

**DAY
5**

Nurture



DAY 5 *Nurture*

There may be nothing more important for raising resilient children with high wellbeing than having nurturing parents. Nurture is the single best predictor of successful child outcomes.

When we nurture our children we greatly increase the likelihood that they will develop into competent and healthy adults.

But it's hard work. Our physical and emotional resources are often stretched to the point that we simply have no more bandwidth to deal with our children's needs. And some of our children seem to have much greater needs and preferences regarding our nurture than others.

Nurture means:

1. To care for (and protect) something or someone
2. To bring up and educate
3. To support, nourish, and develop

The following activities have been designed to help you nurture your children more.



ACTIVITY #1

Partner chat

Take a minute to think of a time when you were entirely available for your children. How did it feel for you, and for your family? How was it received?

Chat about it with your spouse or partner – or with someone who is genuinely involved with you in raising your children.



ACTIVITY #2

Stop & pay attention

When your children need you, stop and really pay attention. Don't turn your body towards them but keep your head facing the screen. Don't humour them by saying "uh-huh, yep, I hear you" if you're not really listening.

Stop. Drop everything. Pay attention. Listen. Respond in an active, engaged way. Then pay attention to the results you get compared to normal.



ACTIVITY #3

Chat with your children

Chat with your children about the extent to which they agree with the following statements:

- *My parents support me.*
- *My parents console me when I am upset.*
- *My parents show they care about me.*
- *My parents show genuine interest in me.*
- *My parents remember things that are important to me.*
- *My parents are available to talk at any time.*
- *My parents make me feel wanted.*

As you talk with your children, ask them when you do these things well, and when you don't do things well. Ask them how you could do things better. Make a plan together to be more available.



ACTIVITY #4

Write a list

Make a list of the things that get in the way of being emotionally available. Be thoughtful about it, and add to the list over the coming days as you recognise other things that are getting in the way.

Talk about the three central things that you think interrupt your availability. Pick one or two – but no more – that you think you could work on this week to create more emotional availability in your home.

Horizontal lines for writing a list.

Take home message

The 'take-home' message is this: Our children need us to be available, to nurture. They need models, not critics. The more we can be warm, nurturing, and available, the more likely it is that our children will be happy, and our family will be happy.

With your spouse/partner, discuss ways that you can help one another be more available to one another, and to your children, without upsetting one another or making one another feel judged and defensive.

Consider ways that you can be more emotionally available, and nurturing, to your family members. Here are some additional ideas:

- *Express affection and compassion more.*
- *Plan and engage in activities that bring mutual enjoyment with your children.*
- *Tell your kids you love them – and show it!*
- *Take the time to talk with children to help them feel significant*
- *Read books together – that they choose (and read slowly, especially if they're young)*

Horizontal lines for writing notes or reflections.