

# Raising an Emotionally Healthy Child



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There is much in the news today about creating a healthy environment for our children in this time of anxiety about the future of our country. It is a bit overwhelming to determine how to keep our families safe, sane, and healthy.

## Ten Strategies for Raising an Emotionally Healthy Child

Listed below are ten strategies that have helped families become resilient during times of uncertainty:

Provide your children with daily quality time and the opportunity to hug and cuddle during the day's events.

Set the family dinner time to accommodate all family

members if possible. Due to long work days, some families have their children eat dinner at an earlier time. At a later time, children can enjoy a healthy snack when their parents eat dinner. This time together provides a good opportunity to engage in family discussions; listen to your children with care as they describe their inner-most fears, successes, and challenges.

Make time to play as a family. Family recreation relieves stress and provides a respite in which families can function in a healthy and positive environment.

Plan a nightly bed time routine for each child that allows time for individual daily reflection with a parent and reading a bed time story.

Plan a family vacation each year. The vacation can be camping for a couple of days at a local park if time and resources are limited. The vacation planning, participating, and memories will stay with your children forever.

Talk with your children about fears as they arise. Reassure them that you are there to help them and advocate for their needs.

Limit the amount time that your child spends on electronic entertainment devices and TV. These technological wonders can be overly stimulating.

Monitor their internet sites. A child's video game may have links to disturbing or adult content.

Ensure that your child has quiet time during the last hour before bed time.

Model empathy and care for your neighbors and community. Participate in community service with your family.

Provide moral and ethical guidance to your children.

## Model Healthy Living to Reduce Stress

When families model healthy living, their children learn how to care for themselves and become resilient when encountering difficult challenges. The behaviors and values that we share with our families provide guidance to our children in their formative and impressionable years of development.

Happy parenting!

Carole

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