc.)
6. Don't structure it! & Have fun!



The Parenting Pyramid

This pyramid is a helpful visual tool to demonstrate how a parent can positively affect their child's behaviour.

The base of the pyramid is all about **connection** and strengthening your relationship with your child. This is the foundation of parenting and where most time should be spent.

The top of the pyramid relates to **correcting** your child's behaviour. This should take up the least amount of time.

TOP TIP: when we connect often and coach well, we won't have to correct our children often.

Positive parenting should reduce the need for behaviour management strategies and increase competence and confidence in your child.



Let's Play

Why is play so important?

All children are born with the desire to play and explore – it's their job! It's how they learn and understand the world.

Play can tell us a lot about how a child is thinking and feeling. It helps with attention, focusing, taking turns, anticipating what comes next and developing language.

Playing with your child strengthens your relationship and encourages their social skills.

Top tips for play

Child-led play is a great way for children to express themselves and to build confidence.

All parents want to teach their children new skills. The best way to do this is to point out the things your child is already playing with or interested in e.g. "that's 1, 2, 3 little ducks", "that's the red car you've chosen". Try not to ask too many questions or make too many suggestions

Children don't need lots of expensive toys – the most important part is spending time together!

See what's catching their attention, help them explore in their own unique way

Messy play can be the best play – it can help children understand how to cope with messy feelings and tolerate difficult situations!

Breathing Technique of the Fortnight

ELEPHANT BREATHING



Stand with your feet wide apart and your arms dangling in front of your body like an elephant's trunk. As you breathe in deeply through your nose, raise your arms up high above your head. Then slowly swing your arms down again as you breathe out through your mouth.

Time Together During Lockdown

Making a fort/den: using bedding, tables, and fairy lights (anything you can find)

Cardboard box: a box can become a spaceship, a car, a house – the possibilities are endless!

Treasure hunt: write clues or draw a treasure map for your children. You could also hide things around the house e.g. small objects or post-it notes and see who can find them all

Nature walk: find interesting leaves and create a picture with them, go on safari or a bear hunt, create tree rubbings or daisy chains

Make a shaker: all you need is a small bottle and items that make noises or are stimulating to watch e.g. water, glitter, rice, conkers, beads

TOP TIP: glitter jars are also known as calm down jars and can be used to help children (and adults!) relax

Glitter Jars: How to Make Your Own

Add warm water to your jar (one third of the way up)

Add 60ml of glitter glue and stir

Add 3 drops of food colouring. Stir again.

Pour in 60-80g of glitter. Stir.

Top up with water until almost full.

Top Tip: for younger children you can use a plastic bottle instead of a glass jar