

PARENTS' EXPERIENCES AFFECT THEIR CHILDREN

DID YOU KNOW?



Did you know that when a child experiences abuse, neglect, violence or a parent's drug use, it can cause physical and emotional problems?

The stress from these childhood experiences can affect behavior when kids grow up.

Our past experiences and how we cope with them affect how we take care of our children when we become parents.

EXPERIENCES LIKE SEPARATION OR DIVORCE, PHYSICAL ABUSE, AND EMOTIONAL TRAUMA THAT HAPPENED TO PARENTS WHEN THEY WERE CHILDREN AFFECT THE WAY THEY RAISE THEIR OWN CHILDREN.

Parents who have experienced these events may lose their temper more quickly and have more health problems, or depression. Sometimes this can cause parents to respond to stress in unhealthy ways, like yelling at their children, or drinking alcohol.

But parents can learn healthy ways to respond to stress and they can do things to protect their children from the effects of negative experiences.

Some ways you can help your kids:

CREATE A CALM HOME.

Children feel safe when adults around them calm.



TALK ABOUT STRESS. Talk to your children about feelings. If you get mad or yell, talk about what happened and why you were angry. Apologize if you were wrong.

CONNECT WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

Parenting is hard, and you are not alone. Who do you know that can help you see what good things you are doing as a parent? Surround yourself with loving and supportive adults you can turn to when you feel stressed.



TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF. Eat healthy, get enough sleep, and give yourself some child-free time.

REFLECT on how your experiences may be affecting you now.

SHARE YOUR STORY. If something traumatic happens to you or your children, tell your doctor. They can help take care of your family's health.

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PRACTICE GRATITUDE

FOR YOUNG KIDS:

Encourage your child to spend five minutes every day listing the things they are grateful for. This could be done together just before bedtime or after dinner.

I AM GRATEFUL FOR:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

FOR OLDER KIDS AND ADULTS:

Keep a "Good Things Journal." In this journal you can list 3 good things you see every day and the role that you had in those good things.



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