

Alternatives to Child Spanking

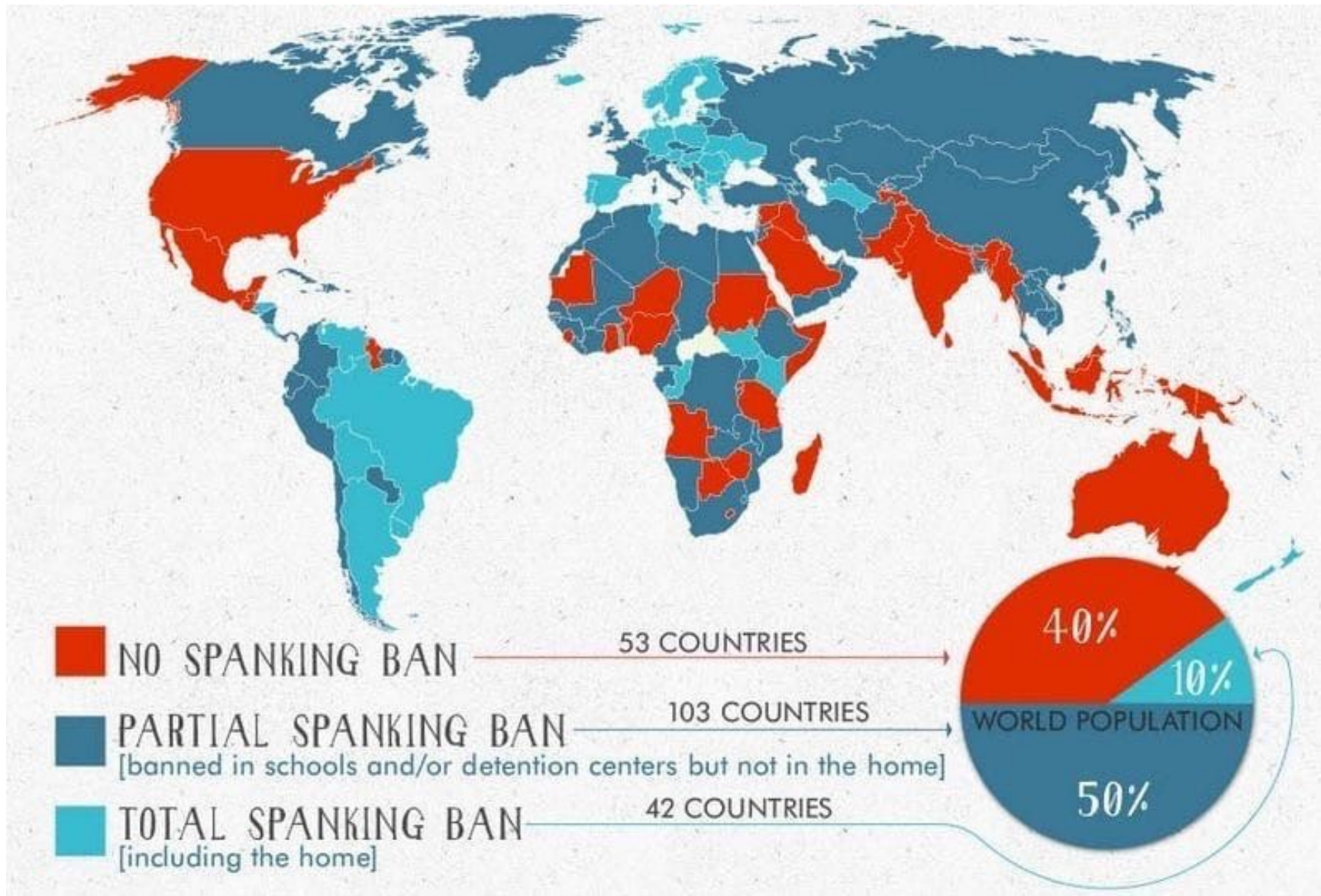
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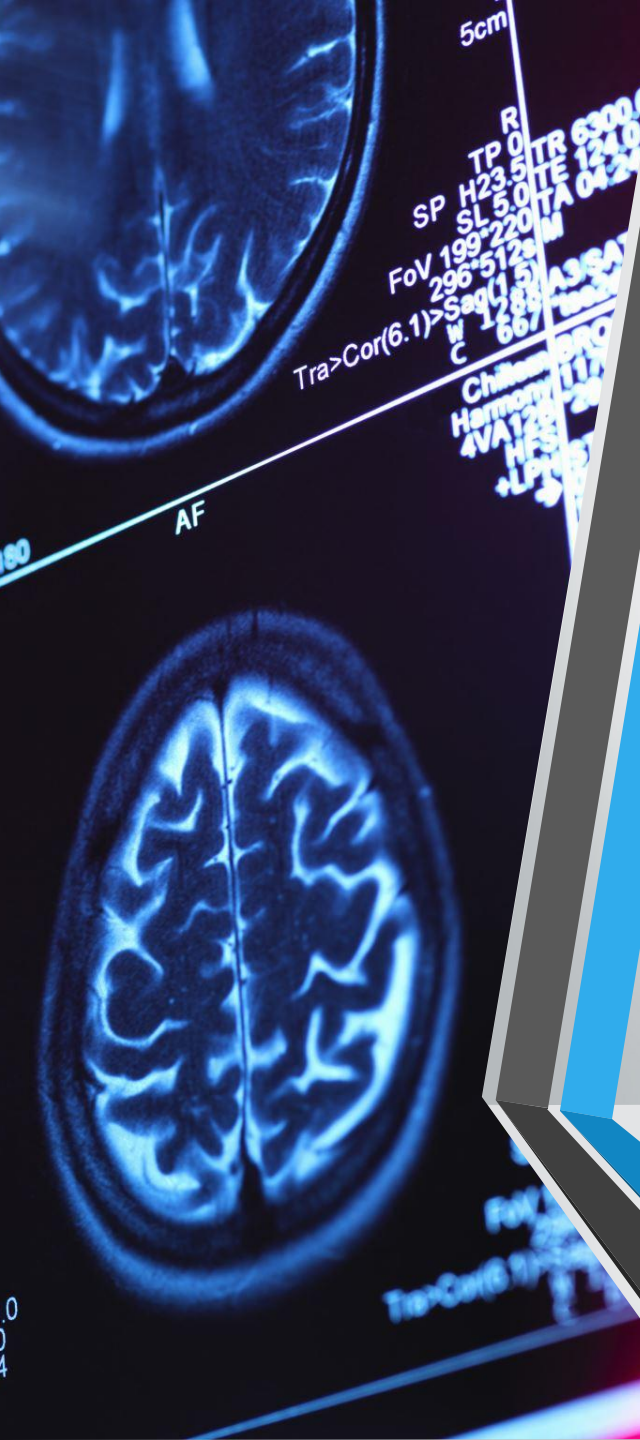
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Scientific research

