

# The Parent Child Connection



OCDSB Parent Involvement Committee



**Parent Conference 2022**  
*Reconnect & Renew*





# Our Hope for their Future



# What gets in the way of Positive Parenting?

The Strain of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Cultural Emphasis on Peer Orientation

Escalating Demands on Family Time

Pressures Felt that our Children Attain Success

Raising Children in Isolation

Focus on Good Behaviors as a Reflection of Good Parenting



# Traditional Approaches to Discipline



Time Outs



Targeted Praise



Consequences



Reward Programs



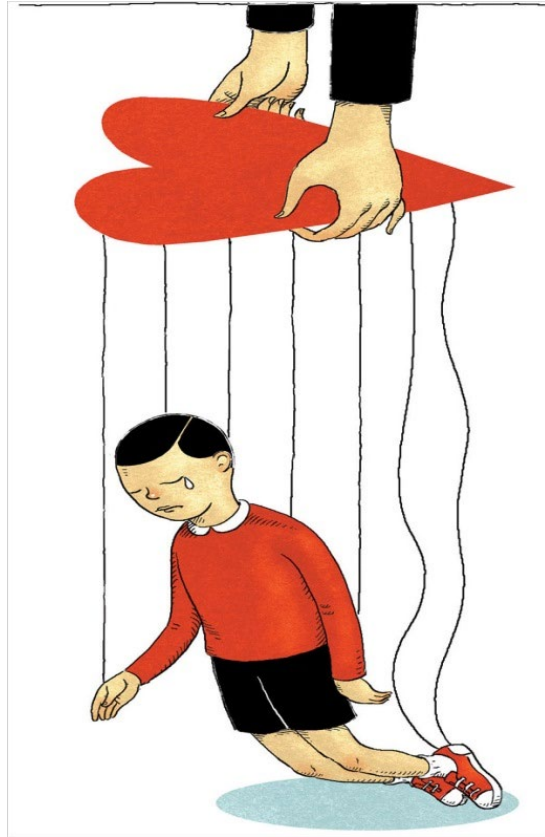
Removal of Privileges



Threats



# The Impact of these Approaches on our Children



So often, children are punished for being *human*. Children are not allowed to have grumpy moods, bad days, disrespectful tones, or bad attitudes, yet we adults have them all the time.

None of us are perfect, and we must stop holding our children to a higher standard of perfection than we ourselves can attain.

— Rebecca Eanes



[fb.com/SharingAlongTheWay](https://fb.com/SharingAlongTheWay)

# What is at the Core of all Parenting?



- The connection between adults and children is THE most important foundation of healthy child development.
- Children depend on the adults in their world for the experience of being KNOWN and LOVED.



# Personal Reflection



# Relationships Drive Brain Development



# Typical Child Development





# Our beliefs about our child's behaviour can significantly affect the way we ...

Think about our child

Feel about our child

Respond to our child



# A Positive Approach to Parenting

Focuses on mutual respect and encouragement

Recognizes children's need for connection to feel safe, secure and regulated

Ensures we are parenting from a place of empathy and compassion

Emphasizes love, respect and belief in our child's abilities!

Ensures an awareness of our child's emotional age not chronological

Reinforces that our goal as parents is to teach not punish





*Our children*  
**CAN BE OUR**  
**GREATEST TEACHERS IF**  
**WE ARE HUMBLE**  
*enough to*  
**RECEIVE THEIR**  
**LESSONS.**

*Bryan McGill*

Fun With Mama



“Just when you feel least like showing love for a child, the child needs your love the most.”



-Urie Bronfenbrenner



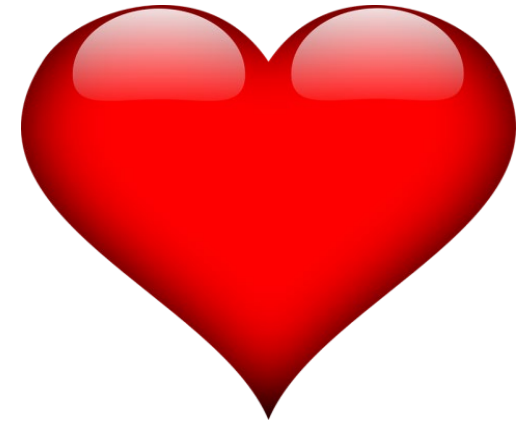
# Parenting Starts with Empathy



Most people do not listen with the intent to understand. Most people listen with the intent to reply.

