

How your behaviour shapes your family

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Children See Children Do: Being the Best Role Model You Can



A parent's behaviour has a powerful influence in shaping their child's. Young children copy what others say and do. Whether they are younger, or much older, children are still learning by watching your behaviour and imitating this. Exposure to violence is one of the key reasons children imitate violent behaviours.

Children learn far more from our actions than what we say to them. We cannot tell children to talk about their feelings, if we bottle up our own. The greatest gift you can give your child—and perhaps the most important thing you can do to prevent problem behaviours — is to **model self-care and handle difficult situations calmly and flexibly.**

How can you have a positive impact on your child's development?

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When parents

Kids learn to

Show affection and attention

- feel loved and connected
- have a sense of self worth

listen/ understand

- feel understood & accepted
- understand others

Stay calm

- calm themselves
- handle stressful situations

Show patience

- wait
- develop patience

Stop, think, take a second chance

- stop & think
- be creative problem- solvers

Show a positive outlook

- appreciate the positives in life
- be hopeful (optimistic)

View mistakes as OK, let go of being perfect

- see mistakes as part of learning
- try new things

Keep trying

- keep trying
- achieve goals

See strengths

- see their own strengths & others
- feel confidence

Take responsibility for your own feelings & actions

- be responsible & involved
- feel they belong

Children need to hear at least 3 positive comments for every negative one to ensure success (The Losado Line). Some say 6:1 is best but you can never give enough positives.

Look at the '**55 positive things you can say to your child**' link on page 4. Use these kinds of phrases every day:

I believe in you

What you did was brave

I knew you could do it

That was a good choice



**“Don’t tell
your children
how to live,
live and let
them watch
you do it”
Vikrant Parsai**



What you can say

“Oops, I just made a mistake with that, no big deal, I can make up for it by doing X..... or maybe it will turn out for the better because I can do Y.....!”

“I’m sorry that I shouted at you. Next time I am going to stop and calm down before I speak”

“I have a big job to finish for work in just a week. I’m going to break it down into smaller parts that I can handle.”

“I’m feeling stressed out and I cannot think. I’m going for a run. That always makes me feel better.”

“I really need to clear my head. I’m going to take some slow, deep breaths and imagine I’m on that beautiful beach we visited last summer. Remember that sunset?”

“I really need a few minutes to myself after the day I’ve had. I’m going to soak in the bathtub for half an hour.”

“I’m so angry that I can’t think straight. I need some time by myself to calm down before we make a decision about how to deal with your behaviour/ this problem. I’m going for a walk to relax (or to do another activity to calm down). Then we’re going to talk about it.”

“When I paint a picture/ draw/ write in my notebook, it helps me to think about how I feel. That way, I don’t have to keep all my feelings inside.”

“ I had a hard day today. Come and give me hugs. I always feel better when I’m with people I love.”

“I need to figure out how to handle this situation with the neighbours. I’m going to talk to a friend about it. Just talking about it makes me calmer, and sometimes friends help me find a totally different way of looking at things.”

What you can do

Show understanding, compassion and kindness. Try to imagine what is like to walk in other people’s shoes

BREATHE...Take three deep breaths when you’re stressed. Breathe in slowly to the count of 3, then breathe out slowly counting 4, 5, 6, 7. Repeat three times to relax your body and gain control of your emotions.

Use humour. Having a giggle reduces our stress and helps us look at tricky situations more positively.

Stay positive. Look on the bright side. Have fun, enjoy simple pleasures. Look for the times when it is not so tricky. Think about how things could be worse.

Ask for support. Everyone needs help sometimes. Children need to see it is ok to ask for help.

Help others. Think about what you can do to help someone else who is going through a hard time.

Let failure happen. Difficult experiences are the only way we develop certain coping and problem solving-skills. If we protect children from mistakes or adversity, key brain connections cannot develop.

Sing. Singing can lift our spirits and it is hard to stay mad when we sing. It also helps us to see the lighter side of a situation. Don’t take life too seriously.



No one is perfect: what to do if it goes wrong

Obviously, no one is perfect and we do not have to get it right all of the time. 60% of the time has been found in research to be just fine!! There will be times where you slip up, your child might copy you or question your actions. There are times where **you** will be immature, reactive and unkind. At these times, make it clear that you were not proud of your behaviour, model and problem solve ways of fixing the situation. By doing your best most of the time your child will learn how to act in the world around him.