- Harvard University researchers investigated the effects of smacking, known as corporal punishment, on the brains of 147 children.

Katie A. McLaughlin at Harvard's Department of Psychology

- 'We know that children whose families use corporal punishment are more likely to develop anxiety, depression, behaviour problems, and other mental health problems, but many people don't think about spanking as a form of violence.'





- **Smacking could alter a child's neural responses to their environment in similar ways to a child experiencing more severe violence**

As a form of punishment,
smacking has 3 other big
drawbacks that we will look at in
the following slides





1 First, there's a risk that smacking might hurt your child.



2 Second, it can give children the message that smacking or hitting other people is an OK way to deal with strong feelings.





3 Third, physical punishment like smacking can lead to longer-term problems in children's health and development. Children who are smacked can be more aggressive than children who aren't smacked. They're more likely to have challenging behaviour, anxiety or depression.

There are better ways than smacking to guide children towards good behaviour.

So, what are the alternatives to smacking?

Here are some approaches to consider with your child:



Give clear and consistent limits about what you expect

- children need to know how you want them to behave and for this to be clear. An example might be: “It’s not OK to hit your brother” or “You can’t take lollies off the supermarket shelves without asking me first.”



Manage your own emotions

- Anger is contagious, so try not to lose your temper in front of your kids. Instead, pause before you react: take three deep breaths, have a cold drink of water, or step outside for a moment.



