



# Stop, Wait, Go

FACTSHEET

[www.stopwaitgo.net.au](http://www.stopwaitgo.net.au)

## USING HUMOUR

**Teach your children a sense of humour and have a laugh, it is great fun.**

Learning how to use humour appropriately is a vital skill that is learned.

Children who can use humour well have a strong sense of belonging. People include them and like to be around them. The child learns to use humour to deal with adversity as well as having a good time. This all adds up to the development of a strong self-esteem.

### How do they learn it?

By parents who ensure that their environment promotes the appropriate use of humour according to the developmental stage of the child. Babies like peek a boo, silly fall down, pop up games and to engage in smiling and laughing with adults that they know.

Toddlers like the music of repeating words, the sounds of rhymes with actions that are told and retold, funny faces and crazy actions. Once they go to school and develop an understanding of jokes they love riddles and their attempts should be encouraged, say “that is funny” and laugh with them. Come on you can do it. Toddlers will appreciate nonsense, cows that bark and flowers that sing. Older children will enjoy you watching a comedy on TV or reading joke books and funny stories with them. Laughing along with them reinforces the pleasure of enjoying a laugh with others, and doesn’t that increase the pleasure?

Another responsibility of parents is to ensure that they role model only appropriate use of humour. They do not use sarcasm, they do not use put downs or condone the use of racist, sexist, teasing and other negative forms of humour. This leads to exclusion and does not have the positive effects on self that appropriate humour will have.

A south western Native American tribe gives special status and value to the person who produces the first laugh from a child without touching them. “The laughing parent” maintains a special relationship with the child for their whole life.

Did you know that children on average laugh 200 times a day and adults only laugh 20 times? So get on with laughing more and having fun with your children. It builds strong relationships that last a life time and strengthens our ability to overcome the bad times.

