

# Parent Education Resource Package for Primary Schools

## Parenting made easy: How to handle children's misbehaviour?

### Strand I: Understanding of Child Development

#### Programme Plan

**1. Programme Name**

Parenting made easy: How to handle children's misbehaviour?

**2. Target**

Parents of children studying at primary level

**3. Duration**

This activity will last for about 90 minutes

**4. Mode of Activities**

Explanations, discussions, self-reflection, role play

**5. Programme Objectives:**

Through the activity, parents will be able to:

- a) Master the skills required to prevent children's misbehaviour
- b) Master the strategies to handle children's misbehaviour

**6. Programme Procedure**

Section	Time (minutes)	Topic	Content	Mode	Resources / Teaching aids
1	5	Arousing motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduce the topic and content.</li><li>• Explain that misbehaviour includes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ When children behave inappropriately even though they have the ability to avoid behaving in that way.</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explanations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PowerPoint (Slides 2-4)</li></ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When children do not comply with adults' expectations/ instructions even though they have the ability to.</li> <li>● Point out that prevention is better than cure. Preventing children's misbehaviour is more effective than handling children's misbehaviour.</li> <li>● Point out that children sometimes end up disobeying parents because they do not understand their parents' expectations or instructions, or they have forgotten their parents' expectations or instructions.</li> </ul>		
2	35	Preventing misbehaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Help parents understand how to give clear and effective instructions and how they should remind children to follow the rules.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explanations</li> <li>● Self-reflection</li> <li>● Discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PowerPoint slides (Slides 5-14)</li> <li>● <b>Worksheet on Art of Speaking</b></li> </ul>
2a	10	Preventing misbehaviour: Give clear and effective instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Display four pairs of similar instructions (Slide 5) and invite parents to discuss which one is more effective.</li> <li>● By comparing different instructions, let parents know what to pay attention to when giving instructions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use descriptive sentences when giving instructions</li> <li>○ Give positive instructions (tell your child what to do, not what not to do)</li> <li>○ State your expectations clearly and do not assume</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explanations</li> <li>● Discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PowerPoint slides (Slides 5-7)</li> </ul>

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			<p>your child can read your mind</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Break down more complex instructions step-by-step</li> <li>○ Use an affirmative tone</li> <li>○ Keep the content concise (avoid adding unnecessary content when giving instructions, such as: “You did well a few days ago, so why did you forget it today?”)</li> <li>● The instructor can play a short video called “Am I Clear” (<a href="#">link</a>). The part from 0:57-4:03 of the video is especially helpful in helping parents understand the ways to give effective instructions.</li> </ul>		
2b	15	Preventing misbehavior: Give instructions that are more pleasing to the ear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ask parents to complete the <b>Worksheet on Art of Speaking</b>. The worksheet contains 10 scenarios, parents need to reflect on which way of giving instructions to children is more acceptable to them.</li> <li>● The instructor and parents will have a discussion to summarise the characteristics of instructions that are more pleasing to the ear (Slide 8): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Arouse motivation. For example: “Let’s study first” so that “We can focus on playing later.” Motivate them to study first by telling them they can play later.</li> <li>○ Give options. For example: “Do you want to do your mathematics homework or English homework first?” If</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explanations</li> <li>● Discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Worksheet on Art of Speaking</b></li> <li>● PowerPoint Slides (Slides 8-10)</li> </ul>

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			<p>children are allowed to choose what they want from the options provided by their parents, they will naturally be more willing to follow their instructions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Make early preparation. For example, before selling flags, tell your child: “We’ll be selling flags later, which means you’ll need to proactively start conversations with strangers. Let’s try it out once first. I’ll be a stranger, and you’ll try to talk to me.” This not only allows your child to be mentally prepared but also gives them the opportunity to rehearse what they will do later, which will help them do better when the situation really takes place.</li> <li>○ Encourage thinking. For example, ask your child to think: “What would happen if you took the books away from the community centre?” Encourage your child to think about the consequences so they can understand why they should not take books from the community centre.</li> <li>○ Emphasise the importance of encouraging them to think. The instructor points out that children may misbehave because they have not thought things through. The instructor gives the following</li> </ul>		

