POSITIVE PARENTING MANUAL

10

STAYING AWAKE PAST BEDTIME



Disciplining children without the use of corporal punishment

unicef

for every child

සෑම දරුවෙක් වෙනුවෙන්ම

ஒவ்வொரு சிறுவர்களுக்காகவும்

10

POSITIVE PARENTING MANUAL

STAYING AWAKE PAST BEDTIME

© UNICEF, April 2023

ISBN : 978-92-806-5108 -9

The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies and views of UNICEF.

The text has not been edited to official publication standards and UNICEF accepts no responsibility for errors. The designations in this publication do not imply an opinion on legal status of any country or territory, or of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers.

In this manual, the term “mother/father/parent” is used for convenience. It applies to all those with a caring role, including grandparents and extended family members, foster carers, etc.

Acknowledgements

This publication is adapted from the original work of Ms. H.P.C Wasantha Pathirana MSSc. (University of Kelaniya) M.A. (University of Kelaniya) B.A. (Special) University of Colombo, and we thank her for her contribution.

Positive Parenting manual booklets

1. Talking Back
2. Fighting with Siblings
3. Neglecting Schoolwork
4. Household Chores and Responsibilities
5. Returning Home Late
6. Setting Limits on the Use of Digital Devices
7. Fussy Eaters
8. Throwing Tantrums
9. Relationships
10. Staying Awake Past Bedtime
11. Substance Abuse
12. Gender

The icons in this book depicts the following to its readers

 Think a Minute

 Point To Remember

 Important Lesson

 Practical Advice

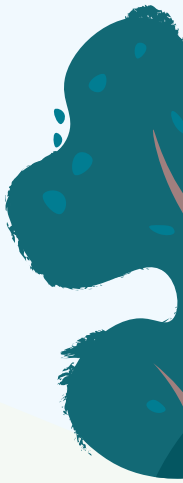
 Question

 Write Your Thoughts

INTRODUCTION TO POSITIVE PARENTING

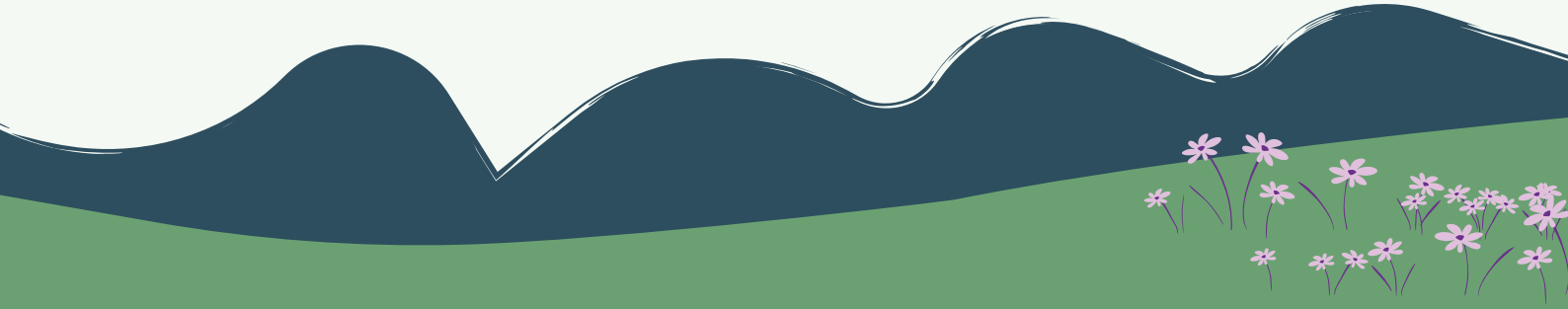
What is Positive Parenting?

Positive Parenting is not restricted to a method, a set of rules, or a style; it is a belief, a way of living. Children should be treated with respect, free from fear of violence and shame, and guided with loving encouragement. The very first step to become a positive parent is to adjust one's thinking, by improving your own knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and skills. To achieve this, parents must be willing to reflect on themselves and their role as parents, do their best to complete all the activities; and use the new information in their daily interactions with their children. Parents will learn that communication is a crucial way to ensure an ongoing relationship with their children.



