

Building the tool box: Keeping close

Another consequence that builds rather than destroys the relationship is to interpret your child's behaviour as needing more support from you. By now you should have an idea about the behaviours that your child shows that indicates that they are anxious and stressed. Shouting at them or giving a consequence when a child uses a behaviour to show you their inner emotional turmoil is not likely to solve the problem. A better strategy is to use PACE (see below) and to try to be accepting and empathic and explain to your child that you understand that their way of telling you that they are anxious and that they need more support from you. This means that you are going to keep them close to you for the evening (rather than them going to their club or out to play) so that you can give them the support they need. This increases proximity rather than dividing you. It feels better than grounding, and when you are together it is important that you make that time pleasant and bonding, it doesn't work if you sit for the night angry and uncommunicative.

What behaviours does your child show that are driven more by anxiety and fear or a need to prove to you that they are unlovable, and would benefit from your child being drawn close?