

Eyes on



# Parenting skills

When responsiveness and beliefs enter the picture



Centre of Excellence  
for Early Childhood  
Development

STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE  
CLUSTER ON EARLY

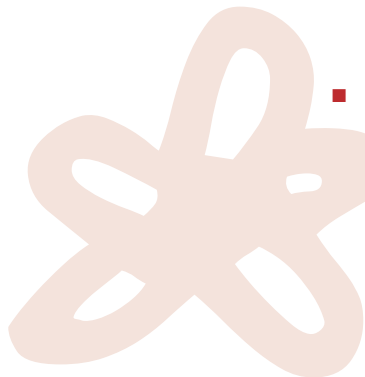
*child development*



***“Well-informed parents know more about the challenges their child will face and are able to adapt when the time comes.”***

## What do we know?

- The quality of parent-child interactions is of special importance in the first years of life.
- Parents who are warm and sensitive to their child's signals (especially in the first year) reinforce their child's feelings of security.
- Sensitive parents encourage their child's need to explore and make sure their child is safe by setting limits and supervising them. These parenting practices promote the child's autonomy and independence.
- Parents' practices also have a major influence on their child's:
  - **Language development and learning**
  - **Social skills** (e.g., empathy, problem-solving, conflict resolution)
  - **Emotional health** (e.g., emotion regulation)
  - **Behaviours** (e.g., sleeping habits)
- Parents' positive or negative reactions toward their child are based on the way they feel when they are with their child, the memories of their own childhood, and their beliefs about child's education.
- Well-informed parents know more about the challenges their child will face and are able to adapt when the time comes.
- Parents who are confident in their parenting skills are better able to set firm limits and to appropriately react to their child's negative behaviours.
- The parents' own psychological functioning (mental health and stress level), the amount of social support outside the family, and the quality of the couple relationship are additional factors that influence parents' practices.



## Paying attention to...

## What can be done?

... the importance of developing a secure parent-child relationship in the first years.

- Provide affection and high levels of warmth.
- Respond to your child's signals and needs.
- Comfort and soothe your child when in distress.

... parenting practices that stimulate your child's curiosity, learning, and language development.

- Talk to your child about what you see and experience in daily activities.
- Engage your child in frequent learning activities (shared book reading, storytelling).
- Provide age-appropriate learning materials to your child (books, toys).
- Consult informative materials on child development.

... the way you interpret and react to your child's behaviours.

- Ask yourself what may have provoked your child's behaviour. Take the perspective of your child and figure out what is difficult for him.
- Make sure to have age-appropriate expectations about your child's development.
- Identify the emotion felt when facing the child's behaviour (anger, fear, sadness, etc.).

... the right balance of control and responsiveness in your parenting practices.

- Refrain from overprotecting your child.
- Allow your child to explore his environment by providing structure and supervision, and by setting limits.



Encyclopedia  
on Early Childhood  
Development

# Information

This information sheet is a publication of the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development (CEECD) and the Strategic Knowledge Cluster on Early Child Development (SKC-ECD). These organizations identify and summarize the best scientific work on early childhood development. They disseminate this knowledge to a variety of audiences in formats and languages adapted to their needs.

For a more in-depth understanding of parenting skills, consult our synthesis and experts' articles on this topic in the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development, available free of charge at [www.child-encyclopedia.com](http://www.child-encyclopedia.com).

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In this document, the masculine form is used merely to simplify the text. No discrimination is intended.



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