



Signposts

for building better behaviour

Resources for Participants from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities

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Summary Sheet

Introduction

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Introduction

Every child has difficult behaviour sometimes. The Signposts program aims to help parents work out the reasons for their child's difficult behaviour, find effective ways of managing that behaviour, and stop difficult behaviour in the future. The Victorian Government paid for this program to be developed, and it was written by RMIT University and Parenting Research Centre staff working with many families.

There are a variety of Signposts program resources for parents, including written materials and a DVD, which your facilitator will give to you.

Understanding difficult behaviour

As children grow they learn new things. Sometimes they do things their parents do not like. We call these difficult behaviours. It might be something mild, like whingeing, or something that is more of a problem, like hurting other people.

Reasons for difficult behaviour

Four important things affect your child's behaviour:

- long-term physical make-up (e.g. tall or short, boy or girl)
- past learning (what your child has learnt already)
- current physical state (tired, angry, upset, the impact of medicines)
- current environment (what is happening around them right now, including what other people are doing or telling them to do).

The factor we can do the most to change is the current environment. The Signposts program helps you work out what you can do to change your child's environment to help bring out the best in your child.

Children who are slower to learn than others can develop behaviours that are difficult to manage.

How Signposts helps

Using Signposts, you will discuss many ideas that work well with boys and girls of all ages and abilities. You will be asked to choose one or two of your child's behaviours to work on, and you will be helped to decide which of the ideas to try out with your child.

Signposts works best if everyone who deals with your child's behaviour does things in the same way. This includes other family members, teachers and others who spend time with your child.

A focus on parents

Parents are the key people who make a difference in a child's environment. Teachers, doctors and other people can play their part, but parents are the ones who have a lot of knowledge about their own child as well as many skills in managing difficult behaviour. This program provides the signposts to help you get to where you want to be.