

Coping skills for our kids

It's breakfast time. Three-year-old Jackson is making his own breakfast. His mother says, "Put the milk down, I'll tip it in for you, you'll waste it all."

Jackson says "No, me do it." Then he pours all what's left of the milk into his bowl.

His mother says, "See, now there's no more left and no milk left for your drink." Jackson looks at his mother and cries.

She says: "That's what happens Bubba when you tip it all out."

Jackson says: "Me can't have drink now?" His mother replies: "Shouldn't have tipped it all over your breakfast eh?"

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This is our way of teaching our kids to learn to make decisions.

When they are old enough, kids have to be responsible for their decisions and the choices they make and wear the consequences, whether good or bad. All this is part of becoming a responsible person.

We want our kids to become strong and healthy, and that means physically strong and healthy as well as spiritually strong and healthy. This is one of the best things we as parents can do for them. We need to teach them to be independent, and to be able to stand up for themselves, do things for themselves and handle the hard things that they come up against.

Tough things for kids

Sometimes kids can have stressful things happen to them. It might be when you get sick or if you have money problems. The arrival of a new baby, parents separating or fighting, moving to a new home, going into a new school, making new friends, being bullied, having a disability, someone special dying ... all these things can make a big difference in your kid's life.

This tip sheet, along with the full set of Parenting WA guides, is available in electronic format at www.communities.wa.gov.au



These things might help

You can help build your kid's confidence when you:

- Do something special with them whenever you can.
- Give your kid a kiss or a hug for no special reason not just when they do things well.
- Attend to them as soon as you can.
- Smile and clap when your little kids do something for themselves.
- Give praise or a hug when older kids do something for themselves or for others.
- Let them try new things if it is safe for them.
- Let them learn new things for themselves, instead of you having all the answers or doing it for them.
- Give them choices to help them learn to make decisions like saying "do you want to wear your blue or red jumper?" even when they are little.
- Protect them from adult problems or business.
- Try not to let your kids see and hear you arguing or fighting.
- Keep them away from adult stuff that will scare them or worry them.
- Find another caring person to 'be there' for your kid if you are feeling very stressed.
- Make them feel loved and loveable.
- Make them feel good about themselves especially if they feel different (e.g. disability).
- Don't compare them with others.
- Give them a good start by breast feeding which helps make their little bodies strong and makes it easier for them not to get sick all the time.

A good parent prepares kids for the tough times in life.



Contacts

Parenting WA Line

A free 24/7 telephone information and support service for parents and children pre-birth to 18 years.

t: 1800 654 432 (free call)

w: www.communities.wa.gov.au

Department for Communities

Aboriginal Early Years – Best Start Program

Best Start is a state-wide program for Aboriginal parents and carers with young children from babies to five years old. Best Start Services are located in the following areas:

- Armadale t: 08 9399 6489
- Carnarvon t: 08 9941 2105
- Goldfields t: 08 9093 3795
- Hedland t: 08 9172 3599
- Mandurah t: 08 9583 9802
- Marble Bar t: 0427 013 144
- Midland t: 08 9274 9411
- Moora t: 08 9651 1294
- Mullewa t: 0408 844 196
- Narrogin t: 08 9881 6693
- Roebourne t: 0438 926 558
- South Lake t: 0427 013 141

w: www.communities.wa.gov.au

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs – Closing the Gap

Closing the Gap initiatives provide grants and funding to support indigenous organisations and individuals.

t: 6218 1400

t: 1300 653 227

w: www.fahcsia.gov.au

Playgroup WA

To find your nearest playgroup

t: 1800 171 882

w: www.playgroupwa.com.au

Ngala Helpline

Provides parenting information, strategies and referral to community resources for parents regarding early parenting concerns and direction to all other Ngala services.

t: (08) 9368 9368 Helpline

t: 1800 111 546 (country callers)

w: www.ngala.com.au

Community Child Health Nurses

Community Child Health Nurses can check children's health and development and provide information about many aspects of parenting, maternal and family health and healthy lifestyles.

w: www.health.wa.gov.au/services

This Guide uses 'he' and 'she' in turn.
Change to suit your child's sex.

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