– Stephen Covey

# Empathy, Empathy, Empathy



Be present

Hear their story, give them a voice

Give acceptance without trying to solve the issue

Let your child know you have heard what they are saying/experiencing

Tolerate exaggerated/negative emotions

Be curious

Listen without an agenda to teach a lesson

Normalize feelings

Focus on emotional safety & staying regulated yourself



# Strategies which Build Connection

Connection  
before  
Direction

Stay Low

Validate

Talk less,  
Listen more

Reflect what  
you Hear

Reduce  
Words

Embrace  
Emotions

Describe,  
don't Lecture

Emphasize  
the Positive



Involve your  
Child

# Examples of Key Connection Times



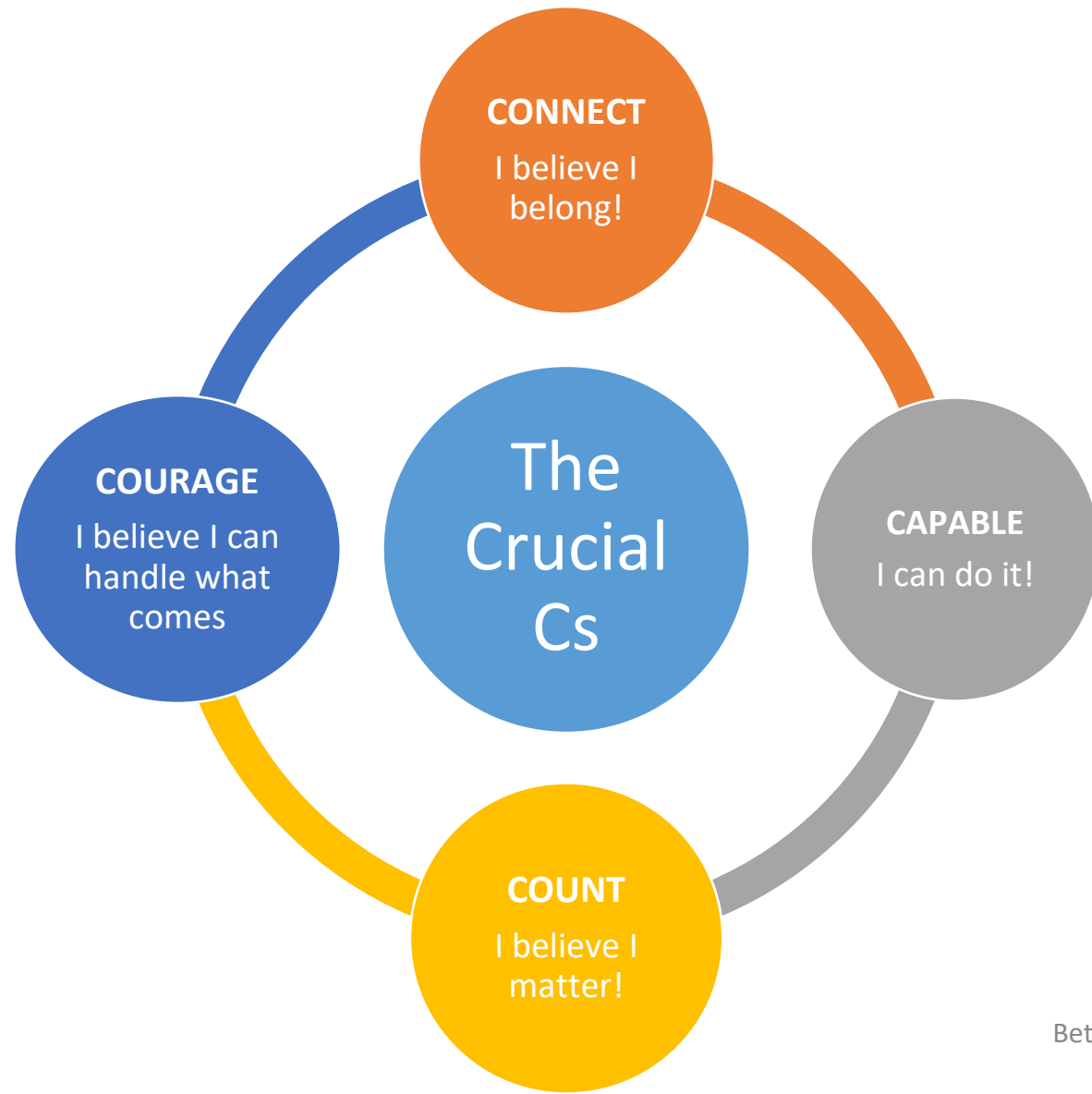
