



# Talking to children

Parents: the earliest educators

NOT NOW DEAR,  
I'M BUSY \



# “No parent wakes up in the morning planning to make a child’s life miserable”

Haim Ginott ‘Between Parent and Child’

○ What would you say to a guest who forgot their umbrella?

*What’s the matter with you?*

*You always forget something!*

*Why can’t you be more like your sister, she never forgets!*

*You’re 44 years old! Will you ever learn?*



# Perhaps you might say...

- *“Here’s an umbrella, I see you left yours at home”*

**So why don’t we speak to our children  
the way we’d speak to guests?**

**“Only if a child feels  
right can he think  
right.”**

Haim Ginott



- Recognise parenting is a tough job!
- Pick your moments
- Skills help us deal with issues as they arise and enhance quality communication with our children

# Give feelings a name



- Model how to identify feelings

*“I feel so upset I broke my favourite vase”*

*“I felt so worried when you ran away from me”*

*“I was so happy when you gave me a big cuddle!”*

- Build children's expressive language and give them a healthy way of dealing with unpleasant experiences
- *“Feelings must be dealt with before behaviour can be improved”* –  
H Ginott



# No too many questions!

- Questions can put pressure on kids and cause self doubt
- Sometimes there are no answers!
- Instead, acknowledge feelings and leave the ball in their court

*"I can see you're upset. I'm ready to listen if you feel like sharing"*



# Are we present?

## DESCRIBE



Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?



# When you describe, you...



- Remain present in the moment
- Build observation skills, giving attention to detail
- Build your child's vocabulary – explicitly and incidentally (Sesame Street, Fancy Nancy)
- Provide opportunities for questioning, leading to discussion
- Establishing a base of prior knowledge and personal experience
- Specifically draw attention to behaviour/outcomes/attitudes that you would like your child to continue (praise)
- Engage Cooperation
- reduce undesirable behaviours

# Be a storehouse for special memories



- Build self confidence and relationships

*“I remember a time when you were learning to walk. You tried and tried and one day you did it! You were so proud!”*

# Offer kids choices



- Boost self esteem
- Respect their opinion
- Engage cooperation – less arguments!

*“Would you prefer the red shirt or the green shirt?”*

*“Shall we read ‘Possum Magic’ or ‘Where is the green sheep?’”*

*“Would you like to ride our bike or scoot to the shop?”*

# Growing brains



- Give information to help learn new skills, however don't be too quick to answer questions
- Use sources from outside the home –
  - Child loves trains? Visit the train station
  - Child loves diggers? Go for a drive to a construction site
  - Child loves animals? Go to the pet shop

# Make no assumptions!

- Be proactive and anticipate potentially difficult situations for your children
- Be EXPLICIT
- If expectations are broken, REMIND then allow for them to FIX the situation

We are visiting Grandma in hospital.

Hospitals are quiet places where people are very sick.

It might be boring for you – How will you handle that?

A reminder?

I expect you to play quietly.

# Men are important!



Dads'/male role models can support their child's development via

- Engagement
- Accessibility
- Responsibility

Children with connected fathers/male influences are more likely to experience

- Higher levels of self-reported happiness
- Higher levels of confidence
- Fewer feelings of fear and guilt
- Less emotional distress and upset



# Everyone is invited!



- *Talking to your child* is FREE and is available to all genders, ages, races and abilities!
- *Talking to your child* builds positive relationships with them, and models positive relationships with others
- *Talking to your child* is a way to prepare them for informal and formal education
- *Talking to your child* promotes social skills and increases harmony in a range of environments

# Seek out support



- Parenting can be a lonely gig! Seek out friendships and support networks to share ideas, increase social skills for children, expand experiences and learning opportunities and have FUN!

Mothers Group	Library 0-5 sessions
Music Classes	Gym sessions
Play Group	Community Organisations
Park play dates	Community Health Nurse
Facebook/online communities	Swimming lessons
Mum's and Bub's exercise group	Kindy/Daycare

**“Our responses can make a decided difference in the atmosphere of our home”**

-Dr Haim Ginott



# Want to find out more?



- 'How to talk so kids will listen & listen so kids will talk' Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

- [www.keytokids.com.au](http://www.keytokids.com.au)

- [www.facebook.com/keytokids](http://www.facebook.com/keytokids)

- Join my mailing list to find out upcoming events

