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Discipline and children

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Summary

- Discipline is not another word for punishment.
- Disciplining your child means teaching them responsible behaviour and self-control.
- Pace the discipline of your child with your child's capacity to understand.

The Latin origin of the word discipline is 'to teach'. Disciplining your child means teaching them responsible behaviour and self-control. With appropriate and consistent discipline, your child will learn about consequences and taking responsibility for their own actions. The ultimate aim is to encourage the child to learn to manage both their feelings and behaviour. This is called self-monitoring.

At its best, discipline rewards the child for appropriate behaviour and discourages inappropriate behaviour, using fair and positive means. Some parents think that discipline means physical punishment, such as hitting and smacking, or verbal abuse such as yelling or threatening the child. This is not discipline.

The consequences of physical punishment

Children learn by example. A number of studies show that the most influential role models in a child's life are their parents. It is important that parents act as a model for how they want their children to behave.

Using physical punishment or inflicting pain on a child to stop them from misbehaving only teaches them that it is OK to solve problems with violence. Children learn how this is done from watching their parents use physical violence against them.

Other problems caused by physical punishment:

- Damage to the very precious parent-child relationship
- Harm to the child's dignity, self-respect, self-esteem and sense of a positive identity
- The possibility of physical and psychological injury
- Lost opportunity to use the child's misbehaviour to teach them responsibility and self-control
- The destruction of the child's sense of fairness and justice
- Long-term effects – the child may become withdrawn, fearful or use bullying behaviour
- The child may try to avoid physical punishment by telling lies.

Reasons for misbehaviour

Children misbehave for many reasons:

- They are too young to know that their actions are unacceptable.
- They are frustrated, angry or upset and have no other reasonable way to express their feelings.
- They are stressed by major changes such as family breakup, a new sibling or starting school.
- They are not getting your attention when they do behave appropriately.
- They feel you have been unfair and want to punish you.
- They need a greater degree of independence and feel constricted.

Your child's ability to understand

Disciplining a child means teaching your child what is acceptable behaviour. A child's intellectual ability develops over time. It is important to match the discipline of your child with your child's capacity to understand. A very young child, such as a baby, has no comprehension of right and wrong.

Children under three do not misbehave – they have needs that they want met, such as hunger and thirst. They cannot yet respond to consequences by changing behaviour and so need to be told the same message over and over again, for example, 'put your hat on in the sun'. When they continue to go out in the sun without their hats, they are not disobedient – they just cannot remember.

Try to explain things to your child in a way that matches their development level and remember to also lower yourself to their physical level. Children act out their feelings through their behaviour, so it is important to understand the feelings behind the behaviour. If you know the reasons for your child's misbehaviour or feelings, you can help solve the underlying problems.

Routines help a child to learn

Children learn how to behave by copying the adults around them. They thrive when they know what is expected of them and their day has a similar pattern to it. Children feel safe when they know the order of events and can predict what will happen next. This is the same with reactions to children's behaviour. The child needs to know what the adults' reaction will be and that it will be fair and consistent.

Suggestions include:

- Tell or show children the behaviour you **do** want rather than punishing them for behaviour you don't want.
- Clearly explain the preferred behaviour and make sure your child understands what you expect of them.
- If you are amused by your child's naughty behaviour, try not to show it on your face or else your child might think you approve.
- Children thrive under consistent routines but they can handle the occasional change in routine, for example, eating meals at the table most of the time with the occasional 'treat' of eating in front of the TV.
- Make sure you're not expecting too much from a young child. For example, it is normal for young toddlers to make a mess while they are eating, because motor control and table manners take time to master. Young children are also unable to sit at the table for long periods of time and often need to eat much earlier than the family is used to having their evening meal.
- If you must make threats, make sure they are reasonable and carry them out. Generally threats show our frustration as parents or carers and are not a positive way to encourage the behaviour we want in children.
- Ask your child to be involved in making some of the rules for the family.

Explaining consequences

Good discipline helps a child to learn that there are consequences for their actions. Ideally, the consequence should immediately follow the action and should be relevant to the behaviour. Teaching your child about consequences may include asking them to:

- Clean up a mess they have made
- Tidy up their toys when they can't find the one they are looking for
- Spend time alone (taking 'time out') when their behaviour indicates they can no longer play well with others. This is a time for the child to regain their composure and return to the group with their dignity intact
- Play by themselves when they have been aggressive.

