

INTENTIONAL WAYS TO GROW A HEALTHY PARENTING RELATIONSHIP

WHY IS INTENTIONAL PARENTING IMPORTANT?

As a parent or someone in a parenting role, you are the most important influence in your child's life. Intentional parenting is an approach where you use strategies to build a healthy parent-child relationship and increase the positive outcomes you and your child experience.

Intentional parenting involves engaging in parenting behaviors like being responsive and involved, demonstrating authority while supporting autonomy, having consistent and predictable rules, and communicating in a way that creates the warmth and safety needed to have tough conversations.

When these parenting behaviors are not present or when parenting is harsh and controlling, research shows that it can harm brain development, which can have lasting harmful effects into adulthood. The skills acquired through intentional parenting strategies can buffer against negative outcomes and increase positive outcomes.

WHAT IS INTENTIONAL PARENTING?

Intentional parenting is an approach to developing safe, stable, and nurturing parent-child relationships. Relying on brain science, the intentional parenting approach provides:

- Social and emotional skill growth for you and your child,
- Ways to stay present and involved with your child,
- Consistent structure and guidelines for your child to find their way,
- Intentional communication for comfortable and safe tough conversations.



**PARENTING
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Tools for Your Child's Success

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HOW TO DO INTENTIONAL PARENTING

BE INVOLVED

- Do things together.
- Be around your child in their environment and bring your child into your environment.
- Be present and available.

BE CONSISTENT AND PREDICTABLE

- Create clear expectations and rules.
- Establish routines (e.g., morning time, reading time, dinner time) to foster predictability.

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN WHICH YOUR CHILD CAN FIND THEIR WAY

- Give your child practice making choices.
- Provide guidelines to help sharpen their decision-making skills.
- Be available if your child needs help.

PRACTICE INTENTIONAL COMMUNICATION

- Foster a two-way exchange that includes talking, listening, and understanding your child's point of view.
- "Talk with" rather than "talk to" your child.
- Seek to understand what your child is feeling as well as their wants and needs.
- Model effective communication for your child in other aspects of your life.

You make a difference for your child now and in their future. Intentional parenting is an approach that cultivates safe, stable, and nurturing parent-child relationships.



Learn more by visiting
ParentingMercerIsland.org



MERCER ISLAND
Healthy Youth Initiative



CITY OF MERCER ISLAND
YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

Brought to you by the City of Mercer Island's Youth and Family Services Healthy Youth Initiative with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of SAMHSA or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.