

Parents are their children's first teachers in the development of emotional intelligence. Research has suggested that emotional intelligence plays a critical role in emotional well-being and success. Children with high emotional intelligence are better able to make friends, enjoy happiness and succeed in life.

Emotional Intelligence

The five main domains of emotional intelligence:

1. Knowing one's emotions
2. Managing one's emotions
3. Motivating oneself
4. Recognising emotions in others
5. Handling interpersonal relationships



Tips for Parents

1. Increase your child's emotional awareness

- Children tend to express their emotions indirectly. Parents can better understand your child's emotions and needs by paying attention to the child's verbal and nonverbal expressions, like facial expressions, body gesture and tone of voice. For example, a child may throw temper when parents limit his/her behaviour. By reflecting your child's feelings, parents help the child to connect feelings with experience.

- Accept your child's feelings. Be patient, empathetic and listen attentively to your child when he is having a difficult moment. This helps to strengthen the parent-child connection and calm the child. When a child feels safe and being respected, he will be more willing to explore and discuss, instead of suppress, his feelings and needs. Emotions help to guide the decisions we make in everyday life. For example, fear motivates us to get away.
- Schedule "special time" with your child every day to share happenings and feelings, or build up your child's emotional literacy with stories.

2. Model emotional management skills

- Parent's psychological health is crucial to a child's emotional welling being. Scheduling time for self reflection allows you to better understand and take care of yourself. Parents may schedule pleasant activities for oneself to increase positive emotions and experience in daily life. It is also important to make time for your spouse and nurture your marital relationship.
- Parents and children may relieve stress by practising relaxation exercise, like muscle relaxation, breathing exercise and guided imagery. Parents may also explore with their children other fun ways of relieving stress like running, playing ball, painting and playing musical instruments. Good emotional management should conform to the principles of "Not hurting others, not hurting yourself and not destroying things".
- When parents feel stressed or tired, it is better to take a break from parenting. Staying calm serves a positive role model to your child in managing negative emotions. This helps you think logically and handle your child's problem effectively. If encounter emotional distress, parents may talk to others or seek professional help.

