

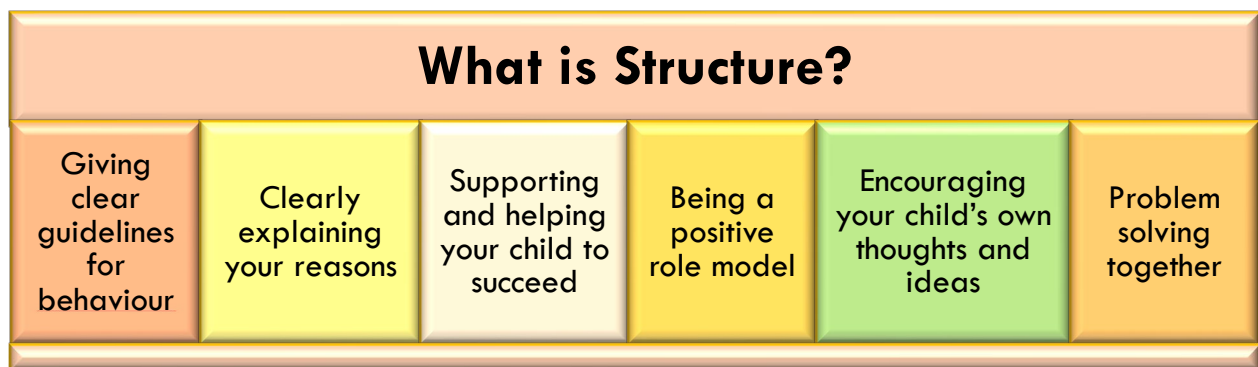
Providing Structure

The tools that will help us reach our long-term goals are Warmth and Structure. They need to be present together, in all our interactions with our children – not just the challenging ones. Here, we will talk about Structure.

We all are more likely to succeed if we have the information we need. We learn when someone talks calmly with us about our mistakes and shows us how to do better next time. We gain skills when others speak kindly to us, explain their reasoning, and involve us in solving the problem. When we fear being punished for mistakes, we stop trying and lose opportunities to learn.

It's the same for children. Fear of punishment interferes with their learning. Under the stress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we might find it hard to be patient and we might find ourselves punishing, rather than teaching, our children. One of the most important things we can do is to help children understand, rather than punishing them.

This is Structure. It's ensuring that children have the information they need to understand, learn, develop skills, and contribute to problem solving.



In the time of COVID-19, it's so important that we support and guide children, not punish them. Many children are frightened by the crisis outside. So *inside*, we need to show them how we can manage stress and uncertainty. We can strengthen their optimism and confidence by creating space for talking, listening and problem solving together in a climate of Warmth.