Positive Parenting Manual

This manual allows us to begin thinking about how we can bring up a child without inflicting/causing physical harm. This method is known as positive parenting.



This manual focuses on specific tools such as:

- How to establish goals for you and your child
- How to spend quality time with your children
- How to express yourself and enable your child to express their feelings in a safe environment
- How to use praise and reward
- How to give instructions and establish household rules
- How to redirect and ignore negative behaviours
- How to use consequences and establish cool down times
- How to resolve conflicts

By repeatedly referring to this manual, you will gain a sound understanding of the different methods available to discipline your child.





What positive parenting is:

- Positive parenting is about long-term solutions that develop children's self-discipline.
- Positive parenting is clear communication of expectations, rules and limits.
- Positive parenting is about building a mutually respectful relationship with your children.
- Positive parenting is about teaching children life-long skills.
- Positive parenting is about increasing children's competence and confidence to handle challenging situations.
- Positive parenting is about teaching courtesy, non-violence, empathy, self-respect, human rights and respect for others.

What positive parenting is not:

- Positive parenting is not permissive parenting.
- Positive parenting is not letting children do whatever they want.
- Positive parenting is not about having no rules, limits or expectations.
- Positive parenting is not about short-term reactions or alternative punishments to slapping and hitting.



A common complaint among parents is that their children are not obedient.

"This child is very disobedient. S/he never listens to anything we say." "S/he always does what we ask her/him not to do. Not in the least bit obedient." Are statements like these made in your family? Do you feel that your children are disobedient?

In your opinion, what characteristics are typical of a child who is obedient? A child who is inclined to be disobedient?

List them separately.

Disobedient	Obedient

Compare your column on obedience with that of another parent's column on obedience. Have a discussion on this. You most probably will see both similarities and differences between the two lists.

Reflect on your own parenting style and consider how you contribute to this behavior.



The differences highlight that what we consider as obedience/disobedience is a relative factor. This just means that the way you think of it is different to the way someone else thinks about it.

Once you have a clear understanding of the key behaviours you want to see or change, try out the strategies below to address these behaviours and support your child to think and act independently.



1. Make a list of what is considered good and bad behaviour at home, the boundaries of these behaviours as well as the consequences of not adhering to the boundaries. Depending on the age of your child/ children, do this together with them. Display this list at home in a place where everyone can see.
2. Appreciate and praise the child every time s/he displays good behaviour. The love you show towards your child must be unconditional and positive.
3. Also note, we should disapprove and dislike the wrongful behaviour of the child, not the child himself.

At times, parenting can be difficult! So, it is important to keep in mind that these positive parenting techniques take time and patience to be successful. It cannot be achieved in one day. If they don't work today, remember to try again tomorrow. It is important to be consistent in your parenting approach and being consistent is the only way your child may be able to understand what you are trying to communicate.

References

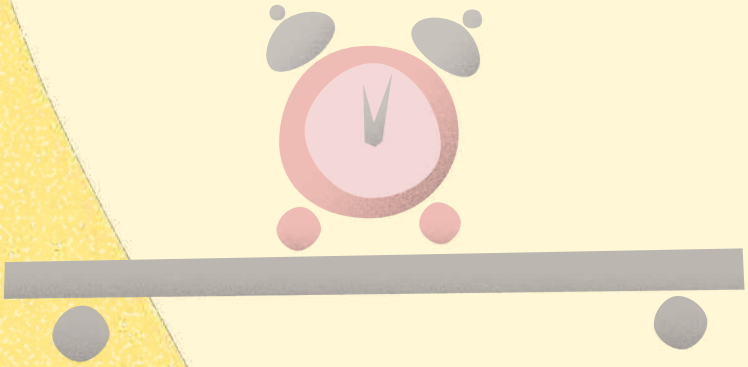
National Parenting Taskforce, (2013), The Art of Parenting: Summary Guide, Parenting Guide_Summary Guide.pdf (sharepoint.com)

Parenting for Lifelong Health: Handbook for Adolescents





STAYING AWAKE PAST BEDTIME



Many parents, particularly of younger children, struggle with getting their children to go to sleep independently and sleep through the night. Some parents train their children to go to bed early, while others may allow their children to stay up late. In certain homes, everyone goes to bed at the same time, while in others, each person sleeps at a different time.

