

# Parents' coffee morning



## *Managing Challenging Behaviour*

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Clinical Psychologist

# Who am I?

- Clinical Psychologist
- From CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- Part of WAMHS (Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools) programme

# The role of WAMHS...

Whole school approach

Parent workshops

Drop ins for parents

Staff training

Staff consultations

# Millfield's Mental Health Team



Jane  
Betsworth  
Headteacher



Debi Cookhorn  
Deputy Head Teacher



Dr Julia Dabrowski  
Clinical  
Psychologist



Claire-Louise Leyland  
Director Treetops  
Therapy &  
Art Therapist

Kingsley Fry  
SENCO/  
SAFEGUARDING



Chris Belgrave  
Lead Behaviour  
Professional

This team liaise closely and regularly to ensure that the staff and children of Millfields are appropriately supported



# Behaviour as a Communication

What might the child be trying to communicate about what they are feeling?

Look for clues about feelings.

What does the child need at this time?

# Managing behaviour that challenges

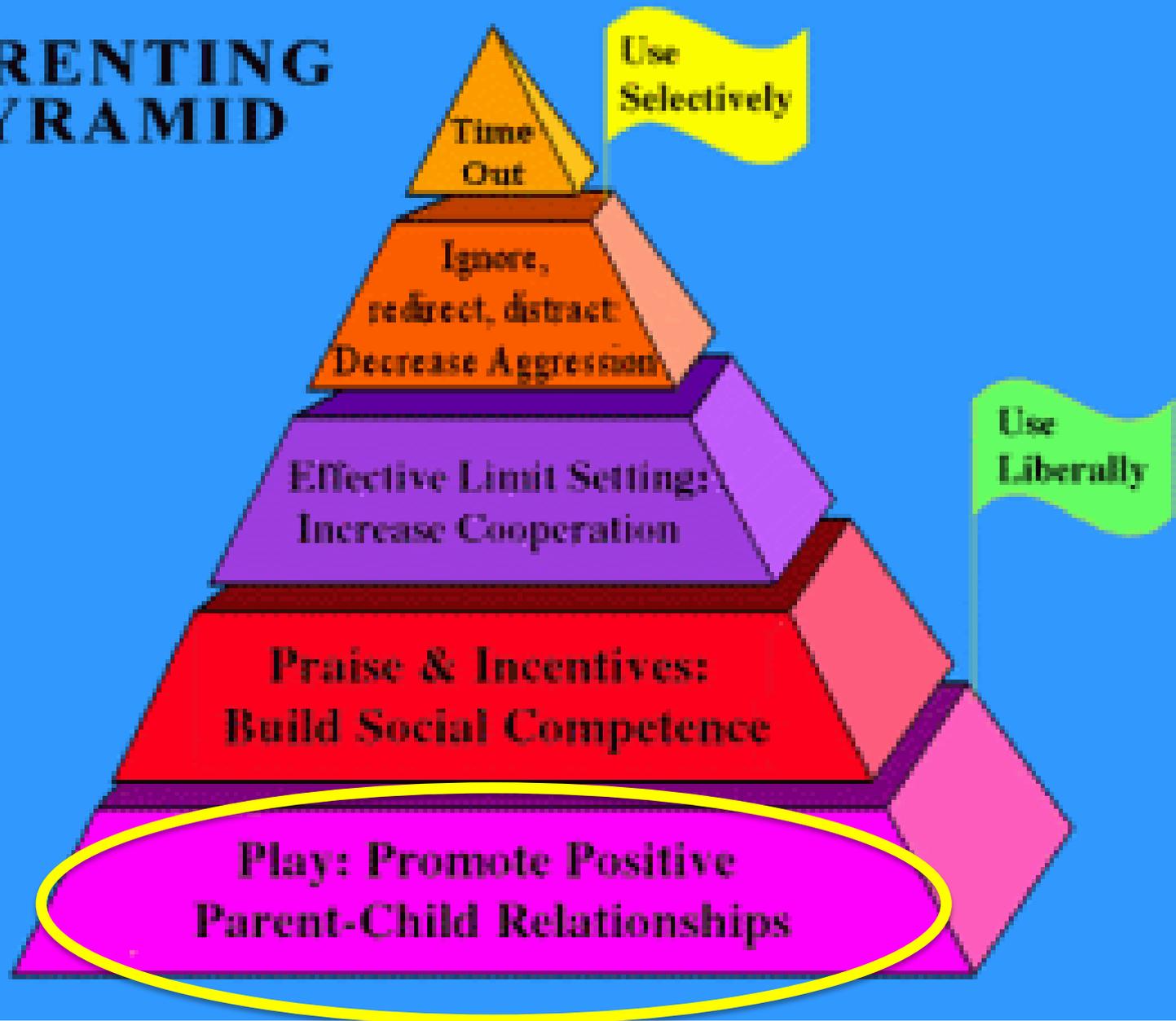
Behavioural approaches

A focus on parents' responses

Incredible Years – Webster-Stratton

Parenting pyramid – *Child-led play, praise and rewards, clear calm commands, ignoring, consequences.*

