

University of Maryland School Mental Health Program's Wellness Wednesdays - Supporting Positive Behavior

Common behavior challenges can look different for children of different ages (see Additional Resources below). Understanding the reasons for your child's actions can help you better support positive behaviors. Strategies that have been found to work for many children and families.

- **Praise.** [Praise](#) is one of the most powerful tools parents can use to increase behaviors in their child. **Look for, notice, and reward** your child's positive behaviors. Praise is most effective when it is:
 - **Specific.** Tell your child exactly what they did right. "I really like it when you pick up your clothes so neatly."
 - **Immediate.** As soon as you notice something positive or when your child follows an instruction, praise them – "Thanks for taking out the garbage when I asked."
- **Give effective instructions.** Effective instructions depend on:
 - **What we say.** **Be specific** – spell out a clear behavior for your child to do. **Don't ask questions** ("Can you clean your room?") – tell your child what to do. **Avoid lists** – give one instruction at a time.
 - **How we say it.** **Get your child's attention first** – get close and get eye contact. **Reduce distractions** when giving instructions (turn off TV). **Use the right tone** – use a calm and even voice. **Be clear** – Ask them to repeat back your instruction to make sure they understand.
 - See [this resource](#) for examples. Watch this [video](#) for more tips.
- **Spend quality time.** Schedule or find time each day to spend **one-on-one** with your child (can be 10 minutes). During this time, do nothing but pay attention to and express positive thoughts and feelings toward your child. Avoid teaching, questioning, or correcting. [Click here for ideas.](#)

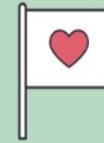
Don't forget to...

- **Give yourself grace!**
- **Connect with School Staff.**

5 POSITIVE WAYS TO REACT WHEN YOUR CHILD

Misbehaves

KEEP YOUR COOL



Losing your cool while trying to improve your child's behavior doesn't set a positive example of how to act in stressful situations.

DON'T HIGHLIGHT MISBEHAVIOR



Of course, you can't ignore misbehavior completely, but try not to show your kid any extra attention when they misbehave.

TAKE SPECIAL NOTICE OF GOOD BEHAVIOR



Make sure that you are intentional about giving praise to your children for good habits and behavior.

STAY FIRM



While it's important to use a calm tone of voice when speaking with your child, remember to also remind them that you mean what you say.

ACCEPT MISTAKES



Children make mistakes in how they behave, just like adults sometimes do. While misbehavior may not be desirable, it is a perfectly normal part of being a kid.

Additional Resource Links

[Short Video Clips with Behavior Support Tips](#)
[7 Parenting Strategies that Work](#)
[Managing Behavior at Home](#)

Parenting Tips: [preschool](#), [school age](#), [twins](#), [teens](#)
Discipline strategies: [preschool](#), [school age](#), [twins](#), [teens](#)

University of Maryland School Mental Health Program's Wellness Wednesdays

Interested in SMHP services for your child?

Reach out to Jasmine Savoy, SMHP clinician and/or Unique Eaton, MSW trainee either by phone or email (See below for more contact information). You can also talk to your child's teacher or Principal Brown about completing a referral form or request one yourself.

Not sure about the program but want to learn more or consult with a counselor? Let's connect!

Cultural Responsiveness and Equity

[University of Maryland Cultural Responsiveness & Equity](#)

[Talking About Race](#): The National Museum of African American History & Culture for educators, caregivers, and involved community members sorted by topics of bias, whiteness, and self-care.

[Talking to Kids about Racism & Justice - Book Lists](#)
The Oakland Library developed a curated list of books, articles, videos, websites, and more, broken down by age range to assist adults in discussions of racism and justice with children.

Useful Links

[U of MD National Center for School Mental Health](#)

[Baltimore City Public Schools](#)

[Behavioral Health & Wellness](#)

Stay connected with Office Hours

Feel free to "stop by" and meet our team using this link:

Wednesdays 3:00-4:00pm [Zoom link for Wednesday](#)
Thursdays: 8:00-9:00am [Zoom link for Thursday](#)

Self-Care Corner

- Identify 1 thing to do for yourself today
- Be realistic when setting expectations for yourself and your child
- Take breaks from social media
- Identify your child's strengths
- Have a positive moment with your child

Crisis Support

For Life Threatening Emergencies **DIAL 911**

Here2Help Hotline provides 24/7 confidential advice and emotional support.

410-433-5175 | [Here2Help](#)

Maryland Crisis Hotline
DIAL 211 | <https://211md.org/>

National Suicide Prevention Hotline
1 800-273-8255 | <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Child Protective Services (410) 361-2235
410-361-2235 | [CPS - MD Dept of Human Resources](#)

Brought to you by Ms. Jasmine Savoy, clinician with the University of Maryland
School Mental Health Program in partnership with
Augusta Savage Fells Institute of Visual Arts

(P) 443-436-2637

(E) jsavoy@som.umaryland.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:00-4:00pm [Zoom link for Wednesday](#)
Thursdays: 8:00-9:00am [Zoom link for Thursday](#)

Psychiatrist: Dr. Albert Nguyen (available Tuesday 8:30-11:30 by appointment)

Trainee: Unique Eaton (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays)

(P): 443.475.0691

(E): unique.eaton@som.umaryland.edu

