



Being a Parent

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2 | Me as a Parent

Being a parent is challenging and rewarding.

Take a little time to think about what you find positive about parenting.

Think about things you do for your child, things you do with your child and the feelings you have about being a parent.

Something I enjoy about being a parent is

Something I do well as a parent is

This is a space for you to think about what you are finding challenging in parenting your child.

Parenting is challenging when

4 What changes would I like to see?

If you have identified some challenges you face in being a parent, take a moment to think about what you would like to be different.

You might want to consider how you would like to feel or how your behaviour or your child's would have changed.

I would like my relationship with my child to be

My hope for myself as a parent is

Exploring Parenting

There is now time to explore some aspects of being a parent.

Below are the areas we can think about together. Do any of them jump out at you? Perhaps one relates to a challenge you are facing or a change you would like to see.

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Playing together



Being Good Enough

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Listening to My Child



Praising My Child

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Taking Care of Myself



Understanding My Child's Behaviour

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My Child's Emotions

Listening to my Child

How do you feel when you think someone is ignoring you?

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Why is it important that children feel heard?

- It helps them to feel understood and accepted
- It helps us to understand what is going on for our child
- It enables us to assist our child when they are feeling overwhelmed

"It really felt like Sonya had something on her mind so I left the dishes half done and sat down with her. She had fallen out with her friend and I just really focused on what she was and let her get it off her chest. Then we had a big hug."

Can you think of something important that your child has told you?

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Helping your child feel heard

- Give your full attention
- Use eye contact and match body language
- Be on the same level and face them
- Feed back their underlying feelings
- Use open-ended questions and reflect back the key words
- Give them space to talk before offering solutions

Can you think of a good time to try listening skills with your child?

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Praising my Child

How do you feel when someone praises you?

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Why is it important to praise your child?

- It makes them feel valued
- It focuses our attention on the behaviour we like
- It reinforces positive behaviour and encourages your child to repeat it

"When Isaiah put his coat on the hook rather than just dropping it when he got him, I said I really appreciated him helping me to keep the hall today. He has put it away by himself every day since."

What behaviour you would like to change in your child? What praise could you give them?

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Valuing behaviour with praise

- Be descriptive: focus on the specific behaviour
- If there is a positive effect explain what it is
- Say how you feel about the behaviour

You can make praise even more effective by:

- Looking out for opportunities to praise your child
- Praising the behaviour right there and then
- If possible praise in front of another person

I will look out for when my child
so I can praise them.

Understanding my Child's Behaviour

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Can you think of some of the things your child needs?

What needs do children have?

- **Physical** – food, water, shelter
- **Safety** – to be secure from harm and illness
- **Love and belonging** – receiving and giving affection
- **Feeling good about themselves** – self esteem and the respect of others
- **Cognitive** – to learn and be curious
- **Aesthetic** – to see beauty in the world
- **Self-actualisation** – to fulfil their potential

“Now when Jayden grabs my phone I realise it’s because he wants me to play with him. Rather than getting annoyed, I can explain to him that I will not be long on the phone and then we can have playtime together.”

How do you feel when your needs are not met?

How do children behave to get their needs met?

- **Attention** – shouting when you are speaking on the phone
- **Love** – wanting a hug
- **Independence** – insisting they choose their own clothes or saying ‘no’ to everything
- **Approval** – showing you their school work
- **Security** – wanting to stay close when you go somewhere new

Think of a behaviour your child does that is frustrating for you.
What need might be behind it?

My Child's Emotions

How do you feel today?

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Why is it important that we accept and acknowledge our child's emotions?

- It helps to build their self-esteem
- It teaches them that feelings are OK
- It helps them to trust their feelings
- They can learn to accept other people's feelings
- It helps them to develop empathy



Responding to your child's feelings

- Acknowledge what they have shared
- Show that you have heard them by repeating back what they said
- Validate them: "it's OK to be scared"
- Don't be afraid to let them know that you have feelings too. By expressing our own feelings clearly we can help them to know and understand their own.



"After school every day we look at pictures of different emoticons and I ask Madison to pick one for how she feels. It's really helped her to start sharing what's gone on at school."



Can you think of a feeling your child may share and a response you could give?

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