# PARENTING PYRAMID



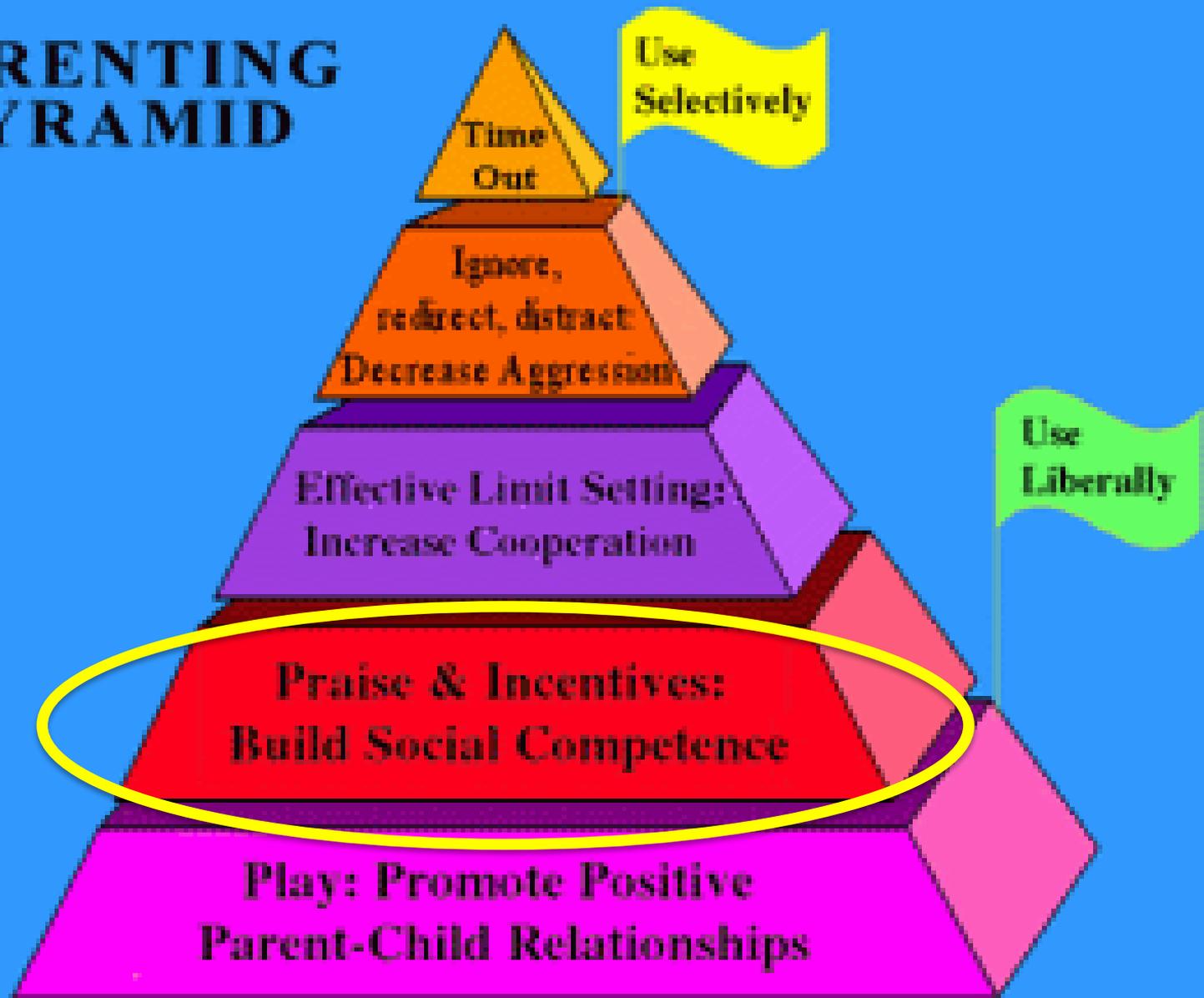
# Child-led play

- Attend to what your child is doing
- Describe their actions e.g. “Peter, you’ve picked up the red bricks.”
- Describe how they are feeling e.g. “Peter you look really calm”.
- Say how you feel e.g. “I’m really enjoying playing with you.”
- Praise frequently
- Ask the child what they want you to do
- Join in with the child’s play in the way they want you to
