

# Advice for Parents in Southwark

**4 to 10 years**



**To arrange a translation of  
this leaflet please take it to:**

للترتيب لترجمة هذه الكراسة خذها رجاءً إلى أحد العنوانين التاليين:

**Arabic**

এই প্রচারপুস্তিকাটির (লিফলেটের) একটি অনুবাদের আয়োজন করতে হলে দয়া

করে এটি এখানে নিয়ে যান:

**Bengali**

Pour une traduction de ce dépliant, présentez-le à l'un des  
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**French**

Para obtener una traducción de este folleto, llévelo a:  
**Spanish**

Bu broşürün tercüme edilmesini düzenlemek için lütfen onu  
aşağıdaki yerlerden birine götürün:

**Turkish**

為獲取此單張的翻譯版本，請將單張帶到以下一站式辦事處：

**Chinese**

Để có bản dịch tiếng Việt, hãy mang tờ rơi này đến cửa hàng:  
**Vietnamese**

**One Stop Shop** 122 Peckham Hill Street, London, SE15

**One Stop Shop** 151 Walworth Road, London, SE17

**One Stop Shop** 17 Spa Rd, London SE16

**Town Hall** 31 Peckham, London SE5

**We have been helping parents find out how to help their children:-**

- **Do well in school**
- **Respect other people**
- **Be happy and get on in life**

**We have written this booklet to share some of the ideas they have found helpful.**

**It worked for them,  
it can work for you!**

For more information on services for children and families in Southwark contact the Family Information Service (FIS) – freephone 0800 013 0639 or e-mail [family.info@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:family.info@southwark.gov.uk)

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## **01** **Starting School**

**Partnership between parents/  
carers and schools is key to  
children being successful and  
happy at school.**

**On Track Southwark has been  
working with local parents/  
carers since 2001 to help them  
prepare and settle their child  
into school.**

Visit with your child to look around the school before they start. Most parents feel nervous taking their child to school for the first time so meet the staff, tell them of any needs your child has and talk over any worries. They want to get to know you.

### **Get your child ready for**

- Lunchtime: encourage your child to eat and drink without help. Practise using a knife and fork and encourage them to ask for help when needed.
- Playtime: help your child get used to large spaces by taking them on visits to the park and encourage them to play and share with others.
- Learning: sing songs, read stories and talk to children in your first language, encourage their questions and help them recognise shapes, colours, numbers and words in familiar places when out shopping or travelling.

## Support for Parents in Southwark

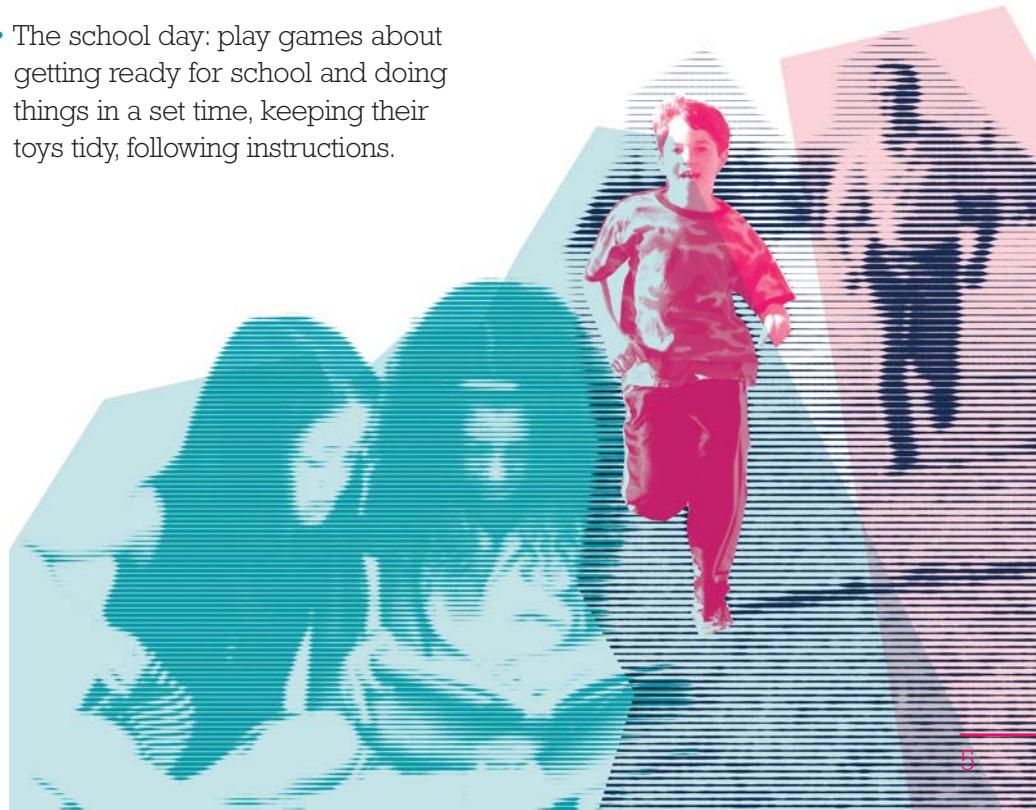
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- Independence: help children go to the toilet independently and be able to undress and do up their clothes and wash their hands; play games that practice putting on and taking off their clothes and shoes (and don't forget to label their clothes with their name!); encourage children to ask for help when they need it.
- The school day: play games about getting ready for school and doing things in a set time, keeping their toys tidy, following instructions.