Time out for children

For children, spending time alone (taking 'time out') before their behaviour embarrasses themselves or angers their parents can be a valuable opportunity for self-reflection. This is appropriate for older children, as long as the child isn't made to feel hurt, humiliated or embarrassed. As children get older, under the guidance of helpful discipline, the child will learn to take themselves to their room when they are losing control.

Time out should not be misused with very young children or children who may see it as punishment and feel humiliated or confused by being forced to sit on a 'naughty chair' and 'think about what they have done'.

Time out for parents

If you find yourself getting angry and frustrated with your child's behaviour, you may need to take time out to deal with your own feelings. It may be best to temporarily remove yourself from a situation you are finding stressful. This may mean making sure your child is safe and leaving the room for a few minutes. Another option is calling a friend or relative to give you a break.

Reinforcing good behaviour

A child naturally wants the love and approval of their parents, so one of the easiest ways to encourage good behaviour is for children to know what behaviour is expected of them and to know they will be recognised and encouraged for it.

Where to get help

- Your local maternal and child health nurse
- Maternal and Child Health Line Tel. 132 229 (24 hours)
- [National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect \(NAPCAN\)](#)
- Parentline Tel. 13 22 89

Things to remember

- Discipline is not another word for punishment.
- Disciplining your child means teaching them responsible behaviour and self-control.
- Pace the discipline of your child with your child's capacity to understand.

References

- Napcan [online], National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect, NSW. [More information here](#)
- *Discipline (0-12 years)* [online], Parent Easy Guides (PEGS), Parenting South Australia. [More information here](#)

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Parenting basics

- [Children and health services](#)
[There is a range of subsidised and free health services, including services for mental health and dental health, available for children in Victoria...](#)
- [Family and child support services](#)
[There are many government funded family support services available to help parents and young people deal with family issues...](#)
- [Happy families](#)
[It might be valuable to occasionally evaluate the dynamics of your family to ensure that everyone is as happy as they could be...](#)
- [Healthy budget - tucker talk tips](#)
[You can buy more food if you spend most of your money on basic healthy foods like bread, cereals, fruit and vegies...](#)
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[The birth of your first child can significantly change your relationship with your partner and may impact on other relationships...](#)
- [Parenting children through puberty](#)
[Puberty is a time of great change for your child, and for you as a parent too. You can help your child in many practical ways, mostly by being reassuring...](#)
- [Parenting on your own](#)
[A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...](#)
- [Parenting services](#)
[Parenting is one of the most important tasks we undertake but it doesn't always come naturally...](#)
- [Raising Children Network](#)
[Raising Children Network is an online parenting resource providing research-based information...](#)
- [Travelling with children](#)
[If your child is old enough, involve them in planning a trip so they can get excited about it...](#)

Family structures

- [10 tips for happier step-parenting](#)
[Give your undivided attention when your child asks for it ... 10 tips for happier step-parenting...](#)
- [Adoption](#)
[Adoption can give a secure family life to children who can't live with their birth family...](#)
- [Empty nest syndrome](#)
[The grief of empty nest syndrome often goes unrecognised, because an adult child moving out of home is seen as a normal, healthy event...](#)
- [Foster care](#)
[Foster care is temporary care of children up to 18 years by trained, assessed and accredited foster carers...](#)
- [Kinship care](#)
[Kinship care is the care provided by relatives or a member of a child's social network when a child cannot live with their parents...](#)

- [Moving out of home – tips for parents](#)

[If you don't approve of your child's reasons for moving out, try to keep the lines of communication open...](#)

- [Parenting on your own](#)

[A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...](#)

- [Parenting when you're a foster carer](#)

[As a foster carer, you are providing a safe and supportive home for a child or teenager who can't live with their family of origin. You may face challenges that affect you physically, emotionally and...](#)

- [Permanent care](#)

[After experiencing abuse, neglect or rejection, many children are slow to put their trust in anyone...](#)

- [Single parenting](#)

[In single-parent households, issues such as holidays or major family purchases are more likely to be decided with the children...](#)

- [Stepfamilies](#)

[Becoming part of a stepfamily involves adjusting to a number of changes...](#)

- [Surrogacy](#)

[Surrogacy is a form of assisted reproductive treatment \(ART\) in which a woman carries a child within her uterus on behalf of another person or couple...](#)

