

# Handy guide

## Starting school

How your child may show how they are feeling in their behaviour

For parents, carers, health visitors, public health nurses  
and community nursery nurses

## Actions not words?

**Your child may be sharing how they are feeling indirectly:**

- Attention seeking
- Fussiness
- Over excited
- Biting
- Hitting
- Tantrums
- Spitting
- Not sharing
- Regression – sleeping, eating, toileting, play.

Or they may say something like: “I’d rather be small!”

## Could they be...

- picking up on your emotions?
- aware that life is changing?
- managing too many choices?
- unable to use words to say how they feel?
- feeling unheard or not validated?
- hungry?
- tired?
- fearful?
- over-excited?
- frustrated?
- scared?
- confused?
- anxious?

## Factors influencing parent & child relationships

- Learned experience
- Expectations
- Employment
- COVID-19 and the impact of lockdown and isolation
- Finances
- Paternal mental health
- Maternal mental health
- Substance misuse
- Domestic abuse
- Family myths
- Number of siblings
- Illness

## How you can help

- Provide consistent boundaries
- Stay calm. Don't over-react by hitting back and avoid saying things to hurt them back
- Count to 10 unless dangerous to wait
- Be prepared
- Be a role model
- Don't ask more than they can manage
- Validate their feelings
- Ignore
- Praise
- Play
- Distract
- Introduce a reward chart
- Choose your battles
- Do, not Don't!

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## Useful links

### Dealing with behaviour

Visit the baby development and temper tantrums sections on:

 [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Resources

Visit the County Council's Family Information service pages on:

 [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Take a look at the useful information on:

 [www.solihullapproachparenting.com](http://www.solihullapproachparenting.com)

For more information about your Gloucestershire Health Visiting Service, visit:

 [www.ghc.nhs.uk/health-visiting](http://www.ghc.nhs.uk/health-visiting)