Be a good role model for your child when you don't manage situations well

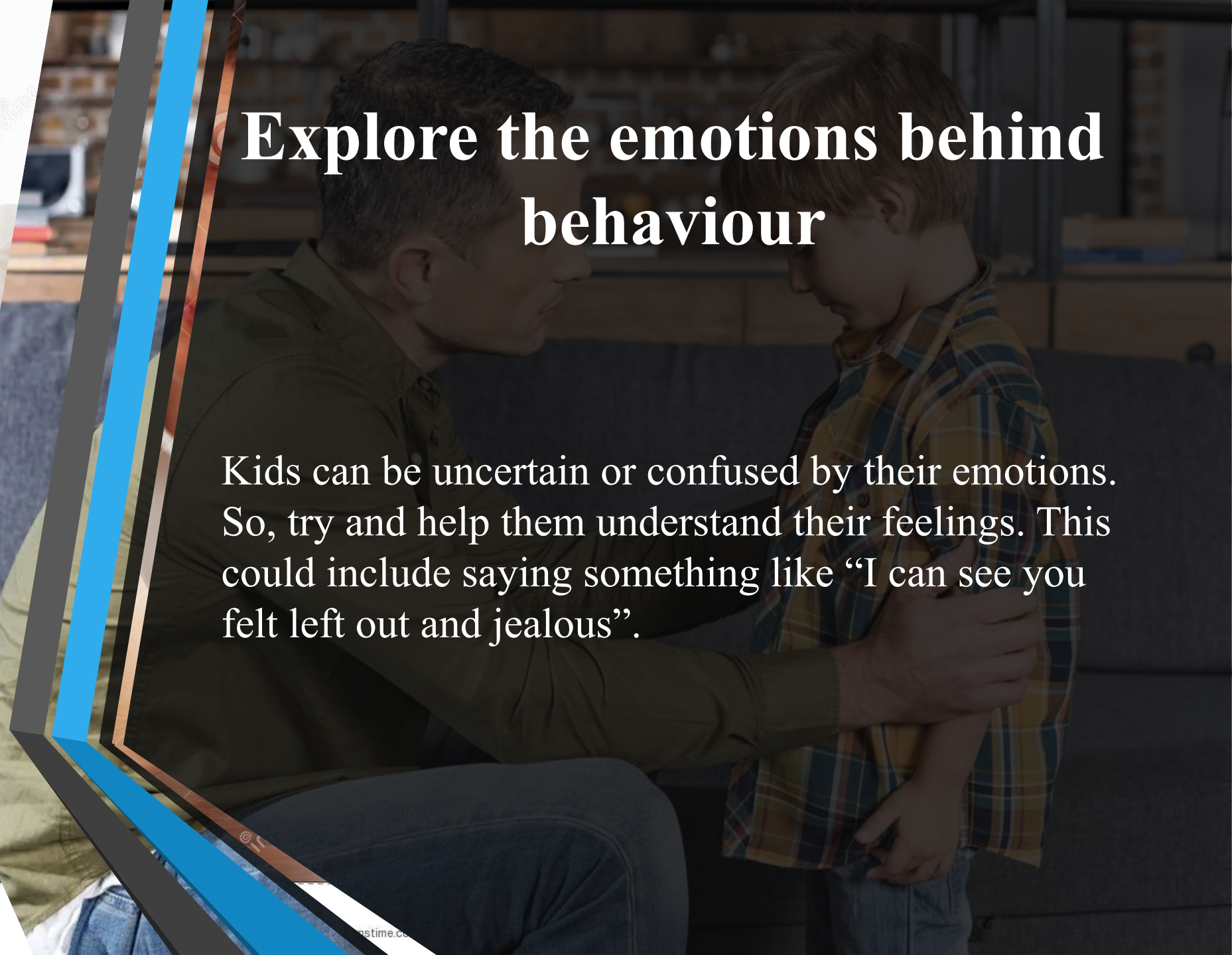
- Parents need to show how they manage their own emotions - or make amends when they act in less-than-ideal ways. Parents should be brave enough to say “I’m sorry I got angry and shouted at you. I wasn’t very patient.”





Explore the emotions behind behaviour

Kids can be uncertain or confused by their emotions. So, try and help them understand their feelings. This could include saying something like “I can see you felt left out and jealous”.





