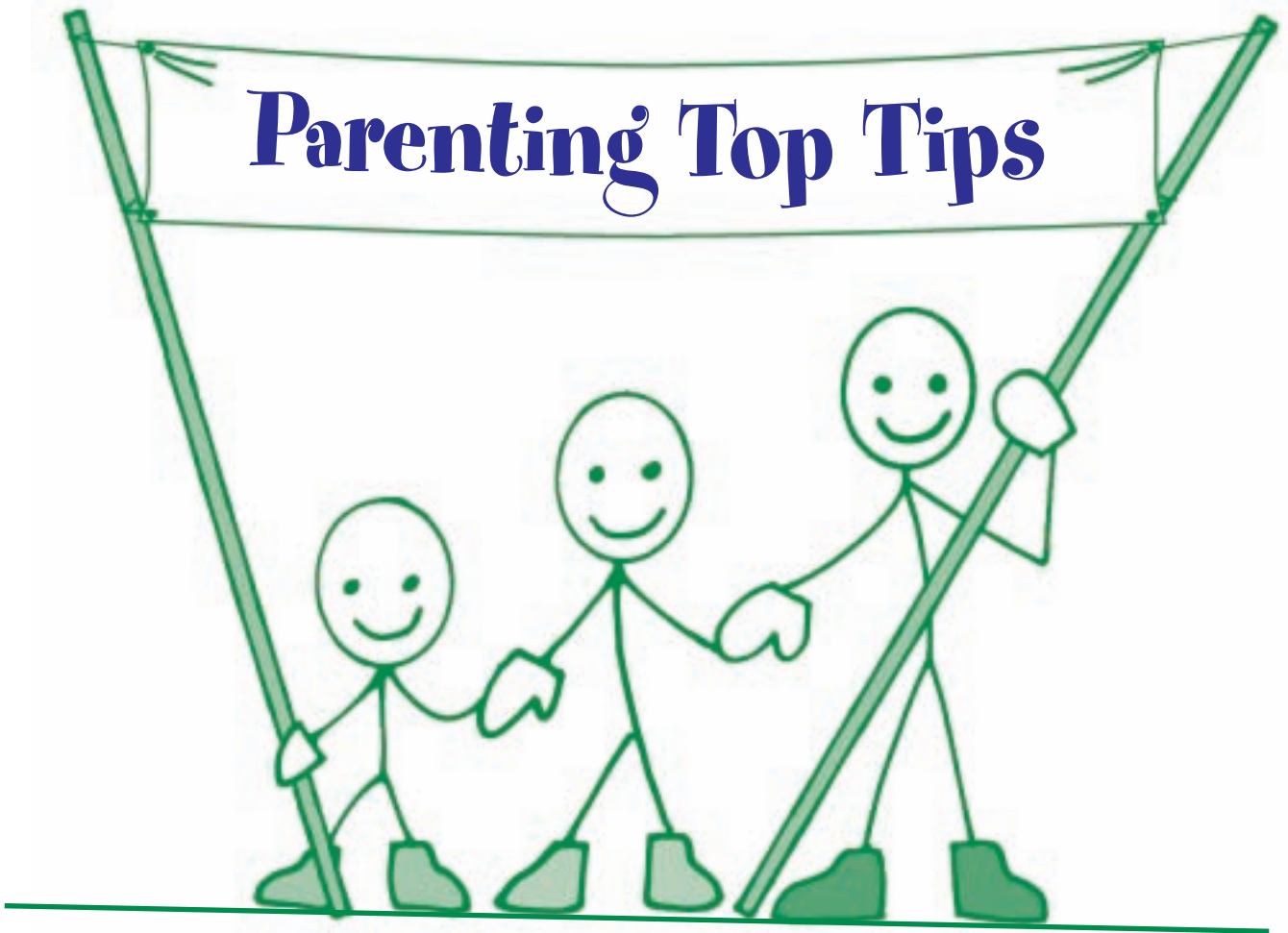




Parenting Top Tips



We'd like to thank...