Communication, identity and behaviour

- [10 tips for managing sibling rivalry](#)

[Teach your children to sort out minor differences themselves... 10 tips for managing sibling rivalry...](#)

- [Body image and young people - staying positive \(video\)](#)

[The pressure on young girls and boys to be physically perfect is creating an epidemic of children and teenagers with low self-esteem and negative body image. Reporter Flip Shelton introduces us to the...](#)

- [Body image – tips for parents](#)

[Give your child opportunities to appreciate their body for what it can do, rather than what it looks like...](#)

- [Bullying](#)

[Parents can help with bullying by supporting their child and involving the authorities to find solutions...](#)

- [Children and shyness](#)

[If your child's shyness is especially debilitating, you may like to consider professional help from a counsellor or psychologist...](#)

- [Children and sibling rivalry](#)

[Sibling rivalry is a common problem, particularly among children who are the same sex and close together in age...](#)

- [Discipline and children](#)

[Disciplining your child means teaching them responsible behaviour and self-control...](#)

- [Family conflict](#)

[It is normal to disagree with each other from time to time and occasional conflict is part of family life...](#)

- [Internet addiction](#)

[Internet addiction refers to the compulsive need to spend a lot of time on the Internet, to the point where relationships, work and health suffer...](#)

- [Parenting on your own](#)

[A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...](#)

- [Partying safely – tips for parents](#)

[With a few simple plans in place, a good time can be had by all at a teenage party – even the parents...](#)

- [Peer pressure](#)

[Peer groups can be a very positive influence on your teenager's life...](#)

- [Sex education - tips for parents](#)
[Mothers are more likely to talk about intimate, emotional and psychological aspects of sex than fathers...](#)
- [Talking to primary school children about sex](#)
[Some parents find it hard to talk with their primary age children about sex, but help is available...](#)
- [Young children and communication](#)
[Children thrive with words of encouragement and praise...](#)

Raising healthy children

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- [Children – keeping them active](#)
[A young child is naturally active, so build upon their inclinations to use their body...](#)
- [Children's diet - fruit and vegetables](#)
[If you eat and enjoy fruit and vegetables every day, your child may eventually follow your lead...](#)
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[Access to vaccines has changed lives and protects our children from crippling diseases such as polio...](#)
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[Physical activity is an important part of health and wellbeing, and girls should remain active as they grow up...](#)
- [Soft drinks, juice and sweet drinks - children](#)
[Encourage children to drink and enjoy water. Sweet drinks such as juice, cordial and soft drinks may cause health problems for children if consumed in large amounts...](#)
- [Youth suicide – the warning signs](#)
[All suicide threats are serious. You don't have to be a trained professional to help a person contemplating suicide...](#)

Common childhood health concerns

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[Children may feel stomach pain for a range of reasons and may need treatment...](#)
- [Allergies explained](#)

[Allergy occurs when the body overreacts to a 'trigger' that is harmless to most people...](#)

- [Anxiety and fear in children](#)

[You can help your child overcome anxiety by taking their fears seriously and encouraging them to talk about their feelings...](#)

- [Asthma, children and smoking](#)

[Exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of children developing asthma and provokes more frequent asthma in children with asthma...](#)

- [Asthma in childhood - triggers \(video\)](#)

[Parents and children talk about some of the factors that can cause a child's asthma to flare up...](#)

- [Back pain in children](#)

[Children with back pain may grow into adults with chronic bad backs, so it is important to encourage sensible back care...](#)

- [Bedwetting](#)

[Bedwetting is a problem for many children and punishing them for it will only add to their distress...](#)

- [Behavioural disorders in children](#)

[Untreated behavioural disorders in children may mean they grow up to be dysfunctional adults...](#)

- [Bronchiolitis](#)

[Bronchiolitis is a common chest infection in babies under six months of age...](#)

- [Chest infections](#)

[A chest infection affects your lungs, either in the larger airways \(bronchitis\) or in the smaller air sacs \(pneumonia\)...](#)

- [Chickenpox](#)

[Chickenpox is highly contagious, but it is generally mild and gets better without the need for special treatment...](#)

- [Children and vomiting](#)

[Mild vomiting is normal in most babies and improves over time...](#)

- [Children's feet and shoes](#)

