

Parenting Practices

TIP SHEET

Close family relationships influence us across our life span and play a crucial role in our growth and development by teaching us about the fundamental ways our connections to others can enrich our lives and wellbeing, and guide us to make good choices.

The relationship between a parent and child is usually a child's first experience of relationships, so for this reason, parents are in the unique position to demonstrate what a healthy relationship is.

A baby's first attachment with their caregiver provides the foundation for the development of a baby's brain and personality, and is the foundational relationship of a lifetime; a consistent, warm and reliable attachment relationship helps a baby to establish trust and the ability to bond with others.

Healthy family relationships have their ups and downs with moments that are supportive and moments that can feel disappointing and hurtful. Close family relationships are a very good place to learn how to love and connect, develop emotional intelligence, accept people's differences, manage your own emotions and practice negotiation and conflict resolution skills.



Parenting tips

- **Encourage family interaction time** by engaging in activities like having meals together, and sharing stories from your own life or culture that help your children feel safe and secure.
- **Help your children to recognise and manage their emotions** by acknowledging how they feel.
- **Appreciate your children's little achievements** in their schooling and sports, and other settings to make them feel more confident and connected to family.
- **Establish clear expectations and limits on behaviours** as well as routines and boundaries. In Australia, the safety and wellbeing of children is paramount, and there are laws that protect the safety of children, so children are not harmed. The law places responsibility on parents for making decisions on "major long-term issues" such as education, religious and cultural upbringing in relation to a child.
- **Repair the stressful or negative moments in relationships** with your children. Talk about what happened and come up with alternate ways to resolve issues.
- **Remember to look after yourself and your relationships.** Try to focus on physical and emotional health and reach out for support to friends and family.
- **Parents need to be open and keen to understand their adolescents' way of speaking** that is unique to their age. This helps to strengthen the parent-adolescent relationship.



Managing challenging times

There are often life situations when parents may feel overwhelmed by demands of family transitions or life changes, such as the following.



- Migrating and adapting to a new country with family and children.



- Managing behaviour with younger children, which can be stressful and challenging for couples, especially if they have different ideas about how best to respond.
- Children from migrant families who are moving into adolescence may transition to the lifestyle of their new country, compared to their parents, who may keep to the traditions of the old country, thus creating strains in the parent-child relationships.

In all these normal transitions, and in relationships generally, the key is to stay calm, repair moments that do not go so well, and practice open communication with family members.

Sometimes it is not the end result of these challenging times, but rather how you got there, that strengthens relationships.

If you feel that things are becoming difficult, it's important to seek help early from child and family support services.

Reach out to us

Contact us to find out how we can assist you and your family.

Call 1300 364 277

Email enquiries@rav.org.au

Visit www.rav.org.au

Please let us know in advance if you need an interpreter.

About us

Relationships Australia Victoria has more than 70 years' experience supporting Victorians. We provide a diverse range of family and relationship support services including counselling, family dispute resolution (mediation), family violence services, and relationship education programs.

Our services are for all members of the community.

Other support services

South East Community Links

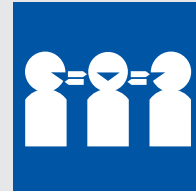
A universal service provider, South East Community Links delivers a wide range of assistance to achieve better social and economic outcomes for people in our community. www.secl.org.au

InTouch - Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence

Supports women from migrant and refugee backgrounds, their families and their communities. <https://intouch.org.au>

The Orange Door

Free service for those impacted by family violence and families who need extra support with the care of children. www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au



This resource is available in other languages.

We have attempted to provide an accurate translation, however, we recognise that due to the complexity of language, each person may have a varying understanding of the information provided.

safe steps Family Violence Response Centre

Free family violence support for women and children. www.safesteps.org.au

Windermere

Child and family support services. www.windermere.org.au/services/family-services



This resource was produced in collaboration with South East Community Links.