Alternatives to Smacking Children

Smacking is a band-aid solution that does not improve your child’s behaviour in the long-term and contributes to other problems. Essentially, smacking teaches children to hit when they get angry. Children also get the message that you are angry with them, but you are actually angry about their behaviour. There is also a chance of hurting your child because you are angry, which causes guilt and makes you want to give into the child. When everyday problems pile up, don’t resort to smacking for discipline. Try any of these alternatives:

**Stop** – Visualise a stop sign and stop in your tracks. Step back and sit down.

**Breathe** – Take five deep breaths. Make sure you inhale and exhale slowly.

**Count** – Count to ten, or backwards from 100 by 2s, or say the alphabet out aloud.

**Make a phone call** – Call a friend, or a family member.

**Vent your frustrations** – Punch a pillow or munch an apple.

**Take time out** – Take yourself away and read a magazine, a newspaper, or flick through a photo album.

**Do some exercise** – Jog on the spot, or do some sit-ups or do some stretches.

**Write it down** – Write down your thoughts. You will be amazed how much this can help sometimes!

**Cool down** – Have a cold shower.

**Relax** – You may prefer to lose yourself in a hot bath or just put your feet up.

**Listen to music** – Play some music and imagine yourself somewhere you enjoy.