- Ignore any silliness or behaviour you do not want, as long as it is safe to do so.
- Remember to praise yourself for finding time to play with your child.

# Child-led play

- **Avoid** giving commands
- **Avoid** asking questions
- **Avoid** teaching
- **Avoid** criticising
- **Avoid** saying no

# PARENTING PYRAMID



# Praise and Rewards

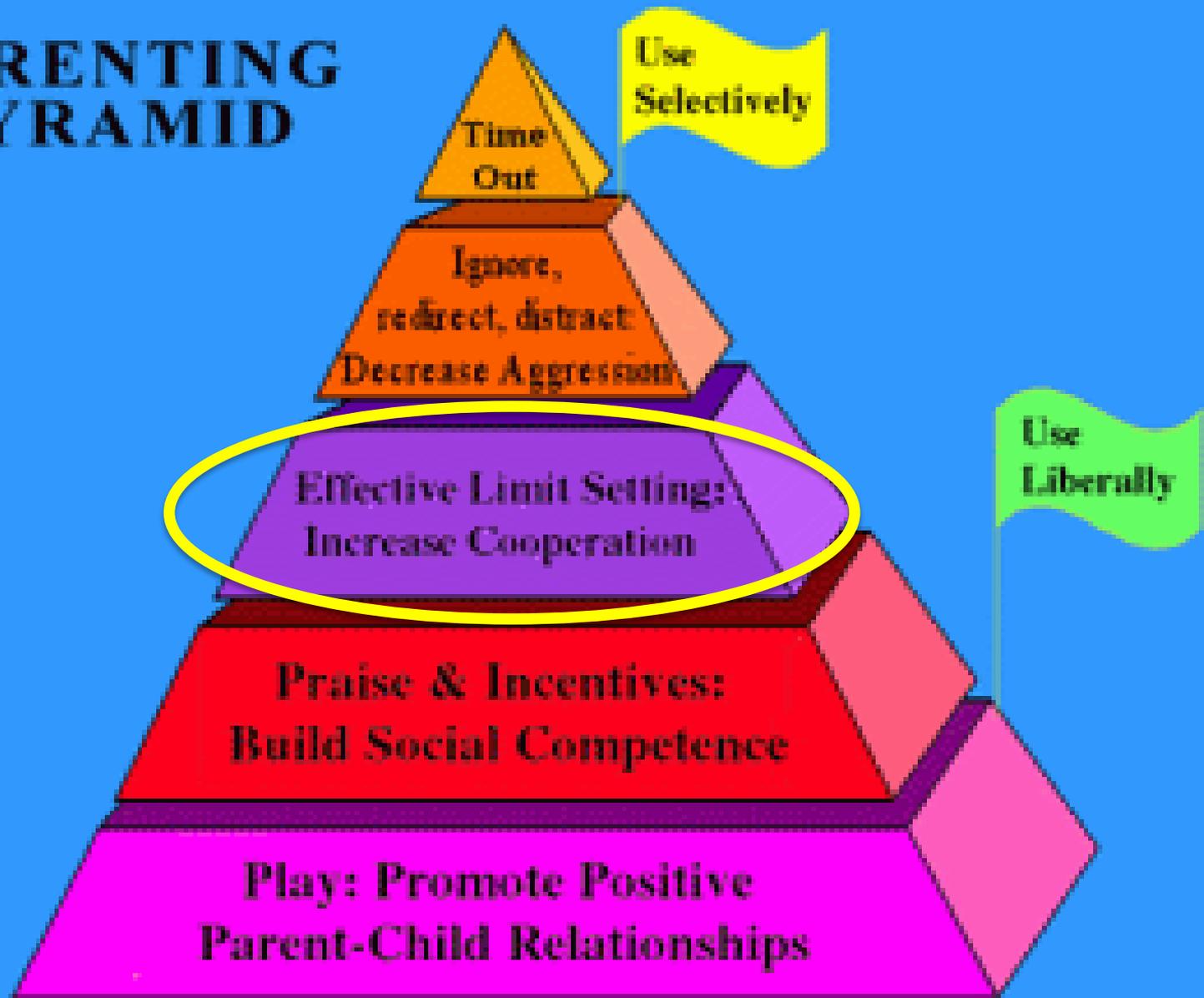
## Types of praise:

- **Labelled Verbal Praise**
- “Well done – you shared with your sister”
- “Thank-you for playing quietly whilst I was on the phone”
  
- **Unlabelled Verbal Praise**
- “Well Done!”, “Good Boy!” and “That’s nice”.
  
- **Physical Rewards**
- Hugs, kisses, pats and so on can be added to verbal praise to make it even more powerfully reinforcing to the child.

# Praise and Rewards

- Try to use immediately after your child engages in any behaviour you want to increase.
- Praise your child in an *enthusiastic* and *sincere* manner. Use lots of smiles and eye contact.
- Try not to add sarcastic comments to praise statements, like “Thank-you for tidying up - at last!” or put down statements, e.g. “Well done for tidying up. Why can’t you do that every time I ask you?” These are disruptive.

# PARENTING PYRAMID



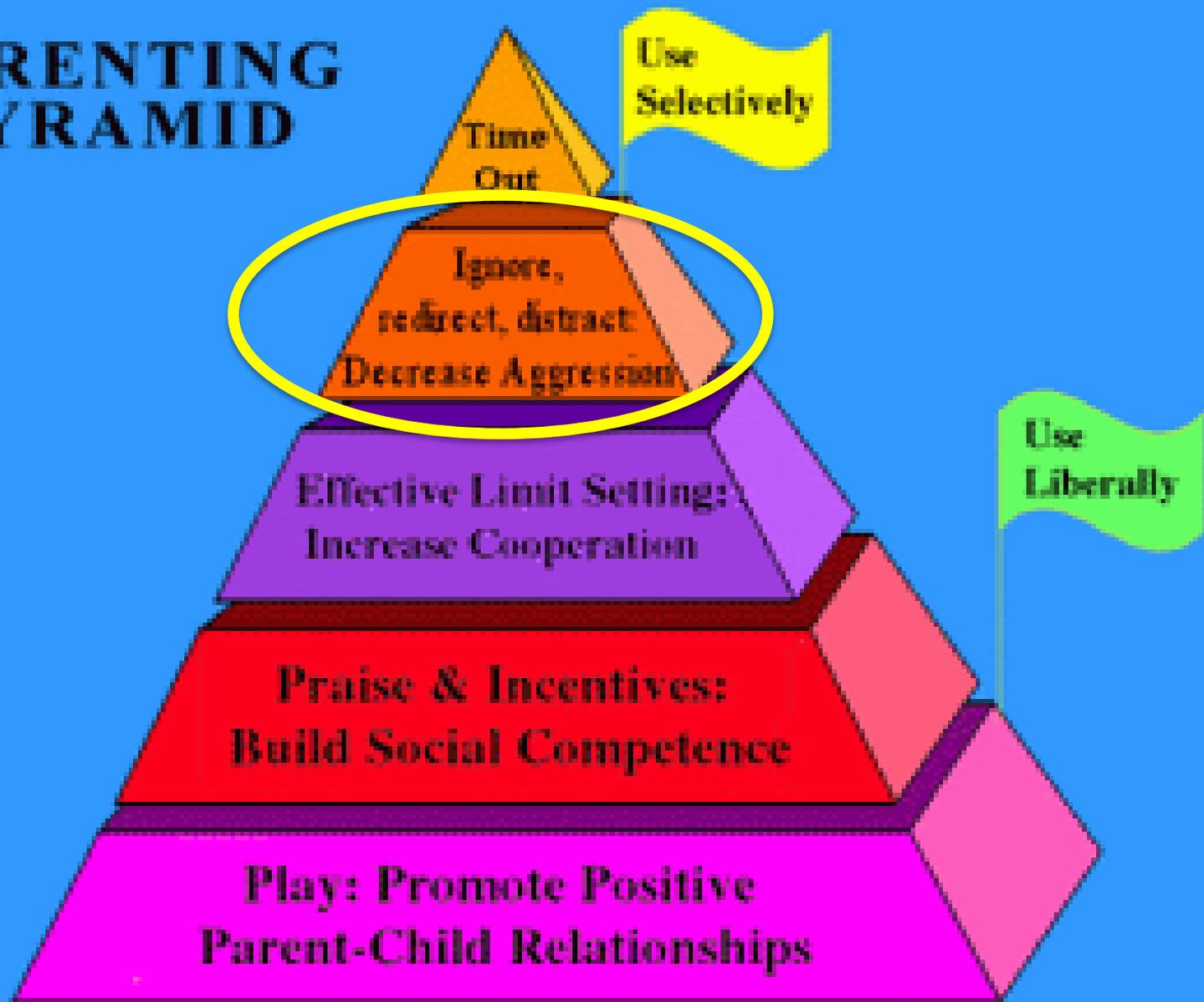
# Giving Clear, Calm Commands

- Decide ahead of time whether to give a command. Make it realistic, Avoid setting your child up for failure.
- Only give a command if you are prepared to see it through until it is completed – however long it may take.
- Get your child’s attention before issuing a command, by calling their name and making eye contact.
- Make the command simple, clear and direct to ensure your child knows what is expected of him/her.
- Use a firm voice and tell the child what you want them to do, not what you want them to stop  
e.g. 1 - “talk quietly” rather than “stop shouting”

# Giving Clear Commands

- **Give one command at a time** - Young children cannot remember long strings of information.