What is important, is that children are getting enough sleep for their age and that the bedtime routine does not create stress for the parents. After a tiring day, be it after household chores or a stressful day at work, when children stay up late and disturb their parents, they may get angry, shout and/or hit their children. In this chapter we will discuss what can be done when a child does not go to sleep at the designated time, or wakes up in the night.

Let us first read a short story



After dinner, Ruwanka and her husband yawned a few times because they were feeling tired due to a hectic day at work. They were trying to get their two children; five year old Nisal and three year old Rehana, ready for bed.

The parents were running around the children to get them to bed and because they were tired, they were yelling at them “Stop running around and get to your room immediately”. Ruwanka said “If you do not get into your beds now, then I will have to punish you both”.

Ruwanka and her husband started arguing with each other about disciplining their children and were blaming each other for the children’s behaviour.

This irritated Ruwanka who grabbed the children by their ears and dragged them into their rooms.

The children started crying and Ruwanka switched off the lights in their room and slammed the door.

Five minutes later, Nisal came down saying he needed to drink some water and Rehana said she wanted to cuddle.

In the end, Ruwanka got into bed with Rehana and hugged her until she went to sleep.

When she finally came out of the childrens room it was quite late and her husband had gone to bed, leaving no time for them to spend some time together and discuss important matters concerning the house.

Ruwanka felt frustrated and angry, as this seemed to happen every night.

Questions based on the story:

What are some reasons why the children may not want to go to bed on time?

What might the parents have felt when they saw their children running around and not going to sleep?

How could the parents have worked together, to get their children to sleep on time?

Does your child also refuse to go to bed on time, similar to what took place in Ruwanka's home?

The Importance of Routine

If you want your child to go to sleep independently, it is important to start sleep training when the child is very young, as early as 6 months old. A simple and consistent rhythm will help him/her to develop healthy habits early on.

It is crucial for parents to set a regular routine for the child and the routine should be clearly communicated to and even practiced with the child. Some children may adjust to the routine well, while others may find it harder to follow a routine.

Why is sleep important for children?

Sleep is essential for children's physical and mental health. When children get the required amount of sleep, they will be able to remember important things and have better memories. Sleep helps remove toxins from our brain that build up while we are awake and without adequate sleep, children will not be able to form new pathways in the brain that help with learning.

Good quality sleep is important and is associated with strong school performance and learning capacity. Good quality sleep is also associated with better ability to focus, solve problems and be more creative. Children do better socially when they are well-rested, while they tend to be more angry and anxious if they have not had quality sleep.

Most children need 10 to 11 hours of sleep per night but often get far less than that (closer to 9 ½ hours on average). There are wide individual differences in terms of sleep needs, but according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (2021) below are the hours of sleep needed by children:

- Under 1 year: 12 to 16 hours a day
- 1 to 2 years: 11 to 14 hours a day
- 3 to 5 years: 10 to 13 hours a day
- 6 to 12 years: 9 to 12 hours a day
- 13 to 18 years: 8 to 10 hours a day