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The Parenting Puzzle

Copies of the book (ISBN 0-9544709-0-7) are available at £14.99,
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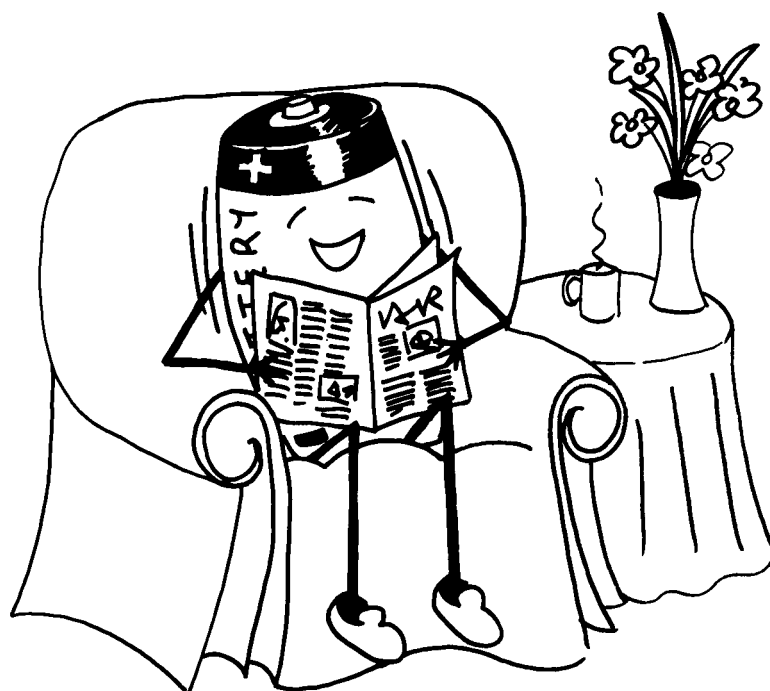
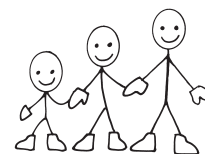
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Look after yourself!

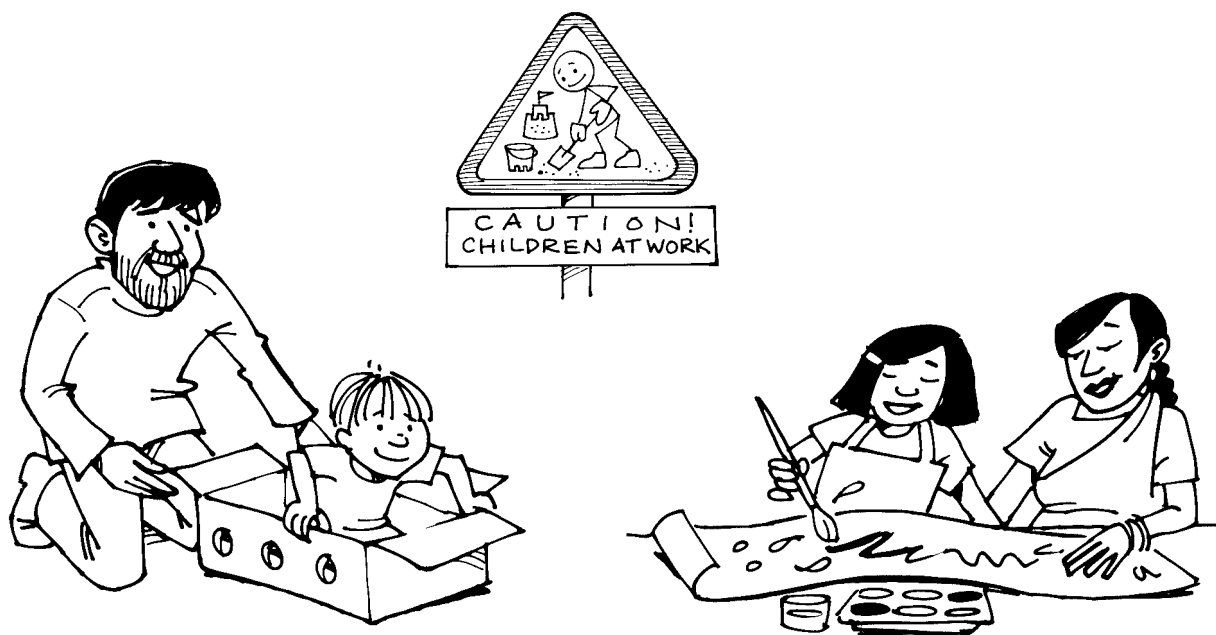
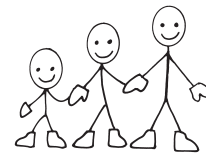