**Morning**



**After School**



**Bedtime**



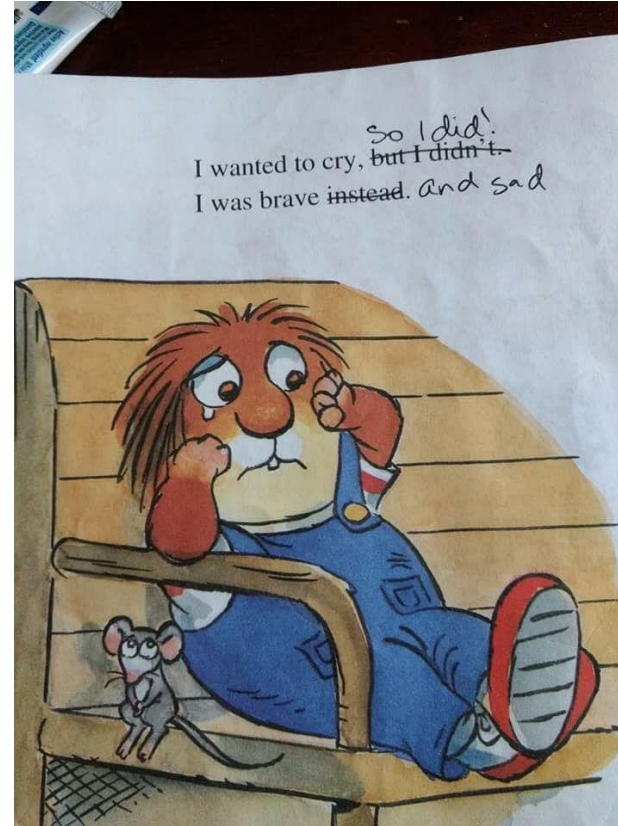
Bettner & Lew (1996). Raising Kids who Can



# How can we Encourage our Children

- Make time for your children
- Separate the deed from the doer
- Commend effort and improvement
- Show your trust in the child
- Listen
- Build on strengths
- Use encouragement instead of praise
- Help the child develop the courage to be imperfect
- Don't give a sense responsibility and significance only to those who are already responsible
- Love them unconditionally
- Allow for natural/logical consequences not punishments
- Be optimistic! Show your belief in them (and you)!

