

The Top 10 Ways to Raise Emotionally Intelligent Kids

Having a high level of emotional intelligence in your children is the best way to ensure that they live a happy, successful, and responsible life as an adult. Here are ten ways to help your kids attain a high degree of emotional intelligence:

1. Model emotional intelligence yourself.

Yes, your kids are watching very closely. They see how you respond to frustration, they see how resilient you are, and they see whether you're aware of your own feelings and the feelings of others.

2. Be willing to say "no" to your kids.

There's a lot of stuff out there for kids. And your kids will ask for a lot of it. Saying no will give your kids an opportunity to deal with disappointment and to learn impulse control. To a certain degree, your job as a parent is to allow your kids to be frustrated and to work through it. Kids who always get what they want typically aren't very happy.

3. Be aware of your parental "hotspots."

Know what your issues are - what makes you come unglued and what's this really about? Is it not being in control? Not being respected? Underneath these issues lies a fear about something. Get to know what your fear is so you're less likely to come unglued when you're with your kids. This doesn't make fears go away, it just makes it easier to plan for and to deal with.

4. Practice and hone your skills at being non-judgmental.

Start labeling feelings and avoid name-calling. Say, "he seems angry," rather than, "what a jerk." When your kids are whiny, saying things like, "you seem sad," is better than just asking them to stop. Depriving kids of the feelings they're experiencing will only drive them underground and make the feelings stronger.

5. Start coaching your kids.

When kids are beyond the toddler years, you can start coaching them to help them to be more responsible. Instead of "get your hat and gloves," ask, "what do you need to be ready for school?" Constantly telling your kids what to do does not help them to develop confidence and responsibility.

6. Always be willing to be part of the problem.

See yourself as having something to do with every problem that comes along. Most problems in families get bigger when parents respond to them in a way that exacerbates the problem. If your child makes a mistake, remember how crucial it is for you to have a calm, reasoned response.

7. Get your kids involved in household duties at an early age.

Research suggests that kids who are involved in household chores from an early age tend to be happier and more successful. Why? From an early age, they're made to feel they are an important part of the family. Kids want to belong and to feel like they're valuable.



Saying "No" to Frances allowed her to experience and work through feelings of frustration

8. Limit your kids' access to mass media mania.

Young kids need to play, not spend time in front of a screen. To develop creativity and problem-solving skills, allow your kids time to use free play. Much of the mass media market can teach your kids about consumerism, sarcasm, and violence. What your kids learn from you and from free play with others will provide the seeds for future emotional intelligence.

9. Talk about feelings as a family.

State your emotional goals as a family. These might be no yelling, no name-calling, be respectful at all times, etc. Families that talk about their goals are more likely to be aware of them and to achieve them. As the parent, you then have to "walk the talk."

10. See your kids as wonderful and capable.

There is no greater way to create emotional intelligence in your child than to see them as wonderful and capable. One law of the universe is, "what you think about expands." If you see your child, you'll get a lot of "wonderful." If you think about your child as a problem, you'll get a lot of problems.

Source: www.topten.org

Rational Psychology An insight into how to manage our emotional lives

In a line from Aristotle, through Augustine and Aquinas to the realist philosophers of the 20th century, there has been a consistent view that emotions are neither good nor bad in themselves ... it is how we manage them through our intellect and will that gives them a positive or negative value.

Aristotle's work laid the foundations for rational psychology. From his observations he taught there are **integrated** features in the psychological make up of all human beings:

- **Our intellect**
Our power to understand, which is assisted by sound habits of thinking critically and logically.
- **Our will**
Where we make decisions; the power to choose and to love.
- **Emotions and passions**
He taught there are seven passions: love and hatred, desire and fear, joy and sadness, and anger.
- **Our senses**
All our knowledge of the world enters through our senses as raw data or information we have been told.
- **Habits of behaviour for better or worse: virtues or vices.**
Habits of respect and responsibility, self control, and courage assist our will when it makes choices.

Realist philosophers argue that emotions and passions are closely linked to our senses, but in need of the guidance of reason. We are a package deal: our happiness is linked to using our reason and good habits to direct our choices. Ultimately, all our actions may be traced back to sound or impulsive choices, to well or poorly managed passions and emotions. Aquinas wrote in the 13th century "*Emotion leads away from moral behaviour in so far as it is uncontrolled by reason; but in so far as it is rationally directed, it is part of the virtuous life*".

When passions and emotions pre-empt decisions, we can end up doing things that we don't want to do, or that are not good for us – we love the wrong things, we eat too much food, we fear things irrationally, we allow sadness to dominate our moods, we give into bursts of impulsive anger, etc. How often we see in children the damage of impulsive behaviours; yet as adults the damage they do will be much greater unless they are taught to manage their emotional lives. This is a key goal of teachers and parents.