For more advice – ask your child's teacher, visit your local library or check out [www.directgov.gov.uk](http://www.directgov.gov.uk)

The Duty Education Welfare Officer can advise on how to deal with any problems: telephone **020 7525 2714** 9am to 1pm.



## 02

# Happy children happy parents

**Southwark parents who join parenting programmes are discovering how to encourage their child to behave well. They are surprised at the difference simple techniques make. Here are some of the things they are trying: -**

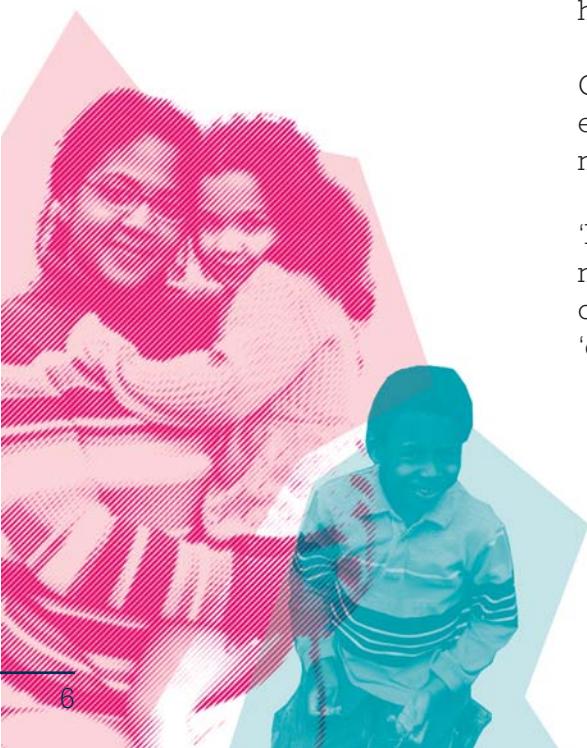
### Praise, encouragement and listening

Make your child feel good when they are behaving and they will want to keep doing it.

Encouraging them with praise not punishment will help them learn new skills, stick at problems and feel good about themselves. This will help them settle in school.

Children who do not get praised, encouraged or listened to will often misbehave to get attention.

'Difficult to manage' children need more encouragement and praise in order to learn to behave well, than 'easy to manage' children.



### Play every day

Play is not just fun; it's how children learn.

Play can help children solve problems, test out ideas, and explore their imaginations as well as encouraging communication of feelings, thoughts and needs. Playing can contribute to a close and loving bond between you and your child.

The more you can play with your child in a way that allows them to set the rules and content the better the result.

Remember, it has to be fun!

### Problem solving

Children need to solve their problems without hitting, arguing, grabbing or yelling.

Help them learn this by asking them to think about solutions to problems and then looking at each one in terms of consequences. Over time children learn to do this for themselves.

What about behaviour you do not want? Ignoring and 'time out'

Firmly and calmly telling your child what you want them to do, rather than what you don't want them to do; your child will learn what is expected of them.

Ignoring what is not wanted, and noticing and praising behaviour that is wanted will make your child feel good. This will increase the likelihood of wanted behaviour being repeated and lessen the behaviour that gets no response.

'Time out' can be used sparingly for behaviour that cannot be ignored because it hurts others or is dangerous. 'Time out' is not a punishment but a time for the child to calm down and think about their behaviour. A minute for each year is long enough for 'time out' (e.g. five minutes for a five year old). This can only be done within a positive relationship and not in an angry or harsh way or the child may feel rejected and unloved.

For information on local parent support services contact your local children's centre. See page 16 for details of your local centre.

Free, confidential 24 hour helpline  
for advice on parenting  
Parentlineplus telephone  
**080 800 2222**  
[www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)



## 03

# Protect your child from accidents in the home

**More children are admitted to hospital because of accidents than any other reason.**

Most common are falls, burns and poisoning.

Nearly half of all burns and scalds happen to children under 5yrs old. Half of these accidents are in the kitchen.

Our advice is,

## To protect your child from burns and fire

- Never leave a child alone with a hot iron, especially on the floor.
- Fit a smoke alarm in your home.
- Keep young children out of the kitchen when you are cooking.

