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## Kings Langley Partnership of Schools

*Working Together to Prepare our Children for the Challenges of Tomorrow*

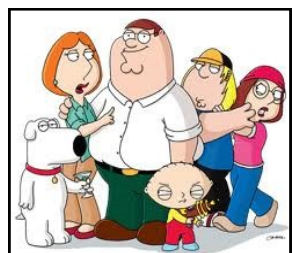
# Top Tips for Parents Managing the Behaviour of Children with Additional Needs *A Guide for Parents*



Becoming a parent is a life changing event with new routines to get used to and a whole new set of priorities. But when your child has additional needs, there's an even greater adjustment to be made. Parents can often feel isolated and misunderstood, and it can be hard to find other Mums and Dads in the same situation. While there is no one-size-fits-all solution, the following tips may give you some ideas to try, but remember to be consistent before you say "this doesn't work for me"!

### **Keep A Journal**

Keeping a journal and recording incidents can help you to look back and see if there are any patterns or contributing factors. It can also be a good thing to look through with the person you are caring for, talking about both the positives and negatives.



### **Use a Break Card**

A 'break card' can be useful for averting meltdowns. It gives a person the means to communicate their wish to leave an unpleasant situation. They simply need to hand the card over. Useful in school or out and about.

### **Exercise As An Outlet**

Lots of scheduled exercise to get rid of some of the overload of stress and anger can be very rewarding, especially if built in as a home from school routine on a daily basis. Behaviour can become more difficult during puberty and a punch bag can be another way of relieving stress while punching and yelling at it.



### **Be Calm But Assertive**

Calm but assertive instructions and body language are the most important assets when dealing with any challenging behaviour. Any more emotion into an already emotional situation can only cloud judgements and cause greater confusion.

# Managing the Behaviour of Children with Additional Needs



## Lower The Volume

When faced with someone who is aggressive and shouting, keep your face neutral and lower the volume and pitch of your own voice. Nine times out of ten, they will quieten down to hear what you are saying.

## A Good Night's Sleep

Sleep can make a big difference to a person's behaviour. The right amount of sleep is very important. Ideally we need a minimum of 7/8 hours quality sleep each day.

## Encourage Friendships

Loneliness is one of the main causes for challenging behaviour among people with special needs. Try to encourage opportunities for socialising and making friends.

## Independence Helps

It's so easy to do everything for your child including making decisions for them. Try giving them the chance to do more for themselves and to make some of their own decisions.

## Monitor Medications

Don't forget medications can have side effects. Sometimes they can make you feel groggy and hungry and not being able to communicate this, can cause further distress.

## Remove All Distractions

When a child starts to have a tantrum and begins to throw something or throw themselves on the floor, it may be a good idea to take away all distractions, like turning off the TV/Ipod etc. and saying something like "Ok nothing is happening, no one is talking about anything until you pick it up, stand up etc. and then we can carry on!"

## Early Intervention

Try to learn to recognise the warning signs and intervene early when you see them. A range of distraction techniques can be really helpful.

## Take Care Of Yourself

Children are very sensitive and can pick up on moods. If you are stressed or feeling down a child's behaviour can get worse. I really recommend you do what you can to take care of yourself as well. If you put just a little bit of energy and time in to yourself it will help both of you.



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