[A child learning to walk receives important sensory information from the soles of their feet, and shoes can make walking more difficult...](#)

- [Choking](#)

[Don't slap a choking person on the back while they are upright - gravity may cause the object to slip further down their windpipe...](#)

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[Cold viruses are spread by sneezing, coughing and hand contact...](#)

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[Caring for a crying baby with colic can be stressful, so take some time out to calm down...](#)

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[A healthy diet, plenty of fluids, exercise and regular toilet habits can help relieve constipation in children...](#)

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[Coughing and wheezing in babies can be distressing for you and your baby, but in most cases symptoms can be relieved at home...](#)

- [Cradle cap](#)

[Cradle cap is not contagious and it is not caused by poor hygiene or bad parenting...](#)

- [Croup](#)

[Croup is a viral infection of the throat and windpipe that causes noisy breathing, a hoarse voice and a harsh, barking cough...](#)

- [Cysts](#)

[Cysts may be as small as a blister or large enough to hold litres of fluid...](#)

- [Dental anxiety and phobia](#)

[Dental anxiety is common, but there are ways to help you manage it. Talk to your dentist about which strategies are right for you...](#)

- [Dental treatment](#)

[Modern techniques mean that dental and oral health treatment is almost always painless...](#)

- [Depression explained](#)

[The most important thing is to recognise the signs and symptoms and seek support...](#)

- [Ear infections](#)

[It is estimated that around four out of five children will experience a middle ear infection at least once...](#)

- [Epilepsy in children](#)

[Children with epilepsy generally have seizures that respond well to medication, and they enjoy a normal and active childhood...](#)

- [Feet - problems and treatments](#)

[Correctly fitted shoes help you avoid foot and leg pain or injury...](#)

- [Fever - children](#)

[Fever is a way in which the body fights infection. A fever is not dangerous and does not always indicate a serious illness...](#)

- [Fever - febrile convulsions](#)

[A febrile convulsion is a fit that occurs in children when they have a high fever...](#)

- [Food allergy and intolerance](#)

[Food allergy is an immune response, while food intolerance is a chemical reaction...](#)

- [Gastroenteritis in children](#)

[Gastroenteritis or Gastro can be dangerous for very young babies. Gastro is common in young children and spreads easily. Gastro is a bowel infection which causes diarrhoea \(runny or watery poo\) and...](#)

- [Growing pains](#)

[Growing pains may cause a lot of pain but they are harmless and can respond to simple treatments...](#)

- [Hand, foot and mouth disease](#)

[Good personal hygiene is essential to prevent the spread of hand, foot and mouth disease to others, both for those infected and their carers...](#)

- [Head lice \(nits\)](#)

[No product can prevent head lice, but regular checks can help prevent the spread...](#)

- [Hearing problems in children](#)

[The earlier that hearing loss is identified in children, the better for the child's language, learning and overall development...](#)

- [Immunisation history statements for children](#)

[By law, parents or guardians must provide an Immunisation History Statement when enrolling children in any childcare service, kindergarten or primary school in Victoria...](#)

- [Immunisations - vaccinations in Victoria, Australia \(video\)](#)

[Vaccinations are encouraged for all individuals living in the state of Victoria, Australia. The immunisation program in Victoria may be different than other countries, and individuals who have moved...](#)

- [Jaundice in babies](#)

[If your baby is full-term and healthy, mild jaundice is nothing to worry about and will resolve by itself within a week or so...](#)

- [Lactose intolerance](#)

[Symptoms of lactose intolerance include bloating, gas, abdominal pain and diarrhoea...](#)

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[Male circumcision involves the surgical removal of the foreskin of the penis...](#)

- [Melissa's story \(video\)](#)

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- [Meningococcal disease](#)

[Do not leave young adults alone if they suddenly develop a fever because they may become seriously ill very quickly...](#)

- [Nappy rash](#)

[Most babies get nappy rash at some stage, no matter how well they are cared for...](#)

- [No Jab No Play](#)

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- [Obesity in children - management](#)

[If your child is overweight, you can help by making healthier lifestyle choices for yourself...](#)

- [Oral conditions - young children](#)

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[Despite the unsavoury reputation, a pinworm infection \(worms\) is relatively harmless and easily treated...](#)

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[Every child is at risk of tooth decay, but good feeding habits and oral care can help prevent decay in baby teeth...](#)