Find out more from Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT)

[www.capt.org.uk](http://www.capt.org.uk)

If you have a child under 6 years old you can ask your Health Visitor to refer you to MORPH for a free home safety check. They can fit free or low cost safety equipment if needed.

## 04

# Protect your child from harm from others

**Most children who are abused, including sexual abuse, are hurt by an adult or child they know.**

Do not assume that because you know and trust someone they cannot harm a child. Adult abusers come from all walks of life.

## Keep your child to keep safe by:-

- Teaching them that they have a right to refuse to do anything that they think is wrong or makes them feel uncomfortable, embarrassed or hurts them.
- Teaching them to tell you if anyone asks them to keep a secret, explain the difference between a secret and a good surprise for someone else, like a birthday present.
- Teaching them about their body and that some parts are private to them.
- Above all make sure your child gets the message that you want to know if anything upsets them and you will not be cross or blame them.

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Many children do not tell anyone when they are abused as they think they will get into trouble.

### Choose safe activities by:-

- Making sure that any club, sports coaching etc. your child goes to has a child protection policy and that staff have been properly vetted and are registered with a national body, for example the FA for football coaches, where appropriate

- If your child has private lessons speak to someone else whose child goes to the same tutor and ask to see a recent Criminal Records Bureau check.

Find out more

[www.southwark.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren)  
[www.nspcc.gov.uk](http://www.nspcc.gov.uk)  
[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)



## 05

# Keep your child safe on the roads

**Nationally over half of all children killed in accidents die in transport accidents.**

Keep your child safe by following this simple advice.

### On the pavement and crossing the road.

Out with children under 6

- Always hold young children's hand, do not let them run ahead.
- Always walk between your child and the road.
- Use reins for younger children.
- Always use a crossing if you can.
- Tell your child about the dangers on the road and start to show them how you judge when it is safe to cross.

7 to 11 year olds

- Do not let your child cross the road alone until they are at least 9 years old.
- Tell your child to use crossings whenever possible.
- Teach your child to use crossings safely.

### In the car

Always obey the law that says

- All children under 135cm tall (a door handle is about 1m off the ground) must be strapped in a child seat or booster cushion depending on their age.
- All children must wear a seat belt or they cannot travel in the car.

TfL sponsors free membership of children's traffic club for all three year olds in London.

[www.trafficclub.co.uk](http://www.trafficclub.co.uk)

Find out more from

[www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk](http://www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk)

[www.hedgehogs.gov.uk](http://www.hedgehogs.gov.uk)

## 06

# Parenting and the law

**Lots of parents ask us what the law says parents can and cannot do. Here are some key facts:-**

## Children alone, at home or playing out

There is no set age in law when children can be left unsupervised. Parents need to make a decision based on the circumstances. **HOWEVER** it is illegal to leave a child in a situation that could lead to them getting hurt.

Southwark is a busy area in a large city and our advice is

- Never leave a baby or child under 10 yrs old alone at home; they could be injured in a fire or accident very quickly.
- Most children under 13 should not be left alone for more than a short time.
- No one under sixteen should be left alone overnight.
- No child under ten should play out unsupervised or be out after 8pm without an adult.
- No child under 16 should be asked to look after younger children for more than a short time.

You should never leave a child if they might be in danger. You need to consider

- How sensible they are.
- How long you will be gone.
- Is there a sensible adult nearby that the child can go to if there is a problem?
- How often you are leaving them

#### **Physical Chastisement**

We all agree that children need to learn to behave and show respect to other people however over time parents are finding that physical discipline is not the best way to do this. Children who behave at home through fear can become unhappy and find it hard to concentrate at school. It may also be illegal.

It is illegal to hit anyone, adult or child. The law does allow the defence of reasonable punishment for parents who have used minor physical discipline, for example one or two slaps to the leg that do not cause a mark.

It is always illegal to

- Hit a child so that it causes a mark or injury
- Hit a child with an object such as a stick, shoe or belt

Even minor discipline can be harmful if it happens every day and makes a child unhappy.

#### **What can you do instead**

Parents find children behave when they

- Praise their children when they behave well
- Make time to have fun with them so that they want to please
- Tell their children what the rules are and stick to them
- Tell them off by speaking firmly but keep their temper and stay in control.

Find out more from

[www.NSPCC.org.uk](http://www.NSPCC.org.uk)

## 07

# Looking after someone else's child? Know the law

**If you look after someone else's child in your home on a regular basis it could be 'childminding' or 'private fostering'. If so you need to inform the proper authorities so the arrangement can be inspected and approved.**

### Private fostering

This has nothing to do with children who are looked after in public care. Private fostering is when a parent arranges for his or her child to live with someone else for longer than a month. The Council must be told of this arrangement.

