

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

Or they may say something like: "I'd rather be small!"

Could they be...

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

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!

Useful links

Dealing with behaviour

Visit the baby development and temper tantrums sections on:

 www.nhs.uk

Resources

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

 www.gloucestershire.gov.uk

Take a look at the useful information on:

 www.solihullapproachparenting.com

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

 www.ghc.nhs.uk/health-visiting