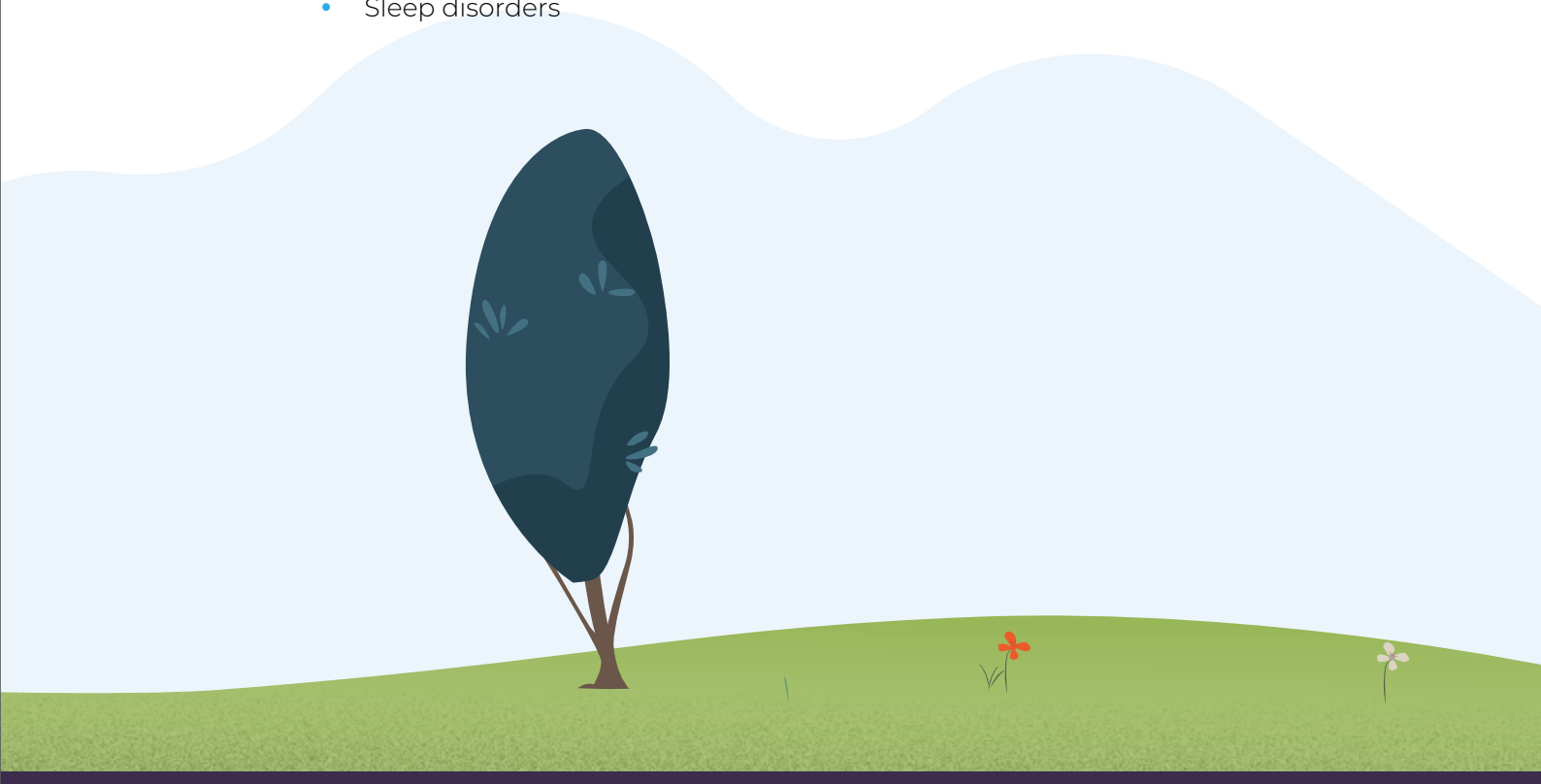
What are some of the sleep challenges that parents may face?

Some challenges include the following:

- Getting the children into bed at a specified time in the evening
- Children taking a long time to fall asleep
- Children waking up frequently in the night
- The child needing something or someone to go to sleep with – for example, a bottle of milk in bed or a parent
- The child wanting to sleep in the same room as the parents
- The child wetting the bed
- The child having nightmares and being scared to go to bed alone

Some common reasons for sleep challenges are:

- Children not getting enough positive attention from their parents in the daytime
- Poor sleeping habits – for example, caused by having a screen-based device in the bedroom or watching TV just before bedtime
- Nightmares – fear of going to bed alone due to hearing horror stories or watching scary movies
- Family circumstances – family members may go to bed late or fights in the family which may cause the child to worry and not sleep
- Not having a regular bedtime or routine – having sleeping schedules that vary everyday
- Sleep disorders



A short story

Kanta is a five year old child and her parents allowed her to sleep in the same room as them from the time she was born. Kanta usually waits to sleep until her parents sleep beside her. Kanta's parents decided that it was time for Kanta to sleep in her room as she was growing up and they did not have enough space in their bedroom. So Kanta's parents made sleeping arrangements in her new room and as Kanta entered her parents room to sleep, her parents told her that she will have to sleep in her new room. Kanta stood at the entrance to her parents' bedroom and started crying loudly saying "I will not sleep there" and "This is my bedroom". Kanta's parents had to carry her and make her sleep in the new bedroom.

