

March 2010



Parenting Tips by Parent Team LLC

Elements of an Emotionally Safe Home

Greetings!

As we march toward Spring I would like to discuss the safety of all members of the family. I am not referring to bike safety or stranger danger, but how emotionally safe members of the family feel within our own homes. It is not something we often give thought to as we go about our daily lives. In the article this month I would like to offer some food for thought about how we as parents set the tone for the environment that exist in our home. These guidelines for an emotionally safe home are appropriate for children of all ages, therefore I will not use my usual format of breaking the issue down by age. It is more about us as parents giving some thought to how we influence the emotional atmosphere of our home.

Giving Some Thought to Emotional Safety

As parents it is our jobs to constantly be on guard against any potential danger to our children. One area that may slip under our protective radars is the emotional safety of our children. What is emotional safety? Emotional safety is a person's right to live free of fear based punishment, threats and not being accepted for who they are. Well meaning parents do not even realize that they are imposing on the emotional safety of their children.

Examples of ways we as parents put our children in emotionally unsafe positions are:

- blaming a child for a simple mistake
- dismissing a child's feelings about what appears to us to be a minor issue
- verbally being hard on them
- using fear based punishment such as time out
- assuming the child's behavior is based on negative intent
- using passive/aggressive parenting techniques
- treating the child in some way that we ourselves would not want to be treated

No parent does any of the above mentioned behaviors with the

In This Issue

[Giving Some Thought to Emotional Safety](#)

[Benefits of an Emotionally Safe Home](#)

[A Parent Coaching Success Story](#)

Quick Links

[Parent Team Web Site](#)

[Parent Coaching Q&A](#)

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intent to harm their child. It is simply a matter of how we were raised and not having enough information about what is best for children.

So, what is best for children and their emotional safety? First and foremost is that the parent become more self-aware of how they address their child/children. Self-examination can be a tough pill to swallow, believe me I have been there and I know it can be hard to realize that there needs to be a change in how we approach our children.

Here are some simple suggestions on how to change the way we approach our children so that they feel more secure.

-accept accidents and mistakes for what they are and focus on solutions for fixing them

-accept and validate the child's feelings, you do not have to agree with them, just accept them for what they are

-use love based discipline to teach children what you do expect from them

-think before you speak and be sure to use kind words

-assume your child means well by their actions, children are truly not as manipulative as we give them credit for being

-use assertive parenting techniques to clearly communicate your expectations of them

-treat your child only in a manner in which you would like to be treated

Benefits of an Emotionally Safe Home

The benefits of an emotionally safe home are endless for both parents and children. Homes that are emotionally safe for all family members produce secure feeling children that possess coping mechanisms to deal with the issues life will hand them. Children of emotionally safe homes have higher self-esteem, perform better in school and relate better to peers and authority figures. Perhaps the most important benefit is that children from emotionally safe homes always feel they have someone safe they can talk to about any issue that comes up. If they are unsure about an incident at school or if they witness an event that scares them they feel safe coming home and discussing it with their parents instead of acting on it themselves. Parents benefit because emotionally secure children cooperate better with parent directions, are overall happier, more content and easier to deal with when it comes to emotional issues. When parents create emotionally safe homes, they raise emotionally intelligent children who are more likely to have solid relationships with their parents, co-workers, partners, friends and others.

A Parent Coaching Success Story



This is a true story about a family of three, the success they experienced through parent coaching and the strategies that empowered them to make positive changes in their home. Sheila and Gary asked me into to their home for a free consultation. The issues they faced were not extreme, but they wanted to feel empowered to be the best parents they could be. They have a five year old son Mikey who they described as "having always been a delightful boy" but they had recently seen changes in him and parenting had become more and more difficult. Compounding the problem was the different approaches the two parents took with Mikey. It is very common for two well meaning parents to be coming from two different backgrounds and approach the child in two different ways. Conflicting approaches by parents is very confusing to children and can be the cause of further misbehavior. It was clear from the beginning that we needed to accomplish two goals. First empower these parents with some easy to apply parenting strategies and second to get mom and dad on the same page in the area of assertive discipline.

Gary, Sheila and I spent five sessions together discussing strategies to help empower them to be assertive parents that provided Mikey with the structure and compassion he needed to return to being their "delightful" son. We discussed and problem solved individual issues such as bedtime routine. We worked on applying new strategies to help him feel empowered and improve his self-esteem. We read and reviewed chapters from Becky Bailey's "Easy to Love, Difficult to Discipline" and gleaned much useful child development information from its' pages.

Gary and Sheila learned how to come together as a "united front" and complimented each other in regards to their parenting skills. As a result, Mikey is responding in a more positive way and they have a much more peaceful household.

Parent Coaching can be a powerful tool to help parents feel successful, confident and happier with their overall quality of life. **Call or e-mail for a free, no obligation consultation today.**

When you are ready to make a change, I am here help empower you with knowledge that will both excite you and provide you with strategies to make a difference in your life.

Sincerely,

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