Top tips

- ☺ When we are very busy it can be hard to find a moment for ourselves, and it's all too easy to put our own needs at the end of the list.
- ☺ If we neglect ourselves we become exhausted and stressed, and then it's much harder to enjoy family life.
- ☺ We owe it to ourselves to recharge our batteries, and our families will benefit too.

A RECHARGED BATTERY MEANS
A FAMILY FULL OF ENERGY

The power of play



Top tips

- ☺ Children do most of their learning through play.
- ☺ Play can be messy but it's very important.
- ☺ We need to give time to let children play by themselves and also to join in with them sometimes.
- ☺ Playtime is their chance to be in charge – and it's fun for us and for them!

CHILDREN AT PLAY
ARE CHILDREN AT WORK!

Understanding our own feelings



Top tips

- 😊 Being aware of our own feelings and accepting all of them (even the difficult ones) is a positive and healthy thing to do.
- 😊 Feelings are never bad in themselves – it's how we deal with them that counts.
- 😊 Children learn from what they see us do. If we can express our feelings appropriately, they will learn how to do this too.

FEELINGS ARE SIGNPOSTS

Understanding our children's feelings and behaviour



☹ Unhelpful



😊 Helpful

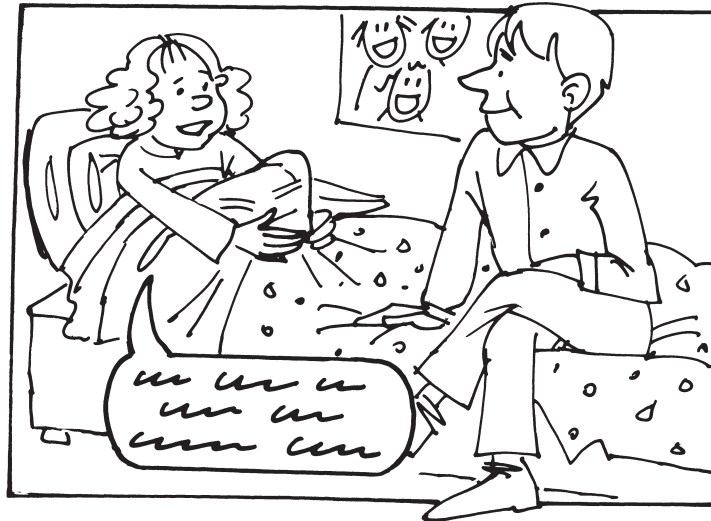


Top tips

- 😊 Noticing our children's feelings is important – tuning in to their excitement and distress (and everything in between!).
- 😊 Responding helpfully often prevents explosive behaviour.
- 😊 It takes years to learn to manage our feelings. Many behaviours (such as tantrums) are a natural stage of development – so don't expect too much too soon.

