

# Do you model the behaviour that you want your child to exhibit?

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***Act in a way you want them to act, Speak in a way you want them to speak, Respect in a way you want them to respect. Remember your child is a reflection of you in their growing years so encourage them to blossom and find their own individuality because they remember less of what you teach and more of what you are.'***

Your children and teens are always observing you and unconsciously modeling your behavior. They are constantly registering your behavioural patterns. Eg: Your outlook towards a stressful situation, the way you treat people around you, and how you deal with your feelings and emotions. They soak in all these actions of yours like little sponges. Even when you think your children are not paying attention, they are actually constantly observing and registering your actions and reactions. I believe, ***“Preach and teach what you practice yourself. It's not only about the words you speak but also the actions you take for your child to follow”.***



You either parent your child the way you have been parented or you choose to do the opposite depending on your own childhood experiences. The feelings/ emotions felt in your childhood are stored in your subconscious as memories. These create core beliefs of all the rights and wrongs, good and bad, do's and don'ts, which reflect in the way you act and react towards your kids. This cyclic phenomena occurs very unknowingly. You probably notice it everyday but subtly ignore it as you are aware that your child is reflecting you in many ways. Some behavioral changes that you approve of and some you disapprove of or you are correcting your child persistently without initiating self-change.

## **Modeling Unhealthy Behaviour:**

Sometimes, you might set unhealthy behavioral patterns as an example for your kids.

- Example 1: As parents we may binge watch movies/shows or often be on our gadgets but we constantly tell our children to restrain their screen time by pushing them to read more, or take up an activity which will help them learn and grow.
- Example 2: We as parents tell our children to treat everyone with respect or not to bad mouth. Yet, often we make critical comments about other people behind their backs unknowingly when with our loved ones.

## **Roles Parents Play:**

- When we speak of parenting it's not only the mother who is the role model, father's behaviour has the same impact on the child as of the mother.
- Discipline, learning life skills, showing respect towards self and others all starts from home (your immediate surrounding). It's from the parents that the child imbibes the nuances of life.
- The behaviour that parents conduct towards each other and at home, has an immense effect on the child's understanding about relationships. The experiences absorbed by the child are witnessed stored in their subconscious.

## **Demonstrating Emotional Skills:**

- All the do's and don'ts are made very clear and demanded from your child. Do we follow these ideals ourselves?
- A child's emotions are often neglected and the emphasis is laid on ensuring that his interpersonal skills are well established.
- We as parents find it difficult to identify our own emotions and feelings. Understanding your child's emotions, reactions to a particular situation, creates a strong bond from a young age.

## **How to Demonstrate Emotional Skills:**

- Emotions and feelings play a very important role in shaping up a child's life. Kids experience complex feelings just like their parents but are unable to assimilate and express it due to lack of articulation. Hence to support and encourage them on how to regulate and express their emotions is of utmost significance. It builds a strong foundation from an early age to live stress and anxiety free life.
- As you converse with your child, try to include references of your thoughts, feelings, perceptions and memories for your child to imbibe the same.
- Act in situations that occurred inappropriately by speaking with your child in a calm and composed manner to understand what caused it and how are they feeling?
- When you help your child build this awareness of identifying their thoughts, feelings, perceptions and memories, you will enable them to feel comfortable with their inner self. This will develop compassion and empathy towards themselves and others.

## **Follow Your Rules:**

- Use discipline that teaches life skills; and explain how these rules will benefit them later in their life.
- If you show kids that you honor the rules, it will increase the effectiveness of your disciplinarian strategies.

## **Simple Tips from Arpita Bhandari:**

- It's really hard to model appropriate behaviour for your kids at all times, and no one is expecting you to be perfect. As a Life Strategist I believe, what you can do is to become more mindful of the way you act and react.
- Reflect before you speak. Speak of your shortcomings, and how you are working towards being different the next time a situation plays out.
- Demonstrate how to manage emotions like frustration, sadness, anger, etc. Express your feelings with ease and encourage them to learn the same. Let them know it's absolutely fine to speak their mind.
- Teach them how to ask questions when confused.
- Remember being a good role model will not only benefit your child but will benefit you in many ways.
- I believe we as parents mend ourselves through raising our kids.



***'Be watchful of what you say and do, Your little one can see it through, The eyes and ears that are open wide, are absorbing and growing deep inside,***

***As time goes by, the things that they learnt, Will come back to you and then hurt, Make sure you do what you want to see, By watching what you're being.'***