

Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development



Parenting a teen is definitely not the same as parenting a newborn! Knowing your child's developmental needs makes parenting a little easier because it will give you ideas on how to strengthen your relationship with your child at any age.

For example, when you smiled back at your baby, you helped them feel safe. When you provided your toddler a choice of toys to play with or allowed your teen to safely hang out with their friends unsupervised, you helped them

build independence while remaining their rock should they need you. Parenting as your child grows is exciting, scary, joyful, and always challenging. It is like building the plane while flying it. The good news is there are plenty of useful and effective strategies to help you and your child grow together!

During those stressful parenting moments remember to take a deep breath and give yourself a break! Parenting (and life in general!) is a job best learned through experience. Turn those experiences into growing moments by considering strategies from a parenting expert, Dr. Dan Seigel. In his book, *The Whole-Brain Child*, Dr. Seigel shares *12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture your Child's Developing Mind*.

Here are a few strategies that are effective with kids & teens of all ages:

Connect and Redirect: When your child is upset, connect with the feeling first before redirecting or correcting. Connecting with the feeling helps your child or teen feel safer talking with you. If you try to shut down the emotion first, your child or teen will shut down too.

Connect through Conflict-Teach Kids to Argue with a “We” in mind: Remaining connected to others while maintaining a sense of ‘we’ is a tall order for anyone. Helping others to develop a sense of empathy is crucial to forming relationships, being successful with a career, and being kind to self. Consider sharing stories with your child about lessons you have learned through your own life. Share your feelings when they make you proud or hurt you. Challenge them to see what others might be feeling when they are in conflict with someone to help build relationships in the midst of tension. Your developing child will have ever changing needs.

Through every stage of development your child benefits from your love and consistency! For more information about your child's needs through every stage of life, visit <https://www.parenttoolkit.com/topics/social-and-emotional>

Don't forget:

- When you see the good, say the good!
- Spot your children's strengths & let them know why you admire that strength.
- Give them strategies to handle their worries & reduce challenging behaviors.