### Are you a private foster carer?

If someone else's child stays with you for most of the week and

- they are under 16yrs old (or 18 if disabled) and
- they have stayed for over 28 days and
- you are NOT their step parent by marriage, brother or sister, aunt or uncle by birth or marriage or grandparent then this is a private fostering arrangement and you MUST inform the Council.

If you do not you may be committing an offence.

The Council has a duty to arrange for a social worker to visit to check the young person is safe and well. They will also arrange any help the young person may need.

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### Who to get in touch with

You will not be in trouble if you have not told us of a private fostering arrangement because you did not know you had to but you must let us know now.

So if you are:

- a parent arranging for your child to live with someone else
- looking after someone else's child or
- know of a child living with someone else.

Contact us on [020 7525 1921](tel:02075251921) or e-mail [RAD@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:RAD@southwark.gov.uk) and say you want to notify the council of a private fostering arrangement.

### Childminding

If you look after a child

- under 8 yrs old,
- to whom you are not related,
- for over 2 hours in any one day,
- in your home **and**
- for reward (which includes favours or reward in kind)

you MUST register as a childminder with OFSTED.

To find out how to register contact the Southwark Family Information Service (FIS) – freephone [0800 013 639](tel:0800013639)

If you are a parent leaving your child with a childminder contact CIS to check they are registered.

## **08 Getting help with parenting**

### **Who you can talk to locally?**

#### **Parent Liaison Worker**

Contact your children's centre locality team who can arrange for you to meet with a parent liaison worker who can tell you about local services.

Walworth, Borough and Bankside:  
tel [020 7407 3780](tel:02074073780)

Bermondsey and Rotherhithe:  
tel [020 7064 9770](tel:02070649770)

Camberwell and Dulwich:  
tel [020 7277 3840](tel:02072773840)

Peckham, Peckham Rye and Nunhead:  
tel [020 7635 2200](tel:02076352200)

#### **Health Visitor**

Visit your Doctors surgery or health centre to find out who your child's health visitor is. They can advise on any aspect of looking after a child under five and refer you for home safety checks and other services.

#### **Children's services duty social worker**

If your family is in crisis and you are not able to care for your children, for example because of illness or your child has been hurt or abused by an adult or another child contact children's services duty: tel [020 7252 1921](tel:02072521921)

For information about services for children with disability or additional needs contact the Duty social worker at Sunshine House: tel [020 3049 8250](tel:02030498250)

#### **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

For help with relationship problems between you and your child or with your child's emotional welfare contact CAMHS: tel [020 7701 7371](tel:02077017371)

You can also speak to your child's teacher or Doctor who may be able to advise you or refer you for further help.

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### **Family Information Service**

Advice and information about childcare, one 'o' clock clubs and activities and services for families in Southwark. Freephone  
**0800 0130639** or e-mail  
[family.info@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:family.info@southwark.gov.uk)

### **Family Service Directory**

A web based directory of services in Southwark  
[www.southwark.gov.uk/fisdirectory](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/fisdirectory)

### **National Links**

Free, confidential 24 hour helpline-Parentlineplus **080 800 2222**  
[www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)



## **09 Getting help for yourself**

**We know many parents need help and advice for themselves, with relationship problems, depression and practical problems like finding work and managing their money.**

For information on local health services contact NHS Direct:  
**0845 4647 [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)** or

Southwark PCT Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):  
Freephone **0800 5877 170**  
E-mail [pals@southwarkpct.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@southwarkpct.nhs.uk)

For health and emotional problems talk to your Doctor,

For help to find a job contact Southwark Works: Freephone **0800 052 0540**  
E-mail [info@southwarkworks.org.uk](mailto:info@southwarkworks.org.uk)

For other advice services ask at a one stop shop or visit your local library and use a computer to check out [www.southwark.gov.uk/yourservices/adviseservices](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/yourservices/adviseservices)

## **10 Would you report a child in danger?**

**Most families bring up their children well even if they need some help from time to time. Sadly, a few children come to harm because their parents neglect them.**

We need to know about these children so we can protect them.

Friends, family and neighbours often know about children who are unhappy or being neglected but do not let us know.

They may be scared of the parents or worry that the children will be removed from home.

### **The facts are:-**

- Over 5,000 children in Southwark receive some extra support, only around 250 of these have a child protection plan.
- Most children whom social services support stay living with their families.

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- Social services must not reveal the identity of members of the public who contact them unless they agree.

If you think a child is in immediate danger, maybe they are left alone or with an adult who is drunk, call the police by dialling 999.

If you think a child is being harmed or abused, possibly they are being hit or living with parents who fight,

ring Southwark Council on **020 7525 5000** and ask for the children's services duty social worker.

To find out more check out:  
[www.southwark.gov.uk/  
safeguardingchildren](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren)



# For your notes

**Safeguarding Children**  
Southwark Council  
Mabel Goldwin House  
49 Grange Walk  
London  
SE1 3DY