



QUAGLIA INSTITUTE

A PARENTING GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING AND FOSTERING CHILDREN'S ASPIRATIONS

ASPIRATIONS AND THE 8 CONDITIONS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

When you are able to dream about your goals, and also work to reach them, you
have high aspirations.

According to Dr. Russell J. Quaglia, founder and president of the Quaglia Institute for School
Voice and Aspirations, "Aspirations' is the ability to dream about the future, while being
inspired in the present to reach those dreams."

Dr. Quaglia has identified 8 Conditions that Make a Difference in whether people have
high or low aspirations. The 8 Conditions are: Belonging, Heroes, Sense of Accomplishment,
Fun & Excitement, Curiosity & Creativity, Spirit of Adventure, Leadership & Responsibility,
and Confidence to Take Action. Having these 8 Conditions in your life can help you
reach your dreams and goals.

We want the best for our children. We want them to learn and grow, to hope and dream, to set goals and strive to reach them. We have the power and ability to help our children do all of these things. The first step is to understand and learn ways to foster our children's aspirations.

When a person of any age has high aspirations, they are able to set goals for the future and, most importantly, take steps in the present to reach those goals. When people have high aspirations, they take on new challenges, persevere through difficult tasks, and confidently take steps toward their future.

People are not born with high or low aspirations. Rather, the conditions in their lives either support and nurture their self belief, or they do not. Luckily for us, we know that there are ways we can deliberately foster our children's aspirations. Research based on the work of Dr. Russell J. Quaglia has shown that there are 8 Conditions which help promote children's aspirations. These Conditions are: Belonging, Heroes, Sense of Accomplishment, Fun & Excitement, Curiosity & Creativity, Spirit of Adventure, Leadership & Responsibility, and Confidence to Take Action.

Parents who learn about the 8 Conditions and choose to incorporate them into their parenting can truly help their children's hopes and dreams for the future become a reality. This guide gives parents of all types—biological parents, adoptive parents, stepparents, foster parents, and even grandparents—an opportunity to learn about aspirations and to reflect on the influential role they play in their children's lives.

There are two parts to this guide. Part I, Self-Scoring Inventory, is designed to help parents better understand their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the 8 Conditions that affect aspirations. Part II, Exploring Aspirations, portrays the 8 Conditions in much more detail. Each condition is defined and then explored through a series of questions designed to generate a deeper understanding of how parents can promote aspirations. Part II also offers age-appropriate information on each condition by focusing on four age groups: 4-7 year olds, 8-10 year olds, 11-13 year olds and 14-18 year olds. Parents are asked to explore each condition further and to engage their children actively in the aspirations growth process.

Keep in mind that this guide is not meant to make you judge yourself as a parent or compare yourself to other parents. Rather, the information can be used to create better relationships with your children and to foster their aspirations at home and in school.

SELF-SCORING INVENTORY

Read each statement in the following eight sections and determine which answer best measures your response. Assign points as indicated. Answer questions as honestly as possible in order to help you better understand the impact you have on your children's aspirations. Use the chart at the end to self-assess your strengths and weaknesses.

SCORE YOURSELF ON THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS RELATED TO THE 8 CONDITIONS.

SECTION 1

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always 4 | Most of the time 3 | Sometimes 2 | Seldom 1 | Never 0

1. I recognize my children's individual talents and strengths. _____
2. I know the names of my children's friends. _____
3. I participate with my children in their hobbies and interests. _____
4. I know my children's hopes, dreams and fears. _____
5. I allow my children to be themselves. _____
6. I work on creating trust and support between my children and me. _____
7. I take the time to know what my children are learning in school or on their own. _____
8. We have positive traditions and rituals in our family. _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 2

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always 4 | Most of the time 3 | Sometimes 2 | Seldom 1 | Never 0

1. I am a positive role model for my children. _____
2. My children seek out my advice. _____
3. Our family talks about people in the community who make a difference. _____
4. I help my children be good role models for each other and their friends. _____
5. I speak positively to my children about their teachers. _____
6. I attend my children's after-school activities. _____
7. I realize I am a hero to my children. _____
8. My children know I am proud of them. _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 3

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always 4 | Most of the time 3 | Sometimes 2 | Seldom 1 | Never 0