Kanta said that she did not like her new room, and she will only go to sleep when she is allowed back in her parents' bedroom. Kanta's parents were annoyed and shouted at her saying "You are a big girl now Kanta and you have to sleep in this room", closed the door and left the room..

The next morning, Kanta's eyes were red and puffed and it looked as if she had not slept that night. Kanta was unable to attend school as she was feeling drowsy. Kanta's parents therefore decided to bring Kanta back to their bedroom so that she would sleep well and would not have to miss school the next day.



Questions for the story:

What could Kanta's parents have done to make better sleeping arrangements for her?

How might Kanta have felt when she was asked to sleep alone?

How might Kanta's parents have felt when she was unable to sleep and attend school?

What are some strategies to help your child go to bed on time?



- **First of all – make sure that your child is getting positive attention and one on one time with you during the day.** This reduces the need for them to seek that attention at night.
- **Set up a bedtime routine –** Even as early as 6 months old, babies and young children can learn to go to sleep independently. A regular bedtime routine should start around the same time each night and will depend on the age of your child, how much sleep they need and what time they have to wake up in the morning. A bedtime routine of bath, then brush your teeth, then put pyjamas on, then story, then cuddles, then lights out…. can help younger children feel ready for sleep. For older children, the routine could include a quiet chat with the parent about the day then some time alone for relaxing or reading a book before the lights are switched off.
- **Relax before bedtime -** Encourage the child to relax and wind down before bedtime by allowing older children to read a book, listen to gentle music or practice breathing exercises. The bedtime routine should not generally go on for more than 30 mins.
- **Keep older children's naps early and short-** Most children stop napping at three to four years of age. If a child over five years is still napping during the day, try to keep the nap to no longer than 20 minutes and no later than early afternoon. Longer and later naps can make it harder for children to get to sleep at night.



- **Make sure the child feels safe at night -** If a child feels scared about going to bed or being in the dark, avoiding scary TV shows, movies and computer games can help. Having a night light helps some children who have bedtime fears.
- **Check noise and light in the child's bedroom -** Check whether the child's bedroom has too much light or is too noisy for sleep. Blue light from televisions, computer screens, phones and tablets suppress melatonin levels and delay sleepiness. Bright light an hour or so before bedtime can have the same effect on young children.
- **Eat the right amount at the right time -** Make sure the child has a satisfying evening meal at a reasonable time. Feeling hungry or too full before bed can make a child more alert or uncomfortable and therefore unable to sleep.
- **Get plenty of natural light in the day -** Encourage a child to get as much natural light as possible during the day, especially in the morning. Bright light suppresses melatonin. This helps a child feel awake and alert during the day and sleepy towards bedtime.
- **Avoid caffeine -** Caffeine is in energy drinks, coffee, tea, chocolate and cola – so it is important to encourage a child to avoid such drinks, especially late in the afternoon and evening.



References

American Academy of Peadiatrics 2021, Retrieved from https://www.aap.org/en-us/Pages/Default.aspx

Gro Sviggum, R. S. (2018). Parents' experiences with sleep problems in children aged 1–3 years: a qualitative study from a health promotion perspective. *NCBI*

HelpGuide 2020, *Childhood Insomnia and Sleep Problems.* Retrieved from https://www.helpguide.org/articles/sleep/childhood-insomnia-and-sleep-problems.html

Pacheco, D 2020, *Sleep Foundation* . Retrieved from https://www.sleepfoundation.org/children-and-sleep

Raising Children 2019, *Persistent sleep problems in children and teenagers.* Retrieved from https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/sleep/sleep-problems/persistent-sleep-problems

Lewsley, J , *Establishing Good Sleep Habits: 3 to 6 months*, BabyCenter India. Retrieved from Establishing good sleep habits: three to six months - BabyCenter India



Notes

Notes

unicef

for every child

සෑම දරුවෙක් වෙනුවෙන්ම

ஒவ்வொரு சிறுவர்களுக்காகவும்

Child Protection
3/1 Rajakeeya Mawatha
Colombo 7
Sri Lanka
www.unicef.lk

ISBN : 978-92-806-5108-9

© United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

April 2023

