



Nurturing Your Child's Mental Health

As a parent, you are responsible for your child's physical safety and emotional well-being. There is not an exact science when it comes to raising a child. Parenting styles vary, but supporting your child's mental health, just as you would their physical health, helps your child develop resilience and the skills necessary to deal with obstacles they may face. Do not expect to be perfect; parenting is a difficult job.

The following is not meant to be a complete list of suggestions for creating a nurturing environment for your child.



- **Do your best** to provide a safe home and community for your child, as well as nutritious meals, regular health check-ups, immunizations, and exercise. Be aware of stages in child development so you don't expect too much or too little from your child.
- **Build trust** by encouraging communication and listening. Let your child know they are safe and that they can talk to you about their feelings, thoughts, or situations they are dealing with. Make sure to really listen to what they are saying. Even if you don't agree, try not to judge. Instead try to understand and accept that the difficulties they have are very real to them. Provide comfort and assurance. Be honest. Focus on the positives.
- **Check your tone.** Using an accusatory tone or raising your voice may cause your child to want to stop listening. Frame your approach from a place of concern and care for their well-being, not from anger.
- **Are you setting a good example?** Look at your own problem-solving and coping skills. Seek help if you are overwhelmed by your child's feelings or behaviors or if you are unable to control your own frustration or anger.
- **Praise your child's character.** Encouragement, affirmations and praise help build your child's self-esteem and self-confidence. Try and focus more on praising character traits rather than physical traits. Remember to not compare your child to others. Embrace your child's unique character and talents.
- **Spend time regularly** with your child. Have family meals, go outside, complete fun projects and crafts, assist with homework, or play other games with one another.
- **Foster your child's independence and self-worth.** Help your child deal with life's ups and downs. Show that you are confident in your child's ability to handle problems and tackle new experiences.
- **Love unconditionally.** Teach the value of apologies, cooperation, patience, forgiveness, and consideration for others. Frame your child's mistakes as a way of learning instead of communicating failure. Let your child know that no matter what they are dealing with you love them unconditionally and that you are there for them.



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POSTIVE THINGS

to say to your child

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1. You are helpful.
2. You were right.
3. I know you did your best.
4. I'm grateful for you.
5. You have great ideas.
6. I love being your parent.
7. I know you did your best.
8. I believe in you.
9. You are important.
10. You make me proud.
11. This family wouldn't be the same without you.
12. You are loved.
13. You don't have to be perfect to be amazing.
14. I'm confident you can do it.
15. You are worth it.
16. Don't be afraid to be yourself.
17. You are capable.
18. We all make mistakes, it's okay.
19. I understand you.
20. You can say no.
21. You don't have to do what everyone else is doing.
22. I appreciate you.
23. I am so glad you're here.
24. That was really brave.
25. I appreciate your help.
26. You can try again tomorrow.
27. I admire you
28. I forgive you.
29. Don't compare yourself to anyone else.
30. You are enough.
31. It's okay to feel what you're feeling.
32. You can fix your mistake.
33. Being kind does not make you weak.
34. Your ideas are great.
35. We can try it your way.
36. Anything is possible.
37. You can make a difference.
38. I love how you said that.
39. You can always talk to me.
40. You did that so well.
41. You make my heart full.
42. It's okay if you need some space.
43. You have a choice.
44. That's a great question.
45. I am so excited to spend time with you.
46. I'm proud of the decision you made.
47. I trust you.
48. I respect your boundaries.
49. I hear you.
50. You are a great friend.
51. It's your decision.
52. I'm always here to listen.
53. Don't give up.
54. I'm so glad you came to talk to me.
55. I love you no matter what.