

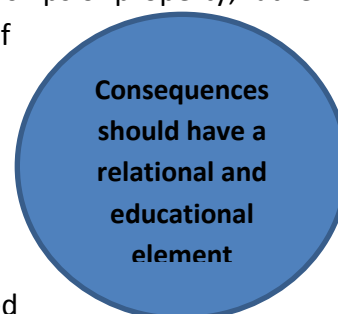
Behaviour Management Strategies for Looked After Children

'Time in', not 'time out': Time out replicates the rejection these children have often experienced and reinforces the child's internal working model of self as unlovable. Instead,



bring the child close to the activity and teacher. If possible, speak quietly to the child about how much fun they will have when they are playing cooperatively with the other children. For older children, rather than send them out of the classroom ask them to come sit with you and to complete their work. Reframe their disruption as a need for your extra attention and help.

Consequences, not punishment: Consequences for unacceptable behaviour should be natural consequences, designed to repair any damage to relationships or property, rather than punishments that have no relationship to the behaviour – 'if you make a mess, clean it up'. Where possible, consequences should have a relational and educational element, try saying... 'When you are calm I want you to apologise to Jane for hitting her, and I think it would be a good idea to help her tidy up her desk' or 'Instead of going to playground you are going to stay in with me and put all the books back on the shelves that you tipped over'.



Structure choices to remain in control: It can be helpful to offer children with attachment difficulties **choices** regarding behaviours and task, both options being acceptable to the teacher but it gives the child an element of control.

Warnings and second chances do not tend to work well with these children, as they don't have the established patterns of attachment – of wanting to please adults and to establish relationships. Instead of giving warnings when you become aware of misbehaviour, help the child to comply with the request, try saying... *'I see you need help with...'* (Stopping an activity, moving to another part of the room, not kicking the chair).



In using discipline we need to be aware of our tone of voice, our pace of voice, humour (but not sarcasm) is to be encouraged and try to keep the communication clear, direct and warm. If there is a specific issue:

- Make an explicit statement
- Use a matter of fact tone
- Induce empathy

'Ah because a lot of time was wasted during the lesson the writing work was not finished during the lesson and now it will have to be finished during break. You are probably annoyed and frustrated now that there is not going to be time to join the others for break. It's a pity this happened but maybe we can both remember this problem and we can avoid the same issues next time?'

This process helps the child to learn something rather than just seeing it all as 'just discipline', the teacher avoids being cast as a mean and rejecting person and therefore the relationship can continue to develop positively.