1. My children are involved in community service projects. _____
2. My children see me attempt to be my best. _____
3. I value my children's effort to learn, as much as I value test results and grades. _____
4. I help my children set goals. _____
5. I share my accomplishments with my children. _____
6. I encourage my children to persevere with challenging tasks and assignments. _____
7. I recognize my children's best efforts. _____
8. I consistently take the time to understand my children's homework assignments. _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 4

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always 4 | Most of the time 3 | Sometimes 2 | Seldom 1 | Never 0

1. I take the time to have fun with my children. _____
2. My children would say that we have fun together. _____
3. My children see me having fun. _____
4. I create fun and exciting opportunities for my children. _____
5. My children know my interests and passions. _____
6. I know what makes my children laugh. _____
7. I try many different approaches to engage my children in new ways of experiencing the world. _____
8. I limit the amount of television my children watch. _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 5

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always **4** | Most of the time **3** | Sometimes **2** | Seldom **1** | Never **0**

1. I understand my children's learning strengths. _____
2. I value my children's creativity. _____
3. My children are comfortable asking me questions. _____
4. I make sure my children have time to play and be creative. _____
5. My children are curious about the world around them. _____
6. I support my children in their efforts to question the world around them. _____
7. My children see me exploring new hobbies and interests. _____
8. I encourage my children to pursue artistic, musical or theatrical interests. _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 6

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always **4** | Most of the time **3** | Sometimes **2** | Seldom **1** | Never **0**

1. I encourage my children to welcome new challenges. _____
2. I model how to learn from mistakes. _____
3. I share my successes and failures with my children. _____
4. My children want to be successful in their endeavors. _____
5. My children are not afraid to take a healthy risk. _____
6. I help my children make plans to reach their goals. _____
7. I help my children create goals that are meaningful to them. _____
8. My children are willing to work hard to reach their goals. _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 7

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always 4 | Most of the time 3 | Sometimes 2 | Seldom 1 | Never 0

1. My children have chores in our family. _____
2. I allow my children to make age-appropriate decisions. _____
3. I encourage my children to take on leadership roles. _____
4. I teach my children how to be good leaders. _____
5. My children understand the positive and negative consequences of decisions they make. _____
6. I ask for my children's ideas and thoughts related to family decisions. _____
7. I value the opinions and ideas of my children. _____
8. I model positive leadership traits for my children. _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 8

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always 4 | Most of the time 3 | Sometimes 2 | Seldom 1 | Never 0

1. My children know I care about them as individuals. _____
2. I tell my children how much I appreciate them. _____
3. I know my children can make a difference in this world. _____
4. I instill confidence in my children. _____
5. I encourage my children to dream about their future. _____
6. My children know their strengths. _____
7. I learn from my children. _____
8. I help my children take action in causes they believe in. _____

TOTAL _____

SELF-SCORING INVENTORY

INTERPRETATIVE CHART

Transfer Section Scores from the previous pages to the grid below.

Section	Score	8 Conditions that Make A Difference™
1		Belonging
2		Heroes
3		Sense of Accomplishment
4		Fun & Excitement
5		Curiosity & Creativity
6		Spirit of Adventure
7		Leadership & Responsibility
8		Confidence to Take Action

Note your high score and celebrate that as a parent you support this condition throughout your school. Share with other parents what you do to make this your strength.

Note your low score and learn how to improve these conditions as you proceed through this guidebook.

**“Aspirations is the ability to dream about the future,
while being inspired in the present to reach those dreams.”**

-Dr. Russell J. Quaglia

BELONGING

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY BELONGING?

The condition of Belonging means that children feel they are a valued member of the family, while still maintaining their uniqueness. It is a relationship between two or more persons characterized by a sense of connection and support. A sense of Belonging is a necessary condition for children's feelings of well-being, social engagement, and competence. Belonging creates an atmosphere that welcomes and connects all children to their family. The condition of Belonging increases children's confidence in their abilities and their strengths, since Belonging encompasses acceptance and support.

As a parent, you have the opportunity to establish an atmosphere of Belonging in your family, one that promotes your children's sense of well-being, connection, and self-belief.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN A FAMILY HAS A SENSE OF BELONGING?

- Children feel valued for their unique skills and talents
- Children are able to express their ideas, hopes and concerns
- Children feel safe and secure with their family
- Family members know each others' strengths and how to help each other improve
- Parents know their children's friends, hobbies, skills, hopes and fears



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I show my children I value their unique skills and talents?

How do I listen to my children's ideas, thoughts and opinions?

