



Building emotional wellbeing
and resilience in children 6 to 12
years old and their families

PARENTING STRATEGIES

Life Skills





Hello Parents,

From the moment our children are born, our child's wellbeing is our number one priority. We do everything we can to keep them safe and healthy, while providing every opportunity to live a full and happy life. One of the most important determinants of our children's happiness is their emotional wellbeing.

There is no doubt about it, parenting is one of the most rewarding, exhausting, and challenging roles we will play in our life. The intention of this ebook is to further strengthen the resilience and emotional wellbeing of your child and make your job as a parent easier, while giving your kids what they truly need. Evidence suggests that the relationship skills, emotional skills and life skills outlined in our three ebooks, if implemented, will strengthen your child's resilience and emotional wellbeing. To see the other two eBooks go to www.upliftingaustralia.org.au.

Be mindful that anything worth doing takes time and it may take 6 - 12 months for these strategies to become a normal part of your family life.

We have been sharing these strategies with parents through our Lift Off! Ready > Steady > Go programs (formerly CampOut with Kids and HangOut with Kids) and the feedback has been fantastic! We have taken the time to make the three parenting strategies ebooks as short and user friendly as possible. I know that my children have greatly benefited from these strategies which have become a normal part of our family life.

There are two self-assessment tools at the end of this ebook to further support you and your family to strengthen the emotional environment in your homes. On behalf of Uplifting Australia we wish you and your family lots of love and support.

Kind regards,

Garry Thomson, CEO Uplifting Australia.



Life Skills

The development of life skills are fundamental to a child's ability to be able to excel in life. If we continue to express our love for our children by doing everything for them, as we needed to do when they were babies and toddlers, they may not develop the life skills or confidence they need to become independent and resilient adults. The strategies below deliver these life skills to your children.

- Teach skills of reflection
- Support children to solve their own problems
- Connecting privileges with responsibilities

Reflection skills

Teach skills of reflection

Reflecting is about having the ability to carefully consider different ideas and experiences and to learn from them. This skill is a building block for thinking things through independently which makes self-development a normal part of life.

Why is this strategy good for my child?

Teaching skills of reflection will support your child to weigh up pros and cons and learn from life whether things go well or not. Ultimately they are learning how to think for themselves and make wise decisions. Independent thought and reflection develops self-confidence as your child learns to trust themselves. Research tells us that if you have the ability to reflect, then you also develop the ability to be rational under pressure and get yourself out of difficult situations. Later on when our children are teenagers, we want them to be able to confidently assess risky situations and make decisions that are right for them despite what their friends may be doing.

How to integrate this into your day:

- We can use real-life situations to practice skills of reflection and learning. For example if one of your children hits their sibling, wait until the situation has calmed (which can take some time). You can then ask, "What happened?", "How did you feel?", "What was going on for you leading up to this situation?", "How do you think that made your sibling feel?" and, "If you could have your time again, how might you do it differently?" Starting reflection at a young age will assist your children to reflect naturally as they mature.
- Start conversations inspired by your surroundings or environment. For example you can use the themes, topics or situations in movies, books, your community or the news to ask age appropriate reflective questions. For example "What do you think the character was feeling and thinking that lead to that happening?" or "What do you think will happen next?". There is no right or wrong answer here and the goal is not to focus on their answer but to stimulate the brain to reflect.



Problem solving

Support children to solve their own problems.

It is a fundamental life skill to be able to solve your own problems.

Why is this strategy good for my child?

Teaching children to solve their own problems increases their capacity to be resilient. This strengthens their sense of self-confidence and determination while building their self-worth. Their self-esteem benefits because they are being given independence, choice and responsibility, which can feel empowering and exciting at a young age. Problem solving skills will also allow them to think rationally when they come up against something tough.

If we don't impart this skill and continue to do everything for our children, then they may struggle to make decisions for themselves when they are older. You may also get burnt out, running around, trying to make sure they are okay, because they haven't developed the skills to look after themselves.

How to integrate this into your day:

To support your children to solve their own problems follow the steps below. This process can be applied to most situations ranging from lost clothing to being bullied.

- 1 Clearly identify and assist your child to name the problem.
- 2 Explore how they are feeling. E.g. "How does that make you feel?".
- 3 Ask them to identify all the possible options for solving their problem, add a few only if they get stuck. Accept each option as a possibility regardless of how far-out it is. The more options at this stage the better. Have fun with it!
- 4 Ask them to choose an option from the list. E.g. "Which option is best for you?"
Ask them to take their best guess regarding what the most likely outcome will be if they do this.
E.g. "What do you think will happen if you do that?"
- 5 If they are still happy get them to follow through.
- 6 If not, go back to the list and choose another option.
- 7 Make a time later to review how it went.
E.g. "Great, go for it and we will see how it goes in a few days".



Privileges & responsibility

Connect privileges with responsibility.

By the time your children are teenagers, they need to learn the natural laws of life and understand the connection between privileges and responsibilities.

Why is this strategy good for my child?

Put simply, if your children learn the relationship between give and take, they will be able to develop realistic expectations of an outcome based on the amount of effort they have offered. This will allow them to clearly map their goals, make good decisions and become self-responsible.

It is important to balance this because if you give them too much responsibility and not enough freedom they may rebel against you. If you give them too much freedom with no responsibility they may struggle to independently fulfil commitments. Balancing this also cultivates self-discipline in our children, which is a key trait in helping them to achieve and reach their potential.

How to integrate this into your day:

- It is a good idea to start teaching your children the connection between privileges and responsibility by clearly outlining them.