Conflict will happen, sometimes lots of times per day. What is key is that you repair your relationship as quickly as possible. If a difficulty has been due to your anger or rage it can result in shame for the child which can damage their sense of self and idea of how relationships work. It is our responsibility as parents to repair and reconnect with our kids. This also models for them what to do if they get it wrong, eventually kids soften and calm down and are ready for love and comfort once more.

TRY: I didn't deal with that in a good way. I'm sorry that I was unkind with my words. Will you forgive me?

I'm sorry. I think I was just reacting because I'm extra tired today but I know I didn't handle it well. I'll listen if you want to talk about how it was for you.

USE HUMOUR. Well, that didn't go very well did it? Anyone want to act out just how crazy I was. What can I do to make it feel right for you?



How you
behave within
your home,
behind closed
doors, will have
a long lasting
effect on your
children.

Self Care: keeping our own cups full

Being a parent/ carer is the toughest job you will ever do you. We all have needs and we need to keep our emotional cups full to be able to support our kids. We need to put on our own air masks first (like on an aeroplane)

The NHS identifies 5 ways to well-being

1. Connect with other people
2. Be physically active
3. Learn new skills
4. Give to others
5. Pay attention to the present (Mindfulness)

What do you need today to fill your cup?

THE EMOTIONAL CUP

Imagine that every child has a cup that needs to be filled -- with affection, love, security, and attention. Some seem to have a full cup most of the time, or know good ways to get a refill. But most children get a little nervous when their cup gets near empty.

Some ways that children deal with having an empty cup:

- steal from other people's cups
- misbehave to get your attention and show that they need a refill
- seem to have bottomless cups, or need constant 'topping off'
- can't sit still for refills or actively refuse them
- bounce off the walls when they approach 'empty'
- think they have to fight or compete for every refill

What fills a child's cup:

- play
- friendship
- one-on-one time
- love and affection
- connection
- succeeding
- doing what they love to do or what they choose to do




What empties the cup:

- stress and strain
- rejection by peers
- loneliness and isolation
- yelling and punishment
- failing
- fatigue
- doing what they're forced to do or they hate to do

upbility

Publisher of Therapy Resources

 For more ways to fill your cup refer to separate leaflet on [Relaxation and Mindfulness](#)

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We value your feedback, please complete our form which takes less than 1 minute by [clicking here](#) or scanning the QR



Further information and resources



Click [here](#) to watch 'Children see children do' to reflect on the impact of negative role modelling

Click [here](#) to watch 'Be the person you want your kids to be' by Dhar Mann



For Scottish parenting advice visit www.parentclub.scot—search for 'coping with being a parent', 'keeping calm with your child'

Language matters to read an article providing [55 positive things to say to your child](#)

Refer to the [NHS 5 Ways to Wellbeing](#) for yourself



Calm parents happy kids: The secrets of stress free parenting by Dr Laura Markham

Pause for thought...



Children Learn What They Live

If children live with **CRITICISM**, they learn to **CONDEMN**.
If children live with **HOSTILITY**, they learn to **FIGHT**.
If children live with **FEAR**, they learn to be **APPREHENSIVE**.
If children live with **PITY**, they learn to feel **SORRY** for themselves.
If children live with **RIDICULE**, they learn to feel **SHY**.
If children live with **JEALOUSY**, they learn to feel **ENVY**.
If children live with **SHAME**, they learn to feel **GUILTY**.
If children live with **ENCOURAGEMENT**, they learn **CONFIDENCE**.
If children live with **TOLERANCE**, they learn **PATIENCE**.
If children live with **PRAISE**, they learn **APPRECIATION**.
If children live with **ACCEPTANCE**, they learn to **LOVE**.
If children live with **APPROVAL**, they learn to **LIKE** themselves.
If children live with **RECOGNITION**, they learn it is good to have a **GOAL**.
If children live with **SHARING**, they learn **GENEROSITY**.
If children live with **HONESTY**, they learn **TRUTHFULNESS**.
If children live with **FAIRNESS**, they learn **JUSTICE**.
If children live with **KINDNESS** and consideration, they learn **RESPECT**.
If children live with **SECURITY**, they learn to **HAVE FAITH** in themselves and in those about them.
If children live with **FRIENDLINESS**, they learn the world is a **NICE** place in which to live.