(03) 9399 8491

mobile 0412 222 406

Email: jenny.i.mackay@bigpond.com

Website: www.jennymackay.com.au

5 STEP PROGRAM - SEMINAR/WORKSHOP for PARENTS & TEACHERS

How can we best guide our children, enable them to become happy, achieving young people?

1. UNDERSTAND their AGE/STAGE and related LIFE TASKS

- Stage 1: 0 to 1 years: Task: to learn to trust ... (not mistrust)
 - Our role: to meet their needs consistently & responsively = establish trust
- Stage 2: Toddler 1 to 2 years: Task: to become autonomous ... (not doubting self, ability)
 - Our role: to encourage initiative & reassure when make mistakes = build confidence
- Stage 3: Early childhood 2 to 6 years: Task: to learn to use initiative ... (not feel bad or guilty)
 - Our role: encourage independence in action and learning through play, be consistent in teaching about acceptable behaviour
- Stage 4: Primary school 6 to 12 years: Task: To become competent, industrious... (not feel unable, inferior)
 - Our role: Support child's learning stimulate interest, encourage work ethic & mastering life skills, relating with peers, working in a structured environment etc. at home & school
- Stage 5: Adolescence 12 to 18 years: Task: To develop personal identity ... (as opposed to role confusion)
 - o Our role: To reassure trust & caring, while enabling independent thought & action, sense of competency, achievement and control so they are able to clarify their vocation, sexual identity and their role in life.

Acknowledgement Erik Erikson

2. Establish simple GROUND RULES which guide & teach acceptable behaviour

Enable children to feel safe, secure... when children misbehave **always follow through** in order to teach children about their behaviour, about taking responsibility and learning to 'put it right'.

REMEMBER: Rules change as children grow... reassess regularly Always ask ... what am I teaching my children?

3. Always remember BEHAVIOUR IS A MESSAGE... conveying how a child/person is feeling and how they are coping with their world.

- Be more aware ... learn to read behaviour ... pick up on the unspoken messages.
- It is OUR RESPONSE ... that is the key "THE DANCE" which guides our interactions
- We always have a CHOICE ... consider your choices ... "The COAT of MANY POCKETS" = skills of interaction

4. TUNE into your CHILDREN – LISTEN!

5. Teach them SELF CONTROL ... model behaviour ... enable self discipline

It all lies in... my response... CONTROL STRATEGY

- 1. PAUSE ... STAND BACK ... Take 5!
- 2. MANAGE those FEELINGS
- 3. FOCUS on the BEHAVIOUR
- 4. Ask ... HOW IMPORTANT IS IT REALLY?
- 5. TUNE IN ... what is really happening here?
- 6. WHOSE PROBLEM IS THIS?

Then act either assertively or supportively, following through as necessary, but always appropriately affirming.

6. TEACH your children INTERACTIVE SKILLS model, manage & teach them

- To be ASSERTIVE ... not aggressive, when there is a problem. Practice assertive skills teach them about behaviour e.g. state expectations, use I-statements, ask questions i.e. don't keep "telling" them what to do e.g. I told you ..., or "threaten" .. You know what will happen Rather e.g. When children are late aren't home at agreed time, I worry that something has happened to them, so let me know if you are going to be late. Thanks.
- To EMPATHISE: Our feelings are an inherent part of who we are, so no one can deny what we feel. Managing our emotions is key to managing ourselves. Empathic skill firstly accept/reflect/acknowledge emotion /situation with an open response e.g. You seem pretty upset about your marks. You look happy today. You sound a bit sad. And if necessary limit behaviour e.g. I can see you are really angry with your brother but we don't hit in this house. We cool off and then talk. Then, if child needs further support, focus them on problem/situation with open questions use 'what, when, where, who, which' and 'how' e.g. What do you want to say ...? How could you do that? Who could help ...? When do you want to ...? etc. N.B. When feelings are 'high', don't use 'why'.

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7. Allow your children to OWN THEIR PROBLEMS & FIND their own SOLUTIONS

- Support and guide your children so they learn to find solutions to their own problems.
- Trying to solve another's problem is a waste of time and energy, as only they can make the decision for change rather empathise & enable them to sort it out. What you may see as being helpful they may see as invasive or controlling & either refuse, rebel etc., or learn not to do it for themselves, and nothing changes.
- If an issue of children's health or safety, parents need to step in, take control, guide them through so they learn from the experience and are able to manage this kind of situation/problem in the future.

- Apply problem solving i Describe situation ... problem
 - ii. Acknowledge feelings, situation etc.
 - iii. Brainstorm for ideas
 - iv. Choose possible solution
 - **Evaluate**

8. TEACH children RESPONSIBILITY... every action has a consequence

• Teach them about cause and effect and to understand the 'choosing' idea i.e. that we continually make choices and choices result in consequences both positive and negative.

e.g. Conversation at school between teacher & erring student: I see you've chosen to stay after school and join the homework group. I didn't! But as you chose not to have it in on time, then you have chosen the homework group. But! Well, if you had wanted, you would have made sure it was in on time ... right?. However, I know you will have it in on time next week. See you at 3!

9. CATCH THEM "DOING IT RIGHT"

We tend to focus on children when they do wrong ... change this in your home. Focus on what they can do ... not what they don't do.

e.g. School report: catch yourself and rather say ... You've improved here and there ... you must be pleased. Then LISTEN to them - you have opened the door to a conversation e.g. Yes, I am pleased, but I'm worried about ... I didn't really work hard enough in ... I think I need help ... etc. They can amaze you!!

10. Plan for FAMILY DISCUSSIONS / MEETINGS

With opportunities for children to learn: to discuss e.g. home responsibilities, plan family outings/holidays etc., to consider e.g. choices & consequences - What if you/we did this? / did that? etc., to make decisions, to find solutions e.g. problem solving and to learn to practice reparation etc.

11. BELIEVE IN YOURSELVES ...

In bringing up your children be kind to yourselves and your children, trust your own judgement even though you will never have all the answers: and that's okay as long as you take time to consider and respond asking "What am I teaching by what I say and do?" Every child is an individual with different talents, but all require teaching and guidance ... be firm but flexible. Home is a safe place where they can learn about themselves, their behaviour and relating to others. Home along with school prepares them to face the world and they learn how to manage themselves, care for others, cope with life's vicissitudes and appreciate successes.

Remember:

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you,

And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,

For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow.

which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday. Kahlil Gibran