



## **SAFEGUARDING Newsletter May 2021**

### **The law on smacking children**

It is unlawful for a parent or carer to smack their child, except where this amounts to 'reasonable punishment'. This defence is laid down in [section 58 Children Act 2004](#), but it is not defined in this legislation.

Whether a 'smack' amounts to reasonable punishment will depend on the circumstances of each case, taking into consideration factors like the age of the child and the nature of the smack.

### **What is the guidance of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)?**

It can be tempting to think a smack sorts out incidents like disobedience and biting. However, it does nothing to teach your child how you want him or her to behave.

Instead it:

- gives a bad example of how to handle strong emotions;
- may lead children to hit or bully others;
- may encourage children to lie or hide feelings to avoid smacking;
- can make defiant behaviour worse, so discipline gets even harder;
- leads to a resentful and angry child, and damages family relationships if it continues for a long time.

All parents have behaved in ways they regret at times (shouting or smacking). If it happens, say you are sorry, make up and try again. This teaches your child a valuable lesson.

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### **How to discipline without smacking**

- Give love and warmth as much as possible
- Have clear simple rules and limits
- Be a good role model
- Praise good behaviour so it will increase
- Ignore behaviour you don't want repeated
- Criticise behaviours, not your child
- Reward good behaviour with hugs and kisses
- Distract young children or use humour
- Allow children some control; joint decisions, choices
- If a punishment is necessary, the removal of privileges, 'time out' or natural consequences are better.

**If you are concerned about a child in an emergency situation, please call 999.**

We have created a secure email address that you can send any concerns you have privately [SecureDSL@oasisboulton.org](mailto:SecureDSL@oasisboulton.org) alternatively please speak to The Safeguarding Team

Thank you  
Mrs Vadukul

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