How do I help my children display tolerance and empathy towards others?

How do I show my children I am interested in their schoolwork and extra curricular activities?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: BELONGING

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Belonging, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

4-7 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They learn about acceptance and tolerance through the adults in their lives
- They need repeated reassurance to feel safe and accepted
- They need to be included in appropriate decisions to feel valued and accepted
- They benefit from learning that differences can be wonderful

DO TOGETHER

- Read books related to acceptance, belonging and diversity
- Let your children create their own space in the house
- Write notes to your children letting them know you are proud of them
- Establish traditions and rituals in your family

TALK ABOUT

- The meaning of diversity and valuing differences
- The beauty in being unique and the importance of being yourself
- The meaning of being a good friend and the idea that friends don't intentionally exclude others or hurt others' feelings
- Words and actions that might be hurtful to other children

8-10 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They place increasing importance on peer acceptance
- They still need to hear how proud you are of them
- They want and need you to be involved in their school life
- They need to feel safe, secure and accepted in their family

DO TOGETHER

- Explore hobbies and interests
- Let your children express their individuality
- Become acquainted with your children's friends and peers
- Expose your children to different cultures, traditions and customs

TALK ABOUT

- How all children learn in different ways
- Different ways we can help new kids or new community members feel accepted
- Various times your children felt excluded or left out
- Different values, religions and beliefs in order to help your children better understand others

11-13 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They are bothered by doubt and insecurities
- They are trying to establish their own identity, not the identity you want them to have
- They want their parents to attend events, functions and plays
- They often do not want to stand out as being different

DO TOGETHER

- Spend time with your children and their friends
- Listen to music your children enjoy
- Visit relatives and stay connected to lifelong friends
- Meet together with your children and their teachers

TALK ABOUT

- The emerging new pressures they are facing
- The importance of sticking to their own values and beliefs
- Their random and confusing moods
- Different ways to become involved with their school and community

14-18 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They need reassurance about the decisions they are making
- They need the safety and security that comes with family traditions
- They still want to fit in and be accepted
- They are becoming their own person

DO TOGETHER

- Become actively involved in your children's interests
- Help your children explore their strengths as related to careers and post-secondary education
- Help your children think about issues of tolerance and acceptance on an adult level
- Spend time with your children's friends and peers

TALK ABOUT

- Their academic and personal strengths
- What it feels like to be valued and accepted
- Whether they can be truly who they want to be with their friends and family
- What they can do to make others feel more accepted

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE BELONGING

Now that you have reflected on the ways to promote the condition of Belonging for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of Belonging, I will...

HEROES

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HEROES?

Heroes are everyday people — friends, family, coaches, teachers, and parents — in a child’s life who inspire him or her to excel and to make positive changes in attitudes and lifestyles. Heroes are individuals your children can connect with regularly, who have a positive influence on them, and who listen to and value their ideas. Heroes build trust in others and belief in oneself.

As a parent you are a Hero to your children. They look up to you as someone to learn from and communicate with about many things. Building better relationships with your children through support, guidance, encouragement, and love enables them to become more self-confident in their life and school.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN PARENTS ARE HEROES TO THEIR CHILDREN?

- Children trust the adults in their lives
- Children feel they are unconditionally supported and loved
- Children feel connected
- Parents listen to their children
- Parents spend time with their children



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How am I a positive role model for my children?

How do I let my children know that I am here for them?

How do I help my children be positive role models to others?

How do I share who my Heroes and role models are with my children?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: HEROES

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Heroes, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

4-7 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They mimic and model your behaviors and attitudes
- They admire the adults in their lives, for better or for worse
- They need many positive adult role models
- They need to be Heroes to other children

DO TOGETHER

- Spend time learning about things that interest your children
- Thank the people who help and assist your children
- Provide opportunities for your children to stay connected to relatives
- Read books that portray all different types of people as Heroes

TALK ABOUT

- Everyday people and how they impact our lives
- How children can be Heroes to other children
- The people your children admire
- The people who have helped you in your life

8-10 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They see other children not always being nice to each other
- They do not see themselves as Heroes or role models
- They admire and desire to emulate television and sports personalities
- They have a strong sense of right and fairness

DO TOGETHER

- Play sports and games in order to help your children be a “good sport”
- Read about local Heroes in the paper
- Spend time doing projects
- Involve your children in your hobbies and work

