

# WHY I MIGHT KEEP DOING WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME NOT TO .....OVER AND OVER!



## Parents Plus & Parents First Psychology Led Service



### What you might notice me doing

- You've told me "no" or not to do something, like touching something you don't want me to.
- I seem to understand you mean "no" and stop but later I might look directly at you, or smile as I do the thing you've told me not to.
- You might say something like "he knows EXACTLY what he's doing".



### Why this is happening

- Whilst frustrating for you, this behaviour is actually **not purposeful or intentional**.
- The part of the brain that helps us to think things through (e.g. if something is right or wrong) and to understand our emotions only **begins** developing at around age 3.
- Looking to an adult before doing something is a way of learning what is safe or unsafe. At this stage, it is **not a deliberate decision** to do something which is not allowed.
- Your child is being a **little scientist**, figuring out 'what happens when I do this?'
- Early brain development is what allows the amazing changes in development that happen in early childhood. It's also what gives young children their amazing ability to '**stick at**' something.
- When a child is learning to walk and falls down 50+ times, they never think to themselves "maybe this isn't for me". It's this same **perseverance** being shown in these more difficult behaviours,



### Ways to help me

- **Remember:** I'm doing this because it's something that helps me learn and develop, not to annoy you. This help you feel more patient with me.
- **Connect with me before you correct me:** give me simple explanations and say out loud what you think I might be feeling e.g., "I know you really want to touch that but I can't let you. It's not safe." Try not to shout at me for this behaviour.
- **Do's rather than don'ts:** tell me what to do rather than not to do ("hold it carefully" rather than "don't spill that").
- **Out of sight:** put the thing you don't want me to touch out of sight so I'm not tempted by it.
- **Redirect:** try to encourage me towards something else; "Let's do this instead." Think about what I'm trying to find out. as a little scientist, and think if there is a safe way for me to do the behaviour I'm interested in. E.g. if I climb on things I'm not supposed to, take me to a place where I am allowed to learn to climb, like soft play or the park.
- **Look After Yourself** :so you are better able to look after me. If you find yourself getting really frustrated with me, take some time out and have a break away from me if you safely can.



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