For example: You may tell them if they tidy their room, then they get to go to the movies. If they don't tidy their room, then they miss out. So it's up to them if they go to the movies or not. It's important here to establish the agreement up front so your child can make the choice and then clearly see the result of their decision.

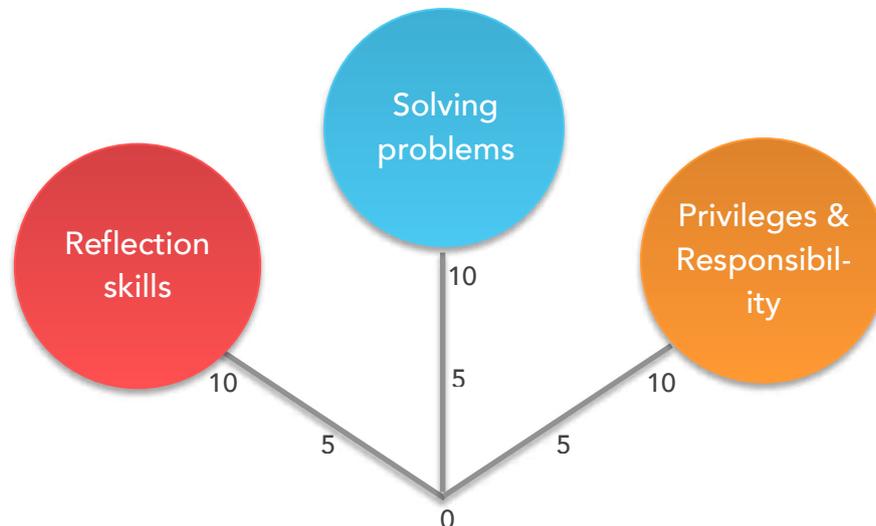
If they want dessert then they must eat their vegetables. Again this is best negotiated before dinner as it's about creating a learning experience for your child rather than using blackmail.

- It is important to stick to the consequences or our children will not learn the link between privileges and responsibilities. So make sure you only makes suggestions you are prepared to act on.



Self-reflection tool

Read each parenting strategy and mark on the wheel below where you feel you best fit for each strategy. "10, you do this lots" is on the outside and "0, you don't do this much", is on the inside.



Now, think about these strategies and consider what you would like to keep doing, stop doing and start doing in your family. Starting to use new strategies can take some time to do, so don't expect it to happen overnight!

I would like to:

Stop doing...

Start doing...

Keep doing...

Self-awareness tool

Research informs us that the behaviours below either improve or erode our children's self esteem and social competence. It is not a complete list, but it is a good guide. Read through the lists and tick which ones are true for you. You may have ticks on both sides which is normal.

Am i off track?

- Shouting at children.
- Teasing children or other family members, making fun in a humiliating way, using the mask of humor to justify giving negative messages to people.
- Putting children down (E.g. You're stupid, dumb, useless).
- Withdrawing love, giving the silent treatment, ignoring children for long periods of time.
- Being too busy to spend time with your children.
- Not caring about how your children feel.
- Not being considerate and not caring when children are upset.
- Treating other family members poorly.
- Leaving your anger unchecked and taking it out (verbally or physically) on children and other family members.
- Not apologising or taking responsibility for the hurts you cause others.
- Being addicted to alcohol, drugs, gambling etc. and not seeking assistance.
- Enabling your children to become very overweight or obese.
- Negative messages about body image.

Am I on track?

- Separating the child from the behavior. Remaining soft on the person and firm on the behavior and using a calm voice.
- Making a habit of acknowledging your child's positive qualities.
- Being kind and affectionate with physical and verbal messages.
- Support your child to express their feelings in healthy ways.
- Spending one on one time with your children and quality time with your whole family on a regular basis.
- Asking how your children are feeling
- Noticing when your child needs a hug and some love and understanding. Providing them with what they need.
- Remaining respectful and caring to all family members.
- Dealing with anger in ways that don't affect your family. E.g. Seeking help from a professional or close friends and having strategies like removing yourself from the family until you calm down.
- Taking responsibility for how you make others feel. E.g. Listening to feedback, saying sorry and then changing your behaviour.
- Keeping yourself healthy and role modeling a quality life to your family.

Read back through your ticked boxes and get a sense of which behaviours you are proud of and where there is room for improvement. Now that you have a level of awareness around your preferred behaviour read back through the Parenting Strategies for a relevant approach.

Parent Line NSW 1300 1300 52 ACT 02 6287 3833 QLD & NT 1300 30 1300
VIC 13 22 89 TAS 1300 808 178 SA 1300 364 100 WA 1800 654 432

Lifeline 13 11 14

Beyond Blue 1300 224 636

National Sexual Assault, Family Counseling & Domestic Violence Helpline 1800 737 732



We would like to acknowledge the generous support of everyone who helps us deliver this meaningful work to the community.

Key Partners



Merchandise Partner



Schools + Families

Thank you to all the schools and families that are participating in Lift Off! programs (formerly CampOut with Kids and HangOut with Kids). You are helping to build a generation of more inspiring, authentic and emotionally intelligent young Australians. Please share this information with your family and friends - we ask that organisations contact us for permission to use this information.

The Lift Off! Parenting Strategies were developed by Uplifting Australia, a not-for-profit harm prevention charity that develops programs and resources that improve the emotional wellbeing and resilience of children and families.

This book was written by Garry Thomson, Sarah Binet and the Uplifting Australia team.

www.upliftingaustralia.org.au