

Develop Positive Relationships with Your Children - Module 4



For Children to feel happy, to be motivated to achieve to the best of their ability, and to perceive their relationship with their parents in a positive way, it is very important for us as parents to demonstrate unconditional love as much as possible.

While it is proper and necessary for us to dislike and discipline our child/ren negative behaviour at times, it is important for us not to make children feel unloved because their behaviour may be bad. As parents we send the message of love through our expressions of affection and communication of feelings of warmth and tenderness.

Listen



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Listening - giving a child a chance to talk through a situation or problem while really hearing what he or she is saying and without injecting advice. Listening helps build a positive relationship with your child/ren because it validates their feelings and demonstrates that you respect what they have to say. If we neglect listening to our child/ren, they will dilute the positive effects of other supportive parenting practices. ***Listening is just that - listening, not listening and offering advice.***

Parents need to establish a time and place for serious discussions with their children, especially when their children seem to be very unhappy and going through a difficult period. There needs to be an opportunity for parents to meet with their child to give the child a chance to communicate what is going on, especially if the child is angry with one or more parents. Even if a child chooses to say little or nothing, parents can be sure that the child is listening. At these times, parents can apologise for anything they may have done that was unfair, comment on what they perceive to be the problem and solution, and most importantly, indicate that they are concerned about what their child is feeling, while offering open ears and a kind heart.

Be Supportive



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Whilst it seems that when children reach adolescence, they rely more on peer support than parental support, in times of crisis - as well as at other times - children's need for parental support cannot be over-estimated.

A group of young people recently identified the most supportive aspects of their relationship with their parents as follows:

1. Physical affection (e.g. hugs and kisses)
2. Sustained physical contact (e.g. sitting on a parent's knee)
3. Companionship (e.g. spending time together)
4. Availability of the parents when needed (e.g. listening)