

Tips for Setting Limits

Supporting Positive Behaviour at Home
September 2024



- Limits are statements of what behaviour is appropriate. They ensure that the child knows what is expected.
- Consistency is key – If a child is given a limit and they are expected to sometimes follow it or are only given consequences every second or third time they do not follow the limit, this is confusing for them and will lead to frustration and inconsistent behaviour.
- Avoid saying, “Because I said so.” Children are more likely to follow the limit when they are aware of why it is in place.

	Instead of...	Try...
Use language that is developmentally appropriate	“Sand stays in the sand box because when we fling it up into people’s eyes, we may hurt them and they may get an infection or need to see the eye doctor for treatment.”	“Sand stays down low so it doesn’t get in people’s eyes.”
State limits positively	“Don’t leave your laundry laying around!”	“Remember to put your laundry in the laundry basket.”
Use a statement rather than a question	“Do you want to help clean up these dishes?”	“I need you to clean up the dishes now.”