TALK ABOUT

- The meaning of being an everyday Hero
- Peer acceptance and their role in being friendly to all different types of people
- The importance of giving your time to others
- School related issues, concerns and confusions

11-13 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They are beginning to realize their parents are not perfect
- They often idolize the popular students
- They are afraid of being rejected by those around them
- They admire and identify with other adults in their lives

DO TOGETHER

- Invite friends over to hang out
- Spend time with relatives
- Do activities that allow your children to have some independence
- Become involved in community service projects

TALK ABOUT

- True friendships and how to establish them
- Different opinions and viewpoints
- The importance of getting to know and understand people of all ages
- The idea that both older and younger people admire them

14-18 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They are often caught between making adult choices and feeling like a child
- They are susceptible to negative adult role models
- They are trying to create their own identity independent of their parents
- They need many adult role models to support and guide them

DO TOGETHER

- Try to meet people in professions your children admire
- Take a fun class, play on a sports team or learn to play an instrument together
- Attend school functions, even if you do not sit together
- Help with school assignments and continue to show interest in their academics

TALK ABOUT

- Difficult decisions you had to make when you were their age
- Positive and negative people in the news
- How they can make a decision to be an everyday Hero
- Ways to develop traits they admire in other people

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE HEROES

Now that you have reflected on the ways to promote the condition of Heroes for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of Heroes, I will...

SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT?

Sense of Accomplishment recognizes effort, perseverance, and citizenship as signs of a child's success. Parents often use a narrow view of accomplishment that refers to academic achievement or innate ability. Sense of Accomplishment, however, is viewed in terms of personal growth and effort, not just measurable outcomes and countable successes.

As a parent you have the opportunity to celebrate all of your children's accomplishments. Taking time to recognize and support your children's efforts will result in children who are motivated to persevere through difficult tasks and to create a healthy family through hard work, dedication, and love.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN PARENTS SUPPORT SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT?

- Children feel proud putting forth effort
- Children try their best, even if they don't receive top grades in all they do
- Children participate in community service initiatives
- Parents recognize and praise their children's efforts and accomplishments
- Parents value effort and perseverance as much if not more than the end product



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I show my children I value their efforts?

How do I help my children persevere at difficult tasks?

How do I model perseverance for my children?

How do I involve my children in activities that promote citizenship?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Sense of Accomplishment, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

4-7 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They begin to compare their academic and athletic accomplishments to others
- They need on-going praise for their efforts
- They are watching your responses to their schoolwork and grades
- They might not know how to improve and keep trying when things are difficult

DO TOGETHER

- Do tasks that take several attempts to be successful
- Try to improve an assignment or project
- Learn a new skill, hobby or game that takes effort and perseverance
- Help out at a school event

TALK ABOUT

- Expectations around effort
- The idea that winning is not everything
- All of your children's accomplishments and what it feels like to be successful
- What they might want to improve and how to do it

8-10 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They believe perfectionism is important
- They can be very competitive with themselves and peers
- They become more sensitive to criticism
- They develop multiple interests

DO TOGETHER

- Attend events where there are not always winners and losers
- Play games
- Spend time on homework and challenging assignments
- Watch movies or read books where people succeed against the odds

TALK ABOUT

- Different ways to improve and revise work
- The times your children put forth the most effort
- Different accomplishments they have achieved so far
- Achievements you are proud of having accomplished

11-13 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They are very aware of the differences in learning abilities
- They often see themselves as incapable of completing challenging tasks
- They need to know their hard work is appreciated
- They watch your reaction to their grades and accomplishments

DO TOGETHER

- Do activities where your children experience success
- Learn something new that is challenging for both your children and yourself
- Improve upon a house project or complete an unfinished project
- Become involved in helping in the community on a regular basis

TALK ABOUT

- How it seems unfair that some people have to work harder to achieve the same results in school
- The notion that sometimes even with a lot of effort no one recognizes you
- What it means to value learning and the process of discovering new things
- Different ways they can become involved in their school and community

14-18 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They have already experienced failures and successes
- They need to be acknowledged for their hard work
- They often equate success and happiness with money and material objects
- They might not know how to work harder and do better

DO TOGETHER

- Pursue activities where your children put forth much effort
- Set personal and academic/career goals
- Make a timeline of past accomplishments and future dreams
- Share struggles and frustrations you have had in your efforts to accomplish something personally or professionally

TALK ABOUT

- All the successes they have experienced
- Future goals and ways to achieve those goals
- What it feels like to try hard and still not be successful
- Important skills employers' desire

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

Now that you have reflected on the ways to promote the condition of Sense of Accomplishment for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of Sense of Accomplishment, I will...

