

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT AS A
PARENT YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO BE
PERFECT!

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Being a Parent



- ◆ Becoming a parent is one of the most important and difficult things you can do, yet it is one of the most rewarding.
- ◆ Raising a child is a huge responsibility which demands a lot of time and patience.

YOUR FEELINGS

One of the most important things in parenting is your own attitude to it. *Do you like it, do you feel scared about it or are you really enjoying it?*

At times, as a parent, you may feel a range of emotions which are all normal. You may feel love, joy and pride but you may also feel anger, panic, despair and frustration. Often, you may feel you are not being appreciated by your child/children or valued by others.

Most parents at time feel tired, upset and even question their ability as good parents.

⇒ ***Look after yourself***

- * Be careful not to expect too much of yourself and of others.
- * Enjoy your own special talents.
- * Praise yourself for simple things
- * Don't dwell on mistakes as they are for learning from, not for making you feel bad.

⇒ ***Reward yourself***

- * Do at least one thing a day that makes you feel good.
- * Ask someone to help you so you can have 'time out' even if it's for 30 minutes.

⇒ ***Get support***

- * Parenting is so hard to do without help from others. If you feel alone and can't find support within your family, find someone to talk to about your concerns. Asking for help is not a sign of failure- it is the smart thing to do.



THINGS TO DO TO MAKE PARENTING EASIER

⇒ *Find out what you don't know*



- * Understand how children grow and develop.
- * Do not be afraid to say you don't know how to do some things.
- * Do not be afraid or embarrassed to ask for information or advice.

⇒ *Accept your feeling*

- * Understand that mixed feelings are normal. At times, in stressful situations, you can experience a range of emotions.
- * Speak to your partner, friends, family members or to someone not caught up in the emotion.

⇒ *Trust yourself*

- * Everyone has their own ideas about parenting. Listen to other people's ideas but do what feels right for you and your children.
- * Trust your own judgment.

⇒ *Value yourself*

- * Be proud of the effort you have made during the day, no matter how small the task.

INFORMATION COMES FROM EVERYWHERE

As a parent you may feel overwhelmed by the amount of information given to you. Sometimes others, such as family members or friends, may think their parenting practices are better and they have more experience than you.

These advice given can add to your feelings of under confident or failure. This is not helpful because they make you question what you are doing.



The important thing to do is

- ⇒ To be open to ideas.
- ⇒ To thank people for their interest and reflect on their advice.
- ⇒ Maybe try some things that sound as if it might work for you.

WORKING PARENTS

Work is now a big part of a parent's life and often parents feel they are constantly having to balance work and family life.

Many parents:

- ⇒ feel guilty about not being able to 'be there' or having the time to spend with their children.
- ⇒ can become stressed when faced with the unexpected that disrupt the daily routine before a work day even begins.
- ⇒ feel pulled in both directions with competing pressures from work and meeting children's needs.



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

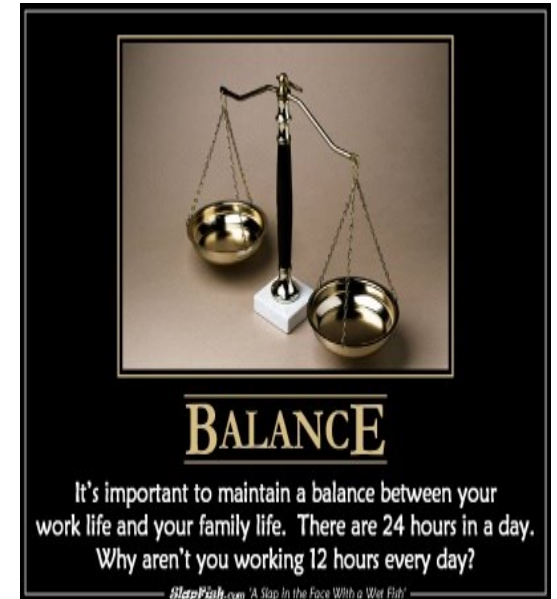
It helps if you can plan and organise in advance how to manage time and look after yourself and your children.

Where two parents are involved, there is the need to talk about how the responsibilities will be shared.

Some things to think about are:

- ⇒ Who does what tasks?
- ⇒ What plans are there for sick children or school event (who takes time off?).
- ⇒ Making time for family being together.
- ⇒ Time for self/leisure activity.
- ⇒ Giving special time for each child.
- ⇒ Finding special time to spend with partner/friends.

It is important to find ways to balance the load within the family while also considering the workplace load as it can often be one-sided.



Children may feel they have to compete for your time and attention. They often associate 'love' with the 'time' and 'connection' with parents- not just being told they are loved or being given material things.