- If you would like them to do a number of tasks, ask each one individually and praise them for complying with each one.
- Limit unnecessary commands.
- **Give your child a chance to comply** - Make sure you wait after giving a command and give your child enough time to begin to follow it. This should be at least 5 seconds and avoid talking in that time.
- If your child complies, or begins to comply, then *praise him immediately*. If you have asked your child to do a long task (such as putting away a lot of toys) then attend and praise to him throughout the task.

# PARENTING PYRAMID



# Ignoring

- So far in the child led phase, your child has learnt that attention from you is rewarding.
- Ignoring is a major way to decrease your child's unwanted behaviour.
- The child learns that there is no value to the misbehaviour.
- Most parents find ignoring incredibly difficult
- Ignore a chosen behaviour consistently
- If you do not, the behaviour will get worse, not better.

# Tips for affective ignoring

- **Give no eye contact or expressions of disapproval**
- **Make no verbal contact**
- **Make No Physical Contact**
- **Stop ignoring as soon as the inappropriate behaviour stops**
- **Do something distracting to help you ignore**

## **Remember**

A problem behaviour may get worse before it gets better. If it is a behaviour that has previously reliably got attention from you, then it may escalate until the child learns that it will no longer get attention.

You must wait out this period whilst it gets worse, otherwise the child will learn that s/he needs to simply show more challenging behaviour to get your attention.

