

Becoming a Better Parent

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Raising Emotionally Healthy Children

1. Develop a secure attachment with each child.
2. Express a wide range of emotions yourself, but be primarily positive.
3. Use effective discipline, avoid power assertive discipline.
4. Respond respectfully to children's emotions. Don't make children feel excessive guilt for negative emotions.
5. Coach effective coping strategies.
6. Talk about emotions – Seize naturally occurring opportunities.

More and Less Useful Strategies to Teach Your Children to Use to Cope with Emotions

Less useful	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do nothing2. Aggress – to resolve the problem3. Aggress – to release pent-up feelings (e.g., kick the chair)4. Cry – to elicit help from others5. Cry – to release pent-up feelings
More useful	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Avoid the situation or leave (especially for taunting). Don't overuse.7. Seek help from friends, teachers, or parents8. Take constructive action to improve the situation9. Talk to friends, teachers, parents, or pray (especially for sadness). Don't ruminate.10. Temporarily distract yourself or try not to think about the problem11. Re-appraise – try to think about the situation in a positive way, or substitute a new goal (or find the humor)12. Exercise (for low arousal emotions like sadness)13. Relax (for high arousal emotions like anger or anxiety)14. Simulate being happier, until you are happier

Teaching Children Self-control through Discipline

Goal of discipline = teach values and self-control

Principles of Effective Discipline

Get compliance

Use the least amount of force necessary

Keep a warm relationship intact

Children adapt to force

- Avoid power-assertion (or else)
- Avoid love withdrawal
- Use induction
 - Persistent persuasion = no raised voice, no threat, reasons given for compliance
 - Negotiation is not weakness
- Ask “Why?”
- Use humor

Raising Kind, Helpful, Likeable Children

1. Help children be emotionally healthy and happy.
2. Be responsive and establish a secure attachment with your child.
3. Use victim-centered inductive discipline (*Note: Induction is a form of discipline in which the adult explains to the child why the child's behavior needs to change, but without coercion or threats. Victim-centered is where the adult's explanation centers on how the child's misbehavior made the victim feel. "Look, you made Joey cry."*).
4. Provide opportunity to practice prosocial behavior.
5. Do not use tangible rewards, but praise is OK.
6. Espouse prosocial values – talk about your values and model prosocial behavior.

Successful service projects have these attributes:

- *choice, autonomy, and responsibility -- gives the youth challenging responsibilities that are met with success*
- *service is regular like 4 hours per week*
- *meets real needs*
- *a collegial attitude from those at the service site and a good relationship with the site supervisor*
- *opportunity to work in a group rather than alone*
- *social interaction with recipients rather than anonymous service*
- *opportunity to reflect on the experience*
- *helps establish a self-identity as a moral person*

Enjoying Living with Teenagers

Pitfalls of adolescence –not necessary

Sleep deprivation (too common)

Moodiness

Delinquency

Authoritative parents

- Warm (keep communication channels open)
- Monitor child
- Use effective discipline
 - Firm, with high standards
 - Not overly controlling, respectful of and LISTEN to the child's perspective
- Build child's self-esteem
- Promote spirituality