

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark hair hugging a young child from behind. The child is wearing a plaid shirt and has their head resting against the woman's chest. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with greenery and sunlight.

# **POSITIVE PARENTING SKILLS:**

## **5 Positive Parenting Strategies**



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## Positive Parenting Skills: 5 Positive Parenting Strategies

As a parent, it is important to distinguish between your child's behaviours, understanding the difference between those that are deliberate and those that are due to other factors, such as: fear, stress, fatigue, and hunger. Following these 5 parenting strategies will help you figure out the clues your child is sending.

Each parent or guardian will have their own unique way of parenting, which you learnt from how you were brought up. We all tend to parent as we were parented, until we become aware of certain behaviours and make conscious decisions to try and modify them.

We can all think of times when we have said something and immediately had the thought, "I sound just like my mum (or dad)."

Becoming more aware of our influences enables us to select our methods of parenting. Things we like, we can use. Things we don't like, we can discard and replace.

As children, and even as adults, we learn by watching other people and by sharing our experiences. We also learn by trial and error. Most important of all, whatever parenting method you choose must be agreed upon and be consistently used by those who care for your child. Always follow through on things that you said that you will do, even if you don't feel like it. As time goes on you will have more experiences to draw from.



## 5 Strategies for Modelling and Teaching Positive Behaviours

There are five main parenting strategies which can be summarized as follows:

1. Clearly communicate your expectations to your children, using positive statements. For example, "I expect you to walk in the street and hold daddy's hand", versus, "There is no running in the street."
2. Ignore inconsequential behaviours. When a parent gives attention to inappropriate behaviour (e.g., shouting and saying no), they may actually be strengthening the behaviour they want to eliminate. IGNORE! Don't look, don't frown, and don't say anything.
3. Selectively reinforce appropriate behaviours. That means give attention and praise/reward behaviors you want to see increase. Behaviour management will only work effectively, and over the long term, through consistently reinforcing appropriate behaviours, such as: listening, attending, and speaking. It is more automatic to focus on what is wrong than what is right so, as parents, it will take some time to break those old habits. Your goal should be to have 8-10 positive interactions to every 1 negative, or at least 20 positives per hour.
4. Stop, then redirect inappropriate behaviours. If a behaviour needs to be attended to, approach your child in a calm, firm, non-threatening way, and redirect their behaviour by stating



expectations in a neutral manner. Avoid the trap of being drawn into an argument or debate about the incident: who started it, etc. Be empathetic but focus on the positive redirection.

5. Stay close to your children. Punishment is humiliating. It creates the desire to escape, avoid, and punish back. If you hit me, I will hit you back. Spend quality time talking and listening to your child. Spend time playing together and doing things you both enjoy. It often works better to gain your child's attention by getting down to their level, tapping them gently on the arm, and whispering their name. Use humour often. Increase appropriate physical interactions, such as hugging and non-threatening touch.

Your child's younger years are a time of great learning for them – and for you. Parenting is a skill that can be practiced and learnt, much like learning to play a new sport. It usually takes approximately a month to learn a new habit. The time that you spend learning about your child's development and ways to teach good behaviour are well worth it and you will continue to reap the benefits in the years to come.

Studies have shown that, as a parent, changing your pattern of verbal and non-verbal behaviour can help in improving your child's behaviour and communication skills. My 10-week [Parent-Child Interaction Coaching](#) will be valuable to any parent or guardian who is struggling to improve their parenting skills.



## *About the Author*



Donia Fahim, Ph.D., Cert. MRCSLT (UK), is Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, International Educational Consultant, writer and adventure traveler who has devoted her life to improving the educational and therapeutic services of young children with special needs around the world. She has worked with leading experts in the field and utilizes evidence-based practices with in-depth knowledge across disciplines.