

How to Develop the Emotional Quotient of Your Child

- Take care of oneself before taking care of child: When parents notice signs of stress, it is important to take a break from parenting to take care of oneself first. Staying calm serves a positive role model to your child in managing negative emotions. It also helps you to think rationally and handle your child's problem effectively. If you encounter emotional distress, please talk to others or seek professional help.

3. Enhance problem solving skills

- Problem solving skills enable your child to deal with his/her stressors effectively in daily life. Help your child identify the problem/trigger of negative emotions. Instead of offering immediate solutions, parents can encourage the child to brainstorm possible solutions. Discuss with your child the feasibility and effectiveness of the ideas and agree on an action plan. Children's ability to problem solving begins to emerge in childhood and becomes mature in late adolescence or early adulthood. It is important for parents to assist your child in formulating an action plan. After the problem was resolved, parents can review and praise your child what he/she has done well in the process.
- Parents may gradually offer your child more opportunities to solve problems independently depending on his/her age, developmental stage and maturity. This can enhance your child's self-confidence.



Emotional intelligence refers to the capacity to recognize and manage our own feelings and to respond effectively to those of others. It begins to emerge in early childhood and plays a critical role in our emotional well-being. Research has suggested that children with high emotional intelligence are happier, have better ability to maintain friendships and achieve future success. Therefore, it is important for parents to help nurture and promote the development of emotional intelligence in our children.

Emotional Intelligence

The five domains of emotional intelligence include:

1. Emotional awareness: Knowing one's emotions
2. Self-regulation: Managing one's emotions
3. Motivation: Motivating oneself
4. Social awareness: Recognising emotions in others and show empathy
5. Relationship management: Handling interpersonal relationships



Tips for Parents

1. Increase emotional awareness

- Label and reflect feelings: Some children are less articulate in verbalizing their feelings. Parents can observe their verbal and nonverbal expressions, such as facial expressions, body language and tone of voice to facilitate understanding of their emotions. For example, when a child shows temper tantrums as parents set limits on his/her behaviour, parents can help the child to connect with their feelings by labelling and reflecting his/her feelings.

- Acknowledge and accept feelings: Parents need to be patient listen attentively with empathy when your child is experiencing a difficult moment. This strengthens the parent-child connection and helps the child to calm down. 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: During which, parents can share about feelings and thoughts, or build up your child’s emotional vocabularies using story books.

2. Model emotional management skills

- Parents’ self-care: Parent’s psychological health is crucial to a child’s emotional welling being. Scheduling break for self reflection from time to time is important. Parents may engage in some pleasant activities for oneself to cultivate positive emotions and experience in daily life. It is also important to make time for your spouse and nurture your marital relationship.
- Relaxation and mindfulness practices: Parents and children may practice relaxation exercises, such as deep breathing, muscle relaxation and guided imagery, as well as mindfulness practices to regulate or manage emotions. Parents may also explore with your child on creative and fun ideas of stress relieving activities such as jogging, sports, drawing and playing musical instruments. Constructive emotional management strategies should incur no self-harm or harm to others and be non-destructive in principle. .

