

EMOTIONAL WELL BEING OF CHILDREN

Repeated research and findings suggest that emotional wellbeing is becoming increasingly important in deciding young people's life chances and that there is a growing urgency in the need to tackle emotional wellbeing. One of the lessons I have learnt with my personal experience of working with children for more than a decade is that if we want to give all individuals an equal chance to achieve their potential, and ensure the emotional and mental health of the next generation, public attention and policy should now explicitly focus on developing the emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

What is emotional well being?

'A positive sense of wellbeing which enables an individual to be able to function in society and meet the demands of everyday life; people in good mental health have the ability to recover effectively from illness, change, stress or misfortune.'

An emotionally well child or young person has empathy and self-awareness. They are able to manage their feelings, are motivated and have good social skills. A child or young person who is Growing Strong is one who works well, plays well, loves well and expects to achieve their full potential

Childhood carries many risk factors, which may have a negative impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, such as poor housing, economic disadvantage, serious illness, abuse or serious parental conflict. Any of these factors can have a profound impact on a child's self-esteem and their ability to learn. As many as one in five children in our classrooms may be experiencing a psychological problem at any one time.

How do we improve our children's emotional wellbeing?

How do we make our children emotionally strong? Preventative approaches are much better than intervention after a problem has emerged. Thus a focus on 'emotional resilience' in schools and home will be helpful. Opportunities for children to deal with the social world through skills like participating, handling conflict, mutual responsibility and relationships will enhance a child's capacity for the management of life.

Some factors that affects emotional well being of children are :

Home and School Environment

Family Relationships

Success and related experiences

Ability to express feelings and emotions

Nutrition

We all should understand warm and a safe environment would be crucial to a child feeling calm and secure. Wealth is not a factor but rather secure family relationships, particularly at early bonding and attachment are crucial and within those relationships, both in the family and in the school that feeling of acceptance. When a child experiences educational success their self-esteem will raise but this can also be achieved through praise from the significant adults in their lives. We should train our children to be good communicators. Good communication skills mean that a child is able to express their feelings and emotions. Good nutrition gives a sense of wellbeing. We know that certain foods are crucial to stimulating and maintaining brain activity. All of these factors ultimately lead to the well being of a child.

What can we do?

Have a strong commitment to the emotional health of your children.

Realize how emotional well being improves the achievement of school goals and targets

Ensure that the creation of emotional well being is a whole family strategy

Create a climate that uses praise widely

Give children every opportunity to be listened to either individually or in a group situation depending on circumstances

Model emotional healthy behavior, Modeling is the most effective way that most learn.

Emotionally healthy families are characterised by:-

Supportive relationships

Good communication

Openness, honesty and trust

Regular celebrations of success

Inclusive approaches

Recognition of all achievements

No fear of failure

Explicit morale raising activities

Clarity of expectation

Appropriate boundaries

A willingness to examine feelings and values

What are some of the concepts of a mentally healthy child or young person?

- A sense of Being
- A sense of Becoming
- A sense of Belonging
- Positive thinking
- Healthy Lifestyle
- Exercise
- Clear head
- Ability to say No!
- Self esteem and confidence
- Friends
- Someone that cares
- Supportive
- A sense of family
- Sleep
- Resilience
- Creativity
- Laughter and fun
- Praise
- Hope
- Independence
- Values and Beliefs
- Inspiration
- Motivation
- Problem Solving skills
- Relaxation
- Positive Thinking
- Acceptance
- Tolerance
- Good Communication
- Love
- Trust
- Time
- Happiness

How to begin

Paint an optimistic picture about the future.

A Child should have a positive image of parents and teachers. That influences his/her self image. So have a good self-image.

Relax daily and help children relax.

Help them understand themselves better

Help them anticipate consequences.

Help them identify alternative actions.

Learn to Live With Failures

You can not avoid doing wrong similarly your child also, because perfection does not exist in humans! But forgiving yourself or your child does not have to be limited to mental attitude.

Eliminate Magical Thinking

Magical thinking believes that something will happen without any real effort on your part.

These simple steps can help a lot in improving the mental health of children.

Remember that your child's emotional well-being is just as important as their physical, so do your part to ensure your child knows he's growing up safe, secure, treasured and loved. It's imperative that parents, educators, involved adults and care providers make a concerted joint effort to ensure that a child's emotional needs are met on a daily basis, just as their physical needs are. The effects of not meeting a child's emotional needs, especially during early years of life, can have devastating consequences. Therefore it's critical that parents, caregivers and other involved adults make a concerted effort to make sure the child's emotional needs are met in a positive, constructive and healthy manner.

FINAL WORD

I Hope that you are now CONFUSED. There is NO EASY WAY to match children's developmental needs to the AMOUNT OF TIME spent by each parent and how that time is spent. Considering the best interests of each child has always been a DAUNTING TASK and is becoming even MORE DIFFICULT. We can no longer hide behind "traditional" arrangements, many of which are based on OUTDATED PRECEPTS and MYTHS. **The aim should be for CHILDREN TO BE THE WINNERS.**

By: NTC Team

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