

## Using reward charts

Reward charts can be used for children 3 – 8 years old. Your child collects stickers or tokens every time they behave the way you want. They then swap the stickers for a reward later on. It might also help you to focus on your child's positive behaviour.

### Tips

- ✓ **Choose the behaviour you want to change or encourage.** It is best to focus on one behaviour at a time, for example tidying up their toys everyday before they go to bed.
- ✓ **Get your child involved.** You could make the chart with your child using paints and colourful paper and you can let them decide what their reward should be. You could put pictures of the rewards on the chart to help them remember. Or you could use a puzzle as your chart and give your child one piece at a time to build it. There are also lots of reward charts to download free on the internet.
- ✓ **Think about the rewards you will give.** Think about what the rewards will be and make sure they are something that can easily be achieved. For example if they achieve 8 stickers by the end of the week they can have a friend over for tea or go to their favourite park. Try not to use sweet treats as a reward but instead think of free, fun activities that your child likes to do, like jumping in puddles or blowing bubbles.
- ✓ **Explain exactly what you want your child to do clearly and simply.** For example, 'Please pick up all the toy cars and put them in the basket' is clearer than 'Tidy your toys away'.
- ✓ **Put the chart where your child can see it.** Older children may prefer this to be in their bedroom.
- ✓ **Give your child a sticker straight after the good behaviour happens.** Give your child specific praise so your child knows why they're getting the sticker or token. For example, 'I liked the way you shared your toys with Tom this morning. Here's a sticker for your chart'.
- ✓ **Try to keep it positive.** Don't threaten to remove stickers and don't remove stickers for problem behaviour. Instead catch your child being good. An empty chart without stickers would make your child feel sad. You don't need to wait for your child to do something perfectly.

- ✓ **Have frequent, small rewards.** These don't need to be expensive gifts. If there is too much time between the sticker and the reward, your child might lose interest or motivation.

If the chart isn't working, don't push it, try something else!