

## Problems and changes

All children will face difficult times. What is important is to help them to get through it and realise that things can change.

### Notice signs of unhappiness:

- Being extra quiet
- Arguing or getting angry
- Changes in behaviour
- Stealing or telling lies
- Being 'clingy' or frightened
- Spending time alone
- Acting young for their age



If problems persist and you are worried about your child, talk to someone.

## For more information...

**Family Lives** 0808 800 222 [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

Local, national and online parenting support and advice.

**Young Minds** 0808 802 5544 [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Supporting parents to help children during difficult times.

**Mental Health Foundation** [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

Supporting parents, children & young people through local projects.

## Visit your local library for more information and access to the internet

For more information and support you could try talking to

- friends
- staff at your child's school
- your doctor



# Draft

Tips for parents and carers of 3-11 year olds

# Helping your child to be happy

## Supporting wellbeing

**We all want our children to be healthy, happy, and confident... to succeed in life.**

As children grow up, friends, teachers and other people become important to them and they become more independent.

**But they need your love and care as much as ever.**

Parents are still the most important people in a child's life!



There are a lot of pressures on children, including friendships and pressure to succeed at school.

**They need you to actively help them grow up healthy, happy and confident.**

A happy childhood will provide a building block for the rest of their lives.

**Children love having your company and attention.**



**They need your praise and want you to be proud of them.**

**Their security depends on you – they need parents they can rely on.**

**The closer you and your child are now, the better things will be for you and for them when they are teenagers.**

## **Spend time with them**

Enjoy your child's company, listen to their ideas, know what they are good at, and what they enjoy doing. Have fun doing things together and make sure you have special times.



## **Be a good role model**

Children look up to you and copy your behaviour.

Show them how to deal with difficult feelings. If you are in a bad mood, tell them why. Say sorry if you treat them unkindly or unfairly.

Get help when you have problems. Show your children you can change and deal with things.

## **What can you do?**

### **Have a family routine**

If everyday routines such as getting up, meal times, playtimes and bedtimes are more or less the same for a child at home it allows them to feel safe and confident and to learn at school.



### **Set clear boundaries**

Remember you're in charge. Be clear about getting up times, bed times, how long to spend on screens etc. Children can get very addicted – they need you to be firm.

Remember that your 'rules' or expectations will change as your child gets older and able to do more.

Praise your child when they do the right thing.

Stick to what has been agreed!



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### **Help them to talk about their feelings**

Give your child attention. Listen to what they say – don't dismiss their feelings and opinions.

As they grow up they'll tell you more of what they feel. You can help them describe and understand their own moods and worries.

Reassure them that it's all right to feel sad, angry or scared sometimes.

Carry on giving them plenty of hugs and physical affection as they get older.

### **Tell them you love them**

Telling your child they are cared for, loved and special is very important to build your child's confidence and self-esteem.



### **Be active – encourage exercise**

It is important for all the family to exercise to stay fit and mentally healthy.

Too much screen time is not healthy.

Children need a range of activity to get out and to socialise.



**There are many things that might make your child unhappy or worried. It could be something at school, at home, in their friendship group, on social media, etc.**

**Give them lots of attention and try to help them to talk about it.**