

Social-Emotional Tips for Parents

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Be Available and Validate Feelings

It's natural for children to ask questions, so answer them. Be clear, concise, and developmentally appropriate. Speak to what you CAN control, for example, preventative measures (hand washing, avoiding large crowds, healthy diet etc.). Don't be afraid to acknowledge worries by practicing strategies to remain calm. Remember, worrying is a natural response to abnormal circumstances. If you have questions on how to address a worried child, please feel free to contact me.

Limit Media Exposure

Children are like sponges, they are listening even when we think they are not. Try to limit media exposure by only watching or listening to the news while your child(ren) are sleeping. You can also opt to **read** news articles.

Avoid Excessive Reassurance

Of course, we want to comfort our kids. Offer comfort as needed but be careful not to constantly reassure your child(ren) because it can hinder their ability to develop positive self-talk strategies. When your child(ren) feels worried/anxious encourage them to use phrases like, "I'm safe with my family." or "I'm being taken care of by my family." or "I can control my breathing."

Routines are Everything

Children thrive on routine, especially during stressful times. Setting boundaries and maintaining a normal routine provides a sense of predictability, security, and comfort when things feel out of control. Children enjoy making and scheduling routines! Try making a visual schedule or writing a daily schedule together. You can even include fun activities like, "play board games", "baking class", or "have a dance party."

Set Daily Intentions

Set a daily goal with your child that is important to them and within reach. It can focus on the amount of time spent reading or kind gestures towards family members. Make it more fun by creating a visual chart to track progress!

Continue Mindfulness Practice

Attached below are some mindfulness activities you can utilize with your children at home. Mindful moments will help to create calm and ease anxiety, especially at bedtime. Remember, a mindful moment can also be coloring or painting. YouTube, GoNoodle or the app Headspace is a great place to start!

You can also try grounding techniques. See examples below.

Encourage Creativity

Have your child start a journal. Journaling is a positive way to reflect on their day and their feelings. You can ask questions like, "What was the highlight of your day?" or "What are you grateful for today?"