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			<p>explanation: Our brains are made up of the comparatively impulsive and primitive <b>emotional brain</b> and comparatively the rational and advanced <b>rational brain</b>. We can use our fist to visualise this combination, with the thumb representing the emotional brain and other fingers representing the rational brain. When the rational brain takes control over the emotional brain, our impulses, emotions and behaviour are controlled in a rational manner. In contrast, when the emotional brain takes control over the rational brain, we will do things without thinking (Slides 9-10).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Before handling children's misbehaviour, parents should first help children control their emotional brain with their rational brain. In other words, they must handle children's mood before handling the matter at hand. When children's emotional brain is in control, children will find it difficult to listen to what their parents are telling them, so parents should wait until their children calm down before handling the misbehaviour.</li> <li>○ Apart from encouraging children to think, the instructor can also suggest parents to observe and</li> </ul>		

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			analyse their children's behaviour to try to understand the reason behind, and then set clear goals to help children improve their misbehaviour.		
2c	10	Preventing misbehaviour: Ways to remind children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point out that there must be times when children forget the rules. Parents should remember the principle of less is more when reminding children. In other words, parents should make reminders as simple as possible so that children will not feel annoyed.</li> <li>The instructor shows parents a series of comics (Slides 11-14) and ask parents to think about how different ways of phrasing things will make their children feel. The instructor then helps parents learn to give simple reminders by using objective descriptions, providing information and using words and text, so that children do not think their parents are nagging them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explanations</li> <li>Self-reflection</li> <li>Discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PowerPoint slides (Slides 11-14)</li> </ul>
3	45	Skills for handling misbehaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help parents understand the skills to handle misbehaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show empathy before reasoning</li> <li>"I" messages</li> <li>Inductive Discipline</li> <li>Reasonable consequences</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explanations</li> <li>Discussions</li> <li>Role play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PowerPoint slides (Slides 15-28)</li> <li>Worksheet on "I Message"</li> <li>Worksheet on Inductive Discipline</li> </ul>

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3a	10	Handling misbehavior: Show empathy before reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point out that parents should show empathy before reasoning with children. Parents should first understand what happened and let children feel that their parents understand their experience of the event and feelings. This helps children review what happened and makes them more receptive to parents' guidance.</li> <li>• Active listening is a way to show empathy and consists of three elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Asking questions</li> <li>○ Reflecting on content</li> <li>○ Reflecting on negative emotions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is important to be precise when reflecting on emotions. Parents should clearly state that the child's mistake is due to their <b>explicit feelings</b>, such as impatience, anger and feeling that the other person was wrong first, or their <b>implicit feelings</b>, such as fear, frustration and not knowing why.</li> <li>• For example: The brothers had a fight, the mother asks the older brother questions first: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mother: "What happened just now?" (Asking questions)</li> <li>○ Older brother: "My brother snatched my toy! I was playing with it first!"</li> <li>○ Mother: "Your brother</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint slides (Slides 15-17)</li> </ul>

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			<p>snatched your toy when you were playing with it, and you want to take it back, right?" (Reflecting on content, asking questions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Older brother: "Yes! I already asked him to give it back to me, but he just won't!"</li> <li>○ Mother: "He wouldn't give the toy back to you even though you asked him to. Is that why you are impatient and angry?" (Reflecting on content, reflecting on negative emotions, asking questions)</li> <li>○ Older brother: "Yes! I just want to get back my toy!"</li> <li>○ Mother: "Your brother snatched your toy and wouldn't give it back to you even though you asked him to. You felt impatient and angry, so you tried to get it back. Did you hit your little brother?" (Reflecting on content, reflecting on negative emotions, asking questions)</li> <li>○ Older brother: "I... I didn't mean to hit him. I just wanted to get back my toy..."</li> <li>○ Mother: "I understand, you just wanted to get back the toy, but you accidentally hit your little brother. What happened</li> </ul>		