# Making Space for Uncomfortable Emotions



# The Role of Technology





# problem solving

Take Time for Yourself

Approach your Child when Calm

Empathize

Express your Feelings

Collaborate on a Solution

# Your spirited child

Time In vs  
Time Out

Language  
matters

Provide  
choices

Use  
Humour



Practice  
Mindfulness

# Family Meetings

Appreciation/Encouragement

Review/Follow up from last meeting

New business

Distribute allowance

Weekly chore sign up

Closing/fun



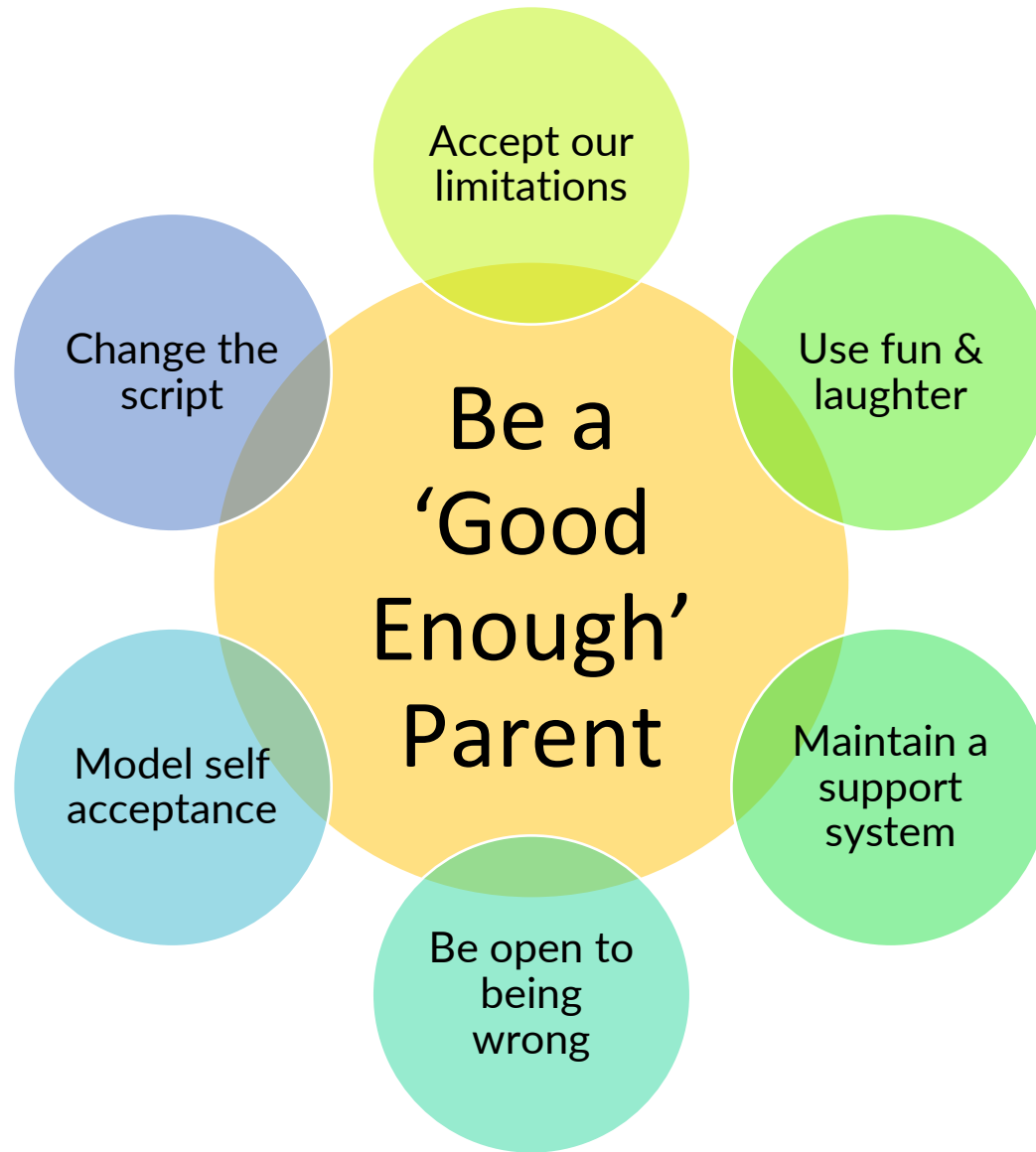
# Reminders that guide us

**Kids Do Well  
If They Can  
(Ablon/Greene)**

**Name It To  
Tame It  
(Siegel)**

**Connection  
Before  
Direction  
(Neufeld)**

**Stress  
Behavior vs  
Misbehavior  
(Shanker)**



# The Voices of Children

I know my parents love me when...

- “they help me when I’m sad”. -11 yrs old
- “they tell me and snuggle me at night”. –8 yrs old

My parents job is to...

- “keep me healthy and safe and help me when I’m feeling down”. – 8 yrs old
- “take care of me, make sure I’m safe, make sure I feel capable, important and that I matter”.- 11 yrs old



# References

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- Siegel, D (2014) No-Drama Discipline.