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[The major symptom of whooping cough is a severe cough, which is often followed by a 'whooping' sound...](#)

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- [Fight flu this winter](#)

[Fight flu this winter. Protect yourself – get vaccinated...](#)

- [Pre-immunisation checklist](#)

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- [Immunisation – common questions](#)

[We answer some common questions about immunisation, including how immunisation works, why it's important and where you can be immunised...](#)

- [Immunisations for older people](#)

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[10 tips for secondary students on how to deal with immunisation...](#)

- [Immunisation – DTP, polio, hep B and Hib](#)

[A number of combined immunisations against diphtheria, tetanus and other infectious diseases are available to provide protection at various life stages...](#)

- [Immunisations for work](#)

[Some jobs have a higher risk of exposure to infectious diseases, so if your job is one of these, it's a good idea to check your immunisation status...](#)

- [Immunisation and pregnancy](#)

[Immunisation can protect a woman and her unborn baby against many infectious diseases...](#)

- [Dr Margaret's Story \(video\)](#)

[Access to vaccines has changed lives and protects our children from crippling diseases such as polio...](#)

- [Ros' Story \(video\)](#)

[Talk to a qualified medical expert like your doctor to find out more about immunisation...](#)

- [Caitlin and Liam's story \(video\)](#)

[Find out how important you and your child's immunisation is to the most vulnerable members in our community...](#)

- [Immunisations - vaccinations in Victoria, Australia \(video\)](#)

[Vaccinations are encouraged for all individuals living in the state of Victoria, Australia. The immunisation program in Victoria may be different than other countries, and individuals who have moved...](#)

- [Immunisation in secondary schools](#)

[Some immunisations are recommended for all Australian teenagers...](#)

- [Children and health services](#)

[There is a range of subsidised and free health services, including services for mental health and dental health, available for children in Victoria...](#)

Keeping yourself healthy

- [10 tips for happier step-parenting](#)

[Give your undivided attention when your child asks for it ... 10 tips for happier step-parenting...](#)

- [10 tips for managing sibling rivalry](#)

[Teach your children to sort out minor differences themselves... 10 tips for managing sibling rivalry...](#)

- [10 tips to prepare your child for high school](#)

[Visit the school before the school year starts ... 10 tips to prepare your child for high school...](#)

- [Abdominal pain in children](#)

[Children may feel stomach pain for a range of reasons and may need treatment...](#)

- [About child, family and relationship services \(video\)](#)

[Services include parent education to maternal and child healthcare, child care, crisis support, child protection, family violence and relationship services...](#)

- [Acne](#)

[Acne is common and can make people of all ages feel embarrassed, but treatments can help if acne is causing distress...](#)

- [Adoption](#)

[Adoption can give a secure family life to children who can't live with their birth family...](#)

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

[A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...](#)

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

[A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...](#)

- [Alcohol and teenagers](#)

[Alcohol is responsible for most drug-related deaths in the teenage population...](#)

- [Alcohol consumption – when things don't go to plan \(video\)](#)

[Don't give up if your plan doesn't work the first time...](#)

- [Alcohol - how much is too much? \(video\)](#)

[Youth Central journalist Soren Frederiksen asks young people what they think is the limit for safe drinking and comes up with some interesting results...](#)

- [Alcohol - tips to turning down drinks \(video\)](#)

[Saying no can be hard. There are things you can do to make it easier...](#)

- [Allergies explained](#)

[Allergy occurs when the body overreacts to a 'trigger' that is harmless to most people...](#)

- [Animals and child safety](#)

[Children should always be closely supervised near animals and taught how to behave safely around pets...](#)

- [Anxiety and fear in children](#)

[You can help your child overcome anxiety by taking their fears seriously and encouraging them to talk about their feelings...](#)

- [Assertiveness](#)

[It is helpful to imagine assertiveness as the middle ground between aggression and passivity...](#)

- [Assessing your alcohol and drug use](#)

[If you are worried about your alcohol or drug use or, call DirectLine on 1800 888 236 for counselling, information and referral, or speak with your local doctor...](#)

- [Asthma and teenagers](#)

[Asthma affects about one in ten teenagers in Australia...](#)

- [Asthma, children and smoking](#)

[Exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of children developing asthma and provokes more frequent asthma in children with asthma...](#)

Children with special needs

- [Autism spectrum disorder \(ASD\)](#)