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			after that?" (Reflecting on content, asking questions)		
3b	15	Problem solving: "I" messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The instructor shows parents the sentences on Slide 18 and asks parents to share how these sentences make people feel.</li> <li>• Pay attention to the following sentences. How do they make you feel? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ "You're <b>always</b> putting your toys everywhere!" → This is an example of black and white thinking</li> <li>○ "You <b>must</b> study before you are allowed to play with your toys!" → This is an example of absolute authority</li> <li>○ "Everyone knows that you're the smartest one in the family!" (sarcastic tone) → This is an example of sarcasm</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Explain the steps of using "I" messages (Slides 19-20): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ "When you said you were full after taking two bites," (Objectively describe the child's misbehaviour)</li> <li>○ "I felt a little worried." (Describe the parent's feelings)</li> <li>○ "Because your growth and development might be affected." (Describe the negative impact of the misbehaviour as perceived by the parent)</li> <li>○ "I hope you can eat at least one bowl of rice." (State</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanations</li> <li>• Discussions</li> <li>• Role play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint slides (Slides 18-20)</li> <li>• <b>Worksheet on "I" Message</b></li> </ul>

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			<p>the parent's expectations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask parents to complete the <b>Worksheet on "I" Message</b>. With the instructor role playing as the child and parents role playing as themselves, one to two scenarios will be completed together as a demonstration.</li> <li>• Summary: "I" messages can be used to handle children's <b>minor</b> misbehaviour. Parents can express their feelings to help children understand their parents' concerns and correct their own behaviour.</li> </ul>		
3c	15	Problem solving: Inductive discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the use of the two images on Slides 21-22, ask parents to analyse how their children may feel when these parenting methods are used.</li> <li>• Point out that many parents handle children's misbehaviour by suppressing children with power (beating, scolding, unreasonable punishment) or withdrawal of love (threatening to abandon children or withdrawing their love from them). However, the former is aggressive and easily makes children accumulate hatred, while the latter can stimulate children's separation anxiety and make them feel insecure. The inductive discipline is the best way to help children (Slide 23). Inductive discipline consists of four steps (Slides 24-26):</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanations</li> <li>• Role play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint slides (Slides 21-26)</li> <li>• <b>Worksheet on Inductive Discipline</b></li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Point out the child’s misbehaviour</li> <li>○ Point out how this misbehaviour affects others</li> <li>○ Understand the rationale behind and then point out how the child can achieve the same goal through a positive behaviour</li> <li>○ (For more serious misbehaviour, such as when a child hurts someone else) Point out how the child can make up for the mistake</li> <li>● Ask parents to complete the <b>Worksheet on Inductive Discipline</b>. With the instructor role playing as the child and parents role playing as themselves, one to two scenarios will be completed together as a demonstration.</li> <li>● Summary: The inductive discipline can be used to handle <b>more serious</b> misbehaviour. Parents point out the harm their children’s behaviour may cause to others, encourage children to correct their behaviour and then ask them to make up for their mistake.</li> </ul>		
3d	5	Problem solving: Reasonable consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The instructor points out that if children still refuse to follow instructions after parents have used “I” messages and the inductive discipline, parents can set</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explanations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PowerPoint slides (Slides 27-28)</li> </ul>

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			<p>reasonable consequences for their children’s behaviour. Reasonable consequences have three characteristics (Slides 27-28):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Related: It is directly related to the misbehaviour</li> <li>○ Reasonable: It is proportional to the severity of the misbehaviour</li> <li>○ Respectful: It is respectful to the child</li> <li>● For example: A child did not complete his/her homework because he/she was procrastinating, so the parents cancelled the family play time for that day. This consequence is directly related to the child’s behaviour (there is no time to play because the child did not complete the homework in time) and is proportional to the severity of the misbehaviour (because the parent only cancelled the activity for <b>that day</b> and not for <b>other days</b>). Parents do not need to beat, scold or be sarcastic to their children (which shows them respect) because they have already borne the consequences of their own behaviour.</li> </ul>		
4	5	Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Summarise the content of the lecture</li> <li>● Complete the evaluation questionnaire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explanations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PowerPoint slides (Slide 29)</li> </ul>