Resolve problems when everyone is calm

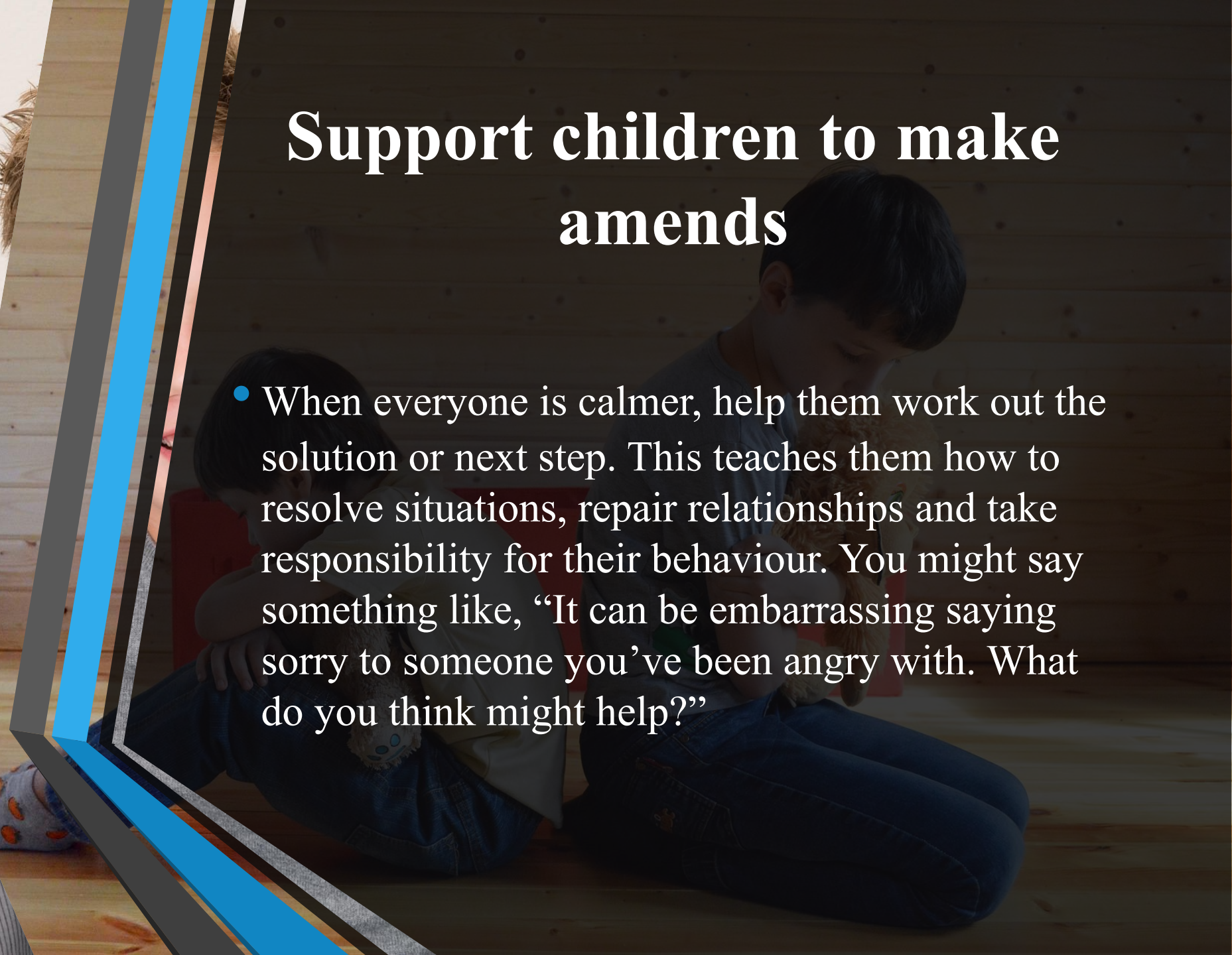
- No one can think, talk or listen properly if they are upset. Take time to do some breathing or something soothing with your child. Or perhaps they need a run around to release strong feelings.





Support children to make amends

- When everyone is calmer, help them work out the solution or next step. This teaches them how to resolve situations, repair relationships and take responsibility for their behaviour. You might say something like, “It can be embarrassing saying sorry to someone you’ve been angry with. What do you think might help?”



Explore natural consequences

- If something is broken, children might need to fix it, use pocket money to replace it, or explore what might make the situation better. Children need family rules about behaviour and it can be useful to discuss what should happen if these are broken.

