

Emotional Safety.

Does Your Child Have Enough Of It To Learn?



Are you providing emotional safety for your children? It's an important factor in the development of many of the skills we most want to see in children, according to Beryl Lourens in a recent article in the journal *ChildrenFirst*. In order for a child to develop emotional health he or she has to know that they will be provided for and have the experience of warm and nurturing caregivers, who instill in the deepest fiber of the child's being that he or she is worthy. If a child lacks a warm and nurturing environment, he or she can possibly grow up to believe that he or she in fact is no good or defective. This is what the renowned psychologist Abraham Maslow referred to as the loss of self.

It is believed that stress in children, or anything that threatens their survival or their self-image, can cause this loss of self. More specifically here is a list of childhood experiences that can negatively determine a child's sense of him- or herself.

- Poverty, or inadequate housing and poor nutrition.
- Excessive rules and punishment or excessive leniency.
- Verbal, physical or emotional violence.
- A relationship with an emotionally dependent parent.
- Abuse or trauma.
- Extreme sibling rivalry.
- Parent's intense marital problems.
- Parent's prolonged illness, unemployment or death.
- A parent who is rejecting, uncaring or emotionally unavailable.
- Change in or loss of support.
- Parent's substance abuse, addiction or compulsive behavior.
- Feelings are consistently dismissed or ignored by people they value.
- Infrequent or inconsistent expressions of love and acceptance.
- Conditional love based on appearance, achievement and social competence or how well a child takes care of the adult's needs.
- Disregard for personal boundaries.
- Lack of positive recognition or acknowledgement.
- Efforts to control through shame, guilt or praise.
- Perfectionistic demands or expectations that are developmentally unrealistic or inappropriate.
- Messages about the child's inadequacy.