FEELINGS FUEL BEHAVIOUR

Listening to our children

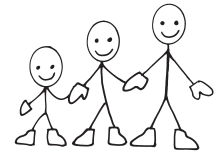


Top tips

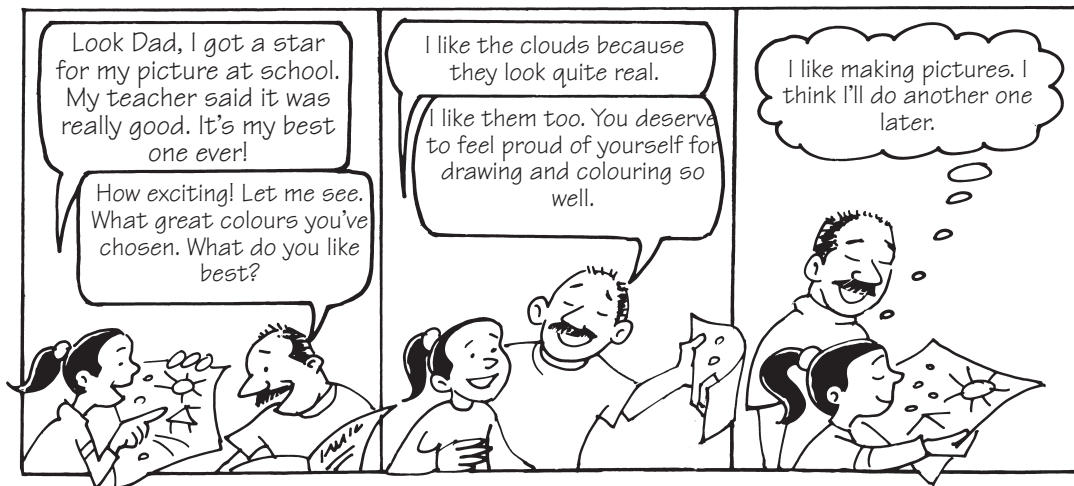
- ☺ One of the greatest gifts we can give each other is to listen.
- ☺ In our busy lives it isn't always easy to stop what we are doing so we can listen closely to our children and value what they say – but it's worth it.
- ☺ Taking time to listen to our children builds trust and honesty.
- ☺ If we listen to our children they will learn to listen to us and to each other.

WHAT CHILDREN NEED
IS A GOOD LISTENING TO!

Praise is magic!



😊 Helpful praise



Top tips

😊 Praise helps children feel good about themselves, so they are more likely to behave well.

😊 Praise helps us to notice all the good things about our children, rather than mostly focusing on their faults.

😊 Praise helps children to remember what we'd like them to do.

😊 Praise helps us to feel good, too – it's no fun having to tell children off all the time.

PRAISE WORKS WONDERS!

Using rewards

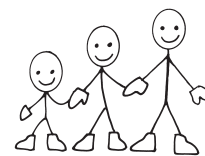


Top tips

- ☺ Children like to please us, but some of the ways we want them to behave aren't easy for them to learn.
- ☺ It's easier to learn a new behaviour if something nice happens when we remember it.
- ☺ Reward effort as well as achievement.
- ☺ Reward little and often, and remember that our time, pleasure and attention are the best rewards of all.

WHAT WE PAY ATTENTION TO
IS WHAT WE GET MORE OF

Diverting and distracting



☹ Unhelpful



☺ Helpful

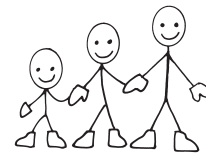


Top tips

- ☺ **Young children easily switch their attention to something else that interests them.**
- ☺ **By offering a different object or activity, we can often avoid difficult situations without mentioning any unwanted behaviour.**
- ☺ **If you are going out it can be helpful to take some small toys or everyday objects for children to play with.**

DIVERSION - HAZARD AHEAD!

