

## LEARNING TO MANAGE BEHAVIOUR

### What Can We Expect Of Very Young Children?

We are often asked "How old should my child be before I should expect him or her to do what I ask?"

This is an important question and the bottom line is that **young babies are not able to follow instructions**. Children need language skills and ability to control their behaviour before they are old enough to begin to do as their parents ask.

So, the task for you as a parent of a young baby is to make the world absolutely **SAFE!** Your baby will not be able to stop from touching something that you tell them is "HOT" until they understand what this means AND are able to stop themselves from reaching out and touching.

### Smacking young babies??

Does smacking help a one year old learn about the world?

Smacking children is an area where people have lots of different opinions. What we can be completely sure about is that smacking young babies is never OK.

They only learn to associate you with being hurt... and not that touching the television is wrong. If they are able to touch the television and they keep turning the power on and off then move the television up higher.

Have a look at this table and think about some things you could complete here.

Things my baby does that I don't really like	What I could do to manage this
Turns the power on the TV on and off	Move the television up higher  Turn TV off at power point
Throwing food on the floor when your baby is in their high chair	Accept that this is just a stage.. Put a big plastic sheet or rubbish bag under the high chair.
Wiggles or even runs away when you are trying to change your baby's nappy.	Make nappy changing fun by having a toy that your baby can hold while you are changing the nappy. Even your car keys! Sing or talk to your baby while you are changing their nappy. Give them a big cuddle when you are finished.. They will learn that nappy changing is nice. Make sure you have everything ready- nappy, wipes, cream, before you start to change your baby's nappy.