



Rethinking Rewards

Food is frequently used to reward children and young people. However, often foods used as rewards are high in fat, sugar and salt, such as biscuits, cakes, chocolates or sweets.

Why do food rewards need "rethinking"?

When a child is rewarded with food they build "positive" associations with the type of food offered.



On an emotional level these foods become linked to feeling good and are used to make them feel better.

As children grow, these links are difficult to break and affect their long-term eating behaviours and eventually their health.

Reward ideas

Verbal praise & recognition **Certificate for achievement**

Genuine verbal praise and recognition is the most powerful reward. Praise a specific skill, attempt or attitude rather than general "well-done". Using helpful feedback shows you are interested.

Leading an activity/task **Carrying out an activity of their choice** **Playing their choice of sport/game** **More time for "free play"**

Children tend to remember the special moments with friends and family, which is the best treat to give a child.

Small, inexpensive and useful items (e.g. ball)

Gifts of items should be used left often and best when unexpected. Wrapping prizes and doing this as a lucky dip adds to the suspense.