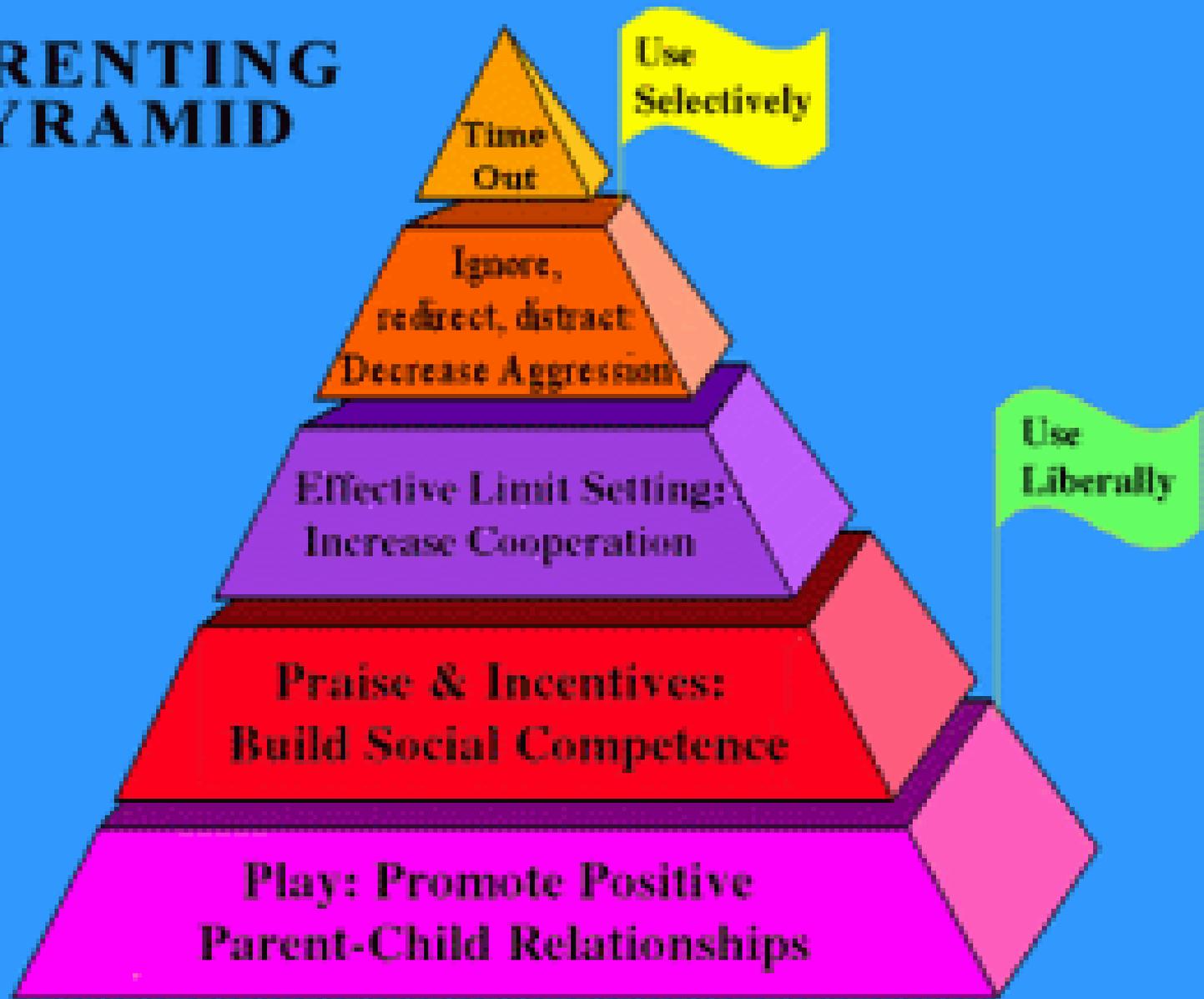
Try to make sure that everyone is ignoring the behaviour.

# **BUT**

You should not ignore behaviours if there is a chance that your child could hurt him/herself or someone else, or there is a risk of damage to property.

Types of behaviour you may want to ignore include tantrums, screaming, pouting, arguing back.

# PARENTING PYRAMID



# Giving Consequences

- “Natural & Logical” consequences
- **IF ... THEN... rule**
- Be sure you can live with consequences you set up. Failing to follow through will dilute your authority and the child will not learn from his/her mistakes.
- Make consequences immediate
- Give child choice of consequences ahead of time. Give plenty of warning!
- Make consequence natural and not punitive. If it is unfair, the child will focus on the cruelty of their parents rather than in changing the behaviour.
- **Be friendly and positive. Use consequences that are short and to the point**
- **Avoid being angry**

# The basic principles of behaviour management

- Much of a child's difficult behaviour is learned.
- Therefore, difficult behaviour can also be *unlearned*.
- Attention, especially from parents, is very rewarding for children.
- Rewarding a child when they are behaving well will make it more likely that they will behave well again.
- Shouting, nagging and hitting are also forms of attention and therefore may be rewarding for the child.
- Instead, 'ignoring' your child's less desirable behaviours will decrease those behaviours because ignoring = no attention.
- **So**, catch your child being good and give them lots of attention and praise!

*Thank you  
for Listening!*

*Any questions?*