[ASD is a complex disorder that affects a person's ability to interact with the world around them...](#)

- [Autism spectrum disorder - tips for parents](#)

[Autism spectrum disorder is a lifelong condition, but you are not on your own and there are plenty of professionals and groups who can help...](#)

- [Cognitive disability and sexuality](#)

[People with intellectual disability can express their sexuality in satisfying ways...](#)

- [Disability - schooling choices](#)

[If your child has a disability, you need to consider extra issues when your child starts school...](#)

- [Down syndrome and family support](#)

[For a person with Down syndrome, being included in all aspects of family life can lead to a successful life within the community...](#)

- [Down syndrome and health](#)

[There are a number of significant health and medical issues that are more common in people with Down syndrome...](#)

- [Down syndrome and learning](#)

[You should focus on what your child with Down syndrome can do, rather than what they can't do...](#)

- [Physical disability and sexuality](#)

[Sexuality is a key part of human nature. Expressing sexuality in satisfying ways is important for everyone, including people with a disability. Some people with disability may need additional support...](#)

- [Sex and chronic illness](#)

[Sexuality is a key part of human nature. Expressing sexuality in satisfying ways is important for everyone, including people with a disability. Some people with disability may need additional support...](#)

Child safety and accident prevention

- [Animals and child safety](#)

[Children should always be closely supervised near animals and taught how to behave safely around pets...](#)

- [Bicycle safety and children](#)

[As they grow and develop, and with the help of adults, children become increasingly aware of how they can manage their own safety and become safer road and bicycle users...](#)

- [Body image – tips for parents](#)

[Give your child opportunities to appreciate their body for what it can do, rather than what it looks like...](#)

- [Bullying](#)

[Parents can help with bullying by supporting their child and involving the authorities to find solutions...](#)

- [Child safety and injury prevention](#)

[By making a few practical changes to your home, you can dramatically reduce the risk of injury to your child...](#)

- [Child safety – at home](#)

[The best way to reduce the risk of injury to children is to remove a potentially dangerous item or add a safety product...](#)

- [Child safety in the car](#)

[Taking care to restrain children correctly while travelling in a car is the best way to prevent injuries...](#)

- [Farm safety – children](#)

[Children who live on farms are at greater risk of injury and death than their parents or other farm workers...](#)

- [Hot weather and child safety](#)

[Babies and children can quickly lose body fluids in hot weather, which can lead to dehydration...](#)

- [Internet safety for children](#)

[A child's digital footprint can be as easy to follow as their real footprints...](#)

- [Mobile phone safety for children](#)

[Teach your child strategies for responding to mobile phone bullying...](#)

- [Playgrounds and child safety](#)

[Play environments can be safe and beneficial for your child. With proper planning, you can make sure your child gets plenty of playtime activity...](#)

- [Poisoning and child safety](#)

[Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 immediately if you suspect your child has been poisoned or given the wrong medicine or the wrong dose of medicine...](#)

- [Road and traffic safety for children](#)

[As they grow and develop, and with the help of adults, children become increasingly aware of how they can manage their own safety, and become safer road users...](#)

- [Water safety for children](#)

[Toddlers are most at risk of drowning because they are mobile and curious but don't understand the danger of water...](#)

Child protection and family violence

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- [Bullying](#)
[Parents can help with bullying by supporting their child and involving the authorities to find solutions...](#)
- [Child abuse - reporting procedures](#)
[Any person who believes, on reasonable grounds, that a child needs protection can notify Child Protection...](#)
- [Child Protection Service](#)
[Child Protection provides child-centred, family-focused services to protect children from harm caused by abuse within the family...](#)
- [Family violence - tips for children](#)
[Kids are not to blame for violence at home, it's not your fault and it's not a special secret...](#)
- [Parenting support to help prevent abuse](#)
[There is a range of non-government agencies available to help families under stress in caring for their children...](#)
- [Recognising when a child is at risk](#)
[Too many children are physically, sexually and emotionally abused and when this happens, it is up to adults to speak up...](#)
- [Sexual abuse - helping your child](#)
[As a parent, you have an important role in helping your child recover from sexual abuse...](#)

