



Prepared parents. Healthy families.
Padres preparados. Familias saludables.

Parent Newsletter

October 2025

Building Strong Relationships in the First Five Years

Why the Early Years Matter

Did you know that by age 5, a child's brain is about 90% of its adult size? The first five years are a time of amazing growth. Every second, your child's brain is making new connections based on what they see, hear, and feel.

Children don't need fancy toys or special programs to thrive. What they need most is your love, attention, and care. Simple, positive moments with you build the foundation for learning, emotions, and healthy relationships.

Relationships Start from Birth

Babies look for connection right from the start. When you respond to their cries, make eye contact, or talk softly, you are teaching them trust. Think of it like a game of catch—your baby coos, and you smile or answer back. This back-and-forth builds their brain and shows them that relationships are safe.

Every day moments are chances to connect. Talk during diaper changes, sing while cooking, or share a hug before bedtime. These small actions matter more than you know.

Helping Your Child's Emotions

Young children are still learning how to handle big feelings. They observe how adults react to understand how to manage their own emotions. When you comfort and guide them, they know that feelings can be managed and that they can count on you.

- **For babies:** Respond quickly to cries, hold them often, and use a calm voice.
- **For toddlers:** Help name feelings. *"You're mad because it's time to leave the park."*



- **For preschoolers:** Teach words and solutions. *"Your friend looks sad. Do you think inviting them to play would help?"*

Your steady, loving response teaches your child that all feelings are okay—and that there are safe ways to handle them.

The Power of Play

Play is how children learn best. Simple games like peek-a-boo teach trust and turn-taking. As children grow, pretend play and group games help them learn to share, cooperate, and understand others.

You don't need to plan anything fancy. Spend time stacking blocks, reading books, going on nature walks, or letting your child help with chores. Even 10 minutes of play makes your bond stronger and helps your child's brain grow.

Simple Ways to Build Strong Relationships Every Day



Respond with love. Comfort your child and show you are there for them.



Show kindness. Use polite words and model respect.



Talk, read, and sing daily. These build language and connection.



Offer choices and set limits. Choices build confidence; limits keep kids safe.



Play together. Join their games and let them lead sometimes.



Make teamwork fun. Turn cleanup into a game and celebrate helping.



Name feelings. Help your child understand emotions: "You feel sad because..."



Stay calm during problems. Guide your child toward solutions.



Respect boundaries. Practice asking permission and honoring "no."



Stick to routines. Predictable schedules help kids feel secure.



Take care of yourself, too.
A healthy parent supports a healthy child.

Learning About Boundaries and Personal Space

Children need to know that everyone has their own comfort zone. Teaching about boundaries shows them that respect and safety go hand in hand.

Start small. Ask before giving a hug: *"Can I give you a hug?"* If your child says no, honor it and offer another choice: *"That's okay, we can wave instead."*

When kids keep their hands to themselves, they learn to think about others' feelings. Praise them when they respect a friend's "no": *"You stopped when your friend didn't want to be tickled. That was kind."*

It also helps to explain that people want different things: *"Sometimes you feel like playing, but your friend may want quiet time. Everyone gets to choose what feels right for their own body."*

These lessons build empathy, self-control, and healthier relationships.

Show What Healthy Relationships Look Like

Children learn by watching you. The way you handle stress, solve problems, and talk to others sets the example. Use calm, respectful words, even during disagreements.

Explain what you're doing so your child can understand: *"We're talking about the problem instead of yelling."* Show kindness through everyday actions like saying *"I'm sorry"* or *"Thank you."* These small moments teach respect, cooperation, and care.

Helping Your Child Learn Social Skills

Social skills take practice, and you are your child's best coach. You can help by:

- Taking turns during games or snack time.
- Modeling polite words: *"Can I have a turn?"* or *"Let's share."*
- Giving simple choices: *"Shoes or coat first?"*
- Praising effort: *"Thank you for helping pick up toys."*

When conflicts happen, stay calm and guide them. Help your child name their feelings and work toward a solution. *"I see you're upset because your friend has the book. How about we read it together?"*

Create a Safe, Loving Environment

Children thrive when they feel safe and cared for. Set simple rules and explain why: *"We walk inside so no one gets hurt,"* or *"We clean up so toys don't get lost."*

Keep daily routines for meals and bedtime. Predictable schedules help children know what to expect, which builds security.

It's normal for kids to test rules or have big emotions. Your steady, calm response helps them feel safe and learn self-control over time.

Final Note for Parents:

You don't need to be perfect. What matters most is showing up with love, patience, and consistency. Every hug, smile, and kind word builds your child's future.



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