Creating boundaries

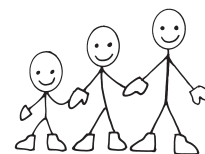


Top tips

- ☺ **We all want our children to grow up confident, independent and responsible. Developing clear, fair, consistent boundaries helps them to do this.**
- ☺ **Children need to test the boundaries in order to feel safe. When they do, we need to be firm without being harsh.**
- ☺ **Boundaries are a family affair – everyone needs to agree them and be prepared to stick to them.**

**CLEAR, FAIR RULES
HELP US ALL FEEL SAFE**

Time to calm down

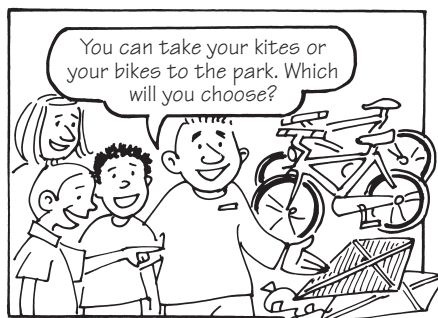
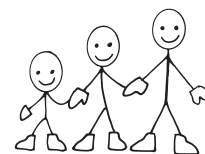


Top tips

- ☺ When emotions are running high, a cooling-off time gives everyone the chance to calm down.
- ☺ Allowing time to calm down helps us to hold on to clear boundaries without nagging or adding our own angry outbursts.
- ☺ Sometimes our children will need to release their frustration or anger safely before they can calm down.

WE ALL NEED TIME TO CALM DOWN

Giving children choices

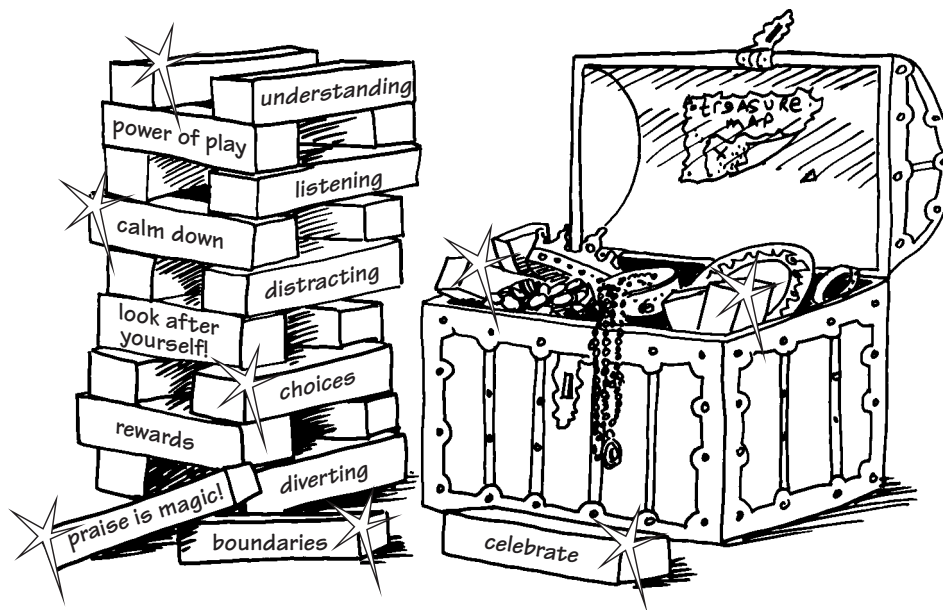
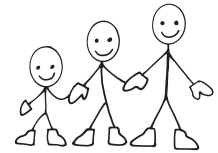


Top tips

- 😊 **We all want to feel that we are in charge of our own lives – though it's not always easy!**
- 😊 **It is helpful for children gradually to learn to make choices for themselves. We can offer them a choice many times during the day.**
- 😊 **The choices we offer children need to be ones we're happy to provide – and can describe to them clearly.**

**GIVING CHILDREN CHOICES
MAKES THEM RESPONSIBLE**

Celebrating family life



Top tips

- ☺ **Family life is like a treasure hunt – full of hazards, adventures and discoveries to make along the way.**
- ☺ **If we keep using the skills we have discovered we will face the hazards more confidently.**
- ☺ **When family life seems like a struggle it can be hard to find the energy to keep going. Making sure our own batteries are charged up will give us the boost we need.**

**THERE'S NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT,
AND NO PRESENT LIKE TIME!**