Grief and trauma

- [Death of a baby](#)
[Miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death is a shattering event for those expecting a baby, and for their families. Grief, relationship stresses and anxiety about subsequent pregnancies are common in...](#)
- [Grief and children](#)
[It can be difficult to talk to a child about death, but it is important to be honest with them...](#)
- [Grief – support services](#)
[People who have support from family and friends are less likely to suffer poor health after bereavement and loss...](#)
- [Recent arrivals, asylum seekers and family support services](#)
[Provides an overview of family support programs and health services available to refugees and asylum seekers living in Victoria...](#)
- [Sudden unexpected death in infants \(SUDI and SIDS\)](#)
[You can reduce your baby's risk of sudden unexpected death by providing a safe sleeping environment and avoiding tobacco smoke...](#)
- [Trauma and children - newborns to two years](#)
[Babies and toddlers can be as affected by trauma as any other family member...](#)
- [Trauma and children – tips for parents](#)
[Tell your child the facts about a distressing or frightening experience using language they can understand...](#)
- [Trauma and children - two to five years](#)
[Preschoolers may not have the words but will show their distress at traumatic events through changes in behaviour and functioning...](#)
- [Trauma and families](#)
[When a family is affected by trauma, everyone will react in a different way...](#)
- [Trauma and primary school age children](#)
[Children look to their parents or carers to judge how to deal with a crisis...](#)
- [Trauma and teenagers - common reactions](#)
[A teenager may be deeply upset by a traumatic event, but not share their feelings with their parents...](#)
- [Trauma and teenagers - tips for parents](#)
[Teenagers may turn to friends rather than parents for support in times of trauma and distress...](#)
- [Trauma - reaction and recovery](#)

[It is normal to have strong emotional or physical reactions after a distressing or frightening event, and help is available...](#)

- [Youth suicide – the warning signs](#)

[All suicide threats are serious. You don't have to be a trained professional to help a person contemplating suicide...](#)

Support for parents

- [About child, family and relationship services \(video\)](#)

[Services include parent education to maternal and child healthcare, child care, crisis support, child protection, family violence and relationship services...](#)

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

[A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...](#)

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[A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...](#)

- [Children and health services](#)

[There is a range of subsidised and free health services, including services for mental health and dental health, available for children in Victoria...](#)

- [Community health centres](#)

[A community health centre is publicly funded and offers a range of health services to local residents...](#)

- [Early support for a child with disabilities](#)

[For children diagnosed with a disability, getting the support they need as early as possible will give them the best chance of minimising the long-term effects of the disability...](#)

- [Family and child support services](#)

[There are many government funded family support services available to help parents and young people deal with family issues...](#)

- [Foster care, permanent care and adoptive parent support services](#)

[Provides an overview of the financial and family support services available to foster carers, families providing permanent care and adoptive parents...](#)

- [Maternal and child health services](#)

[Your local maternal and child health service will be a great source of support after your baby is born...](#)

- [Parenting centres support families](#)

[Early Parenting Centres help families whose children have sleep, feeding or other difficulties...](#)

- [Parenting children through puberty](#)

[Puberty is a time of great change for your child, and for you as a parent too. You can help your child in many practical ways, mostly by being reassuring...](#)

- [Parenting on your own](#)

[A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...](#)

- [Parenting support to help prevent abuse](#)

[There is a range of non-government agencies available to help families under stress in caring for their children...](#)

- [Phototherapy at Home](#)

[Jaundice is very common in newborns, so it's nothing to be too worried about. Treatment is very easy and safe. It all happens using blue light from a special blanket that you wrap your baby in. The...](#)

- [Recent arrivals, asylum seekers and family support services](#)

[Provides an overview of family support programs and health services available to refugees and asylum seekers living in Victoria...](#)

- [Relationship support services](#)

[You may need outside help to resolve problems and ensure your relationship stays healthy and strong...](#)

- [Year 12 exams - managing stress](#)

[Help your child manage stress during exams by getting them to use good study habits, eat well, exercise, relax, sleep and keep things in perspective...](#)

Related Information

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...

- [No Jab No Play](#)

No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age...

- [Asthma explained](#)

Asthma cannot be cured, but with good management people with asthma can lead normal, active lives...

- [Children and sibling rivalry](#)

Sibling rivalry is a common problem, particularly among children who are the same sex and close together in age...

[Home](#)

Related information on other websites

- [Parenting and Child Health SA](#)
- [ParentLink](#)
- [Raising Children Network](#)
- [Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development](#)

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