

## **How Parents/Caregivers can be part of the Team**

The following advice may assist you in helping your child while they are attempting to change their behaviour.

### **1. Notice changes for the better**

Watch for small improvements. Show an interest and talk about the good things you notice. Let the Bidgee School know about the good things your young person is doing at home.

### **2. Tell them what you want.**

Make sure your young person knows what is expected of them. They need to know more than 'be good'. Be specific and tell them what behaviour you want from them. Plan realistic rules and consequences (plan these together with your children so they have input) and stick to them. Refrain from entering into 'power struggles', restate the rule once and walk away.

### **3. Allow your child to make mistakes and use these mistakes to learn.**

Allow the mistakes to earn the appropriate consequence. Refrain from 'rescuing' your young person. When children are allowed to blame others for their behaviour, it is easy for them to fall into the trap of saying the next time "it's not my fault, they made me angry". It will not help your young person in the long run if they feel they can escape consequences and their responsibilities. They are more likely to repeat the unacceptable behaviour rather than change it.

### **4. Separate the behaviour from the child**

Children who are chastised one minute and hugged the next, get mixed and confusing messages. Those who are given appropriate consequences and then the matter (having been dealt with) is forgotten, get the message that they are valued though their behaviour at times was not acceptable.

### **5. Follow through.**

Give out consequences calmly and consistently. If you lose your temper teenagers are less likely to take you seriously. Never threaten anything you won't do. If you make a threat be sure, before you say it, that you will follow through with it, even if it's hard to do so.

### **6. Be part of the team.**

Ring or visit the school. Ask questions, listen, join in and work towards a change. Often our students have not experienced a positive time during their schooling and will take time to learn to trust that the decisions that the staff at The Bidgee School make are in their best interest. Because of this they may try to split the working relationship between school and their parents/carers.

Parents/Caregivers need to be aware this might happen and actively seek to work with the staff to provide a united front to counteract this splitting. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to visit the school to find out about the program. The staff at The Bidgee School prides themselves at working in a team environment. We have meetings to discuss each student on a daily/weekly basis and involve all the stakeholders. We try very hard to fit into the busy parents'/ caregivers' schedule but sometimes despite our best intentions, it is not possible to schedule meetings outside of normal working hours and yet still involve all those who need to attend without asking for compromises on some people's part.

**7. Believe your young person can change.**

Changing behaviour is a challenge. Your belief that your young person can improve his/her trying to behaviour is essential to help them believe in themselves. Don't give false praise when motivate your young person. Find something genuine to praise and do so with sincerity. Become a motivator for your young person. Help them meet the challenge of a change.