FUN & EXCITEMENT

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY FUN & EXCITEMENT?

The condition of Fun & Excitement is characterized by children being inspired. They are actively engaged and emotionally involved in their activities, school, and play. Children who exhibit Fun & Excitement are usually self-confident, curious and prepared; they are willing to meet the challenges of the day.

Parents who foster Fun & Excitement provide new opportunities, initiate challenges, and respect individual interests. Children can be motivated to succeed when parents provide an environment where Fun & Excitement is the norm not the exception.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN PARENTS SUPPORT FUN & EXCITEMENT?

- Children are passionate about something that interests them
- Children are engaged and enchanted with the world around them
- Children know it is good to have fun and laugh often
- Parents enjoy being with their children
- Parents share their passions and enthusiasm for life



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What do my children find fun and exciting?

How do my children and I spend fun time together?

How do I support my children's enthusiasm, interests and passions?

How do I help my children find what excites them?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: FUN & EXCITEMENT

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Fun & Excitement, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

4-7 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They find it fun to read the same book again, and again, and again
- They can find the smallest things exciting and engaging
- They have a short attention span
- They laugh at the strangest things

DO TOGETHER

- Read books your children choose
- Follow your children's imaginative and creative lead
- Explore in more depth what your children are learning in school
- Laugh, tell jokes and be silly

TALK ABOUT

- The differences between laughing with, and laughing at, someone
- The ways learning, reading, and writing can be fun and exciting
- The things that interest your children on a daily basis
- The importance of having fun in sports, games and activities

8-10 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They will not want to stop activities that are fun
- They will often say they are bored and need help thinking of ways not to be bored
- They are enthusiastic about trying new things
- They may struggle in school and might not find much fun in schoolwork

DO TOGETHER

- Play sports for the fun of it
- Enjoy the outdoors
- Laugh. Tell jokes and funny stories
- Do spontaneous activities

TALK ABOUT

- What it means to laugh at yourself
- Appropriate humor
- Ways to expand interests and hobbies
- What your children find fun and exciting at school

11-13 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They want to have fun with you alone, but they often need their friends around
- They find school boring a lot of the time
- They might need to find new passions and interests as they have outgrown what they used to enjoy
- They need to still play, pretend and be silly

DO TOGETHER

- Attend events or functions that interest your children
- Plan holidays and vacation time together
- Play games that are both challenging and fun
- Laugh often

TALK ABOUT

- The feelings associated with being excited
- What they see other kids doing that looks fun
- The balance between having fun and working hard
- The idea that they have choices as to whether they are bored or not

14-18 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They have a lot of stress in their lives
- They are caught between child fun and adult fun
- They are eager to find new ways to enjoy themselves
- They might not find any fun in competitive activities

DO TOGETHER

- Explore new ways of having fun
- Play games that involve thinking and planning
- Make it a point to enjoy each other's company
- Plan for holiday parties and family gatherings

TALK ABOUT

- The thrill that comes with exciting activities and what makes them exciting
- Ways to have fun and be engaged without friends around
- The academic subjects your children find interesting and engaging
- Ways to make school more engaging and relevant

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE FUN & EXCITEMENT

Now that you have reflected on the ways you already promote the condition of Fun & Excitement for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of Fun & Excitement, I will...

CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY?

The condition of Curiosity & Creativity is characterized by inquisitiveness, eagerness, a strong desire to learn new or interesting things, and a desire to satisfy the mind with new discoveries. Curiosity triggers children to ask “Why?” while creativity gives them the initiative to ask “Why not?” Both Curiosity & Creativity are products of the imagination. The experience of Curiosity & Creativity in the home allows children to become active learners who yearn to explore unknown areas. To support the condition of Curiosity & Creativity, children need to be challenged to look beyond the status quo to what lies ahead.

The intensity of Curiosity & Creativity tends to diminish over time due to the habituating effects of the environment. Therefore, as a parent you must pay careful attention to create a home environment that promotes questioning and creative exploration of ideas.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN PARENTS SUPPORT CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY?

- Children are able to think for themselves
- Children are comfortable asking questions
- Children explore new ideas and ways of looking at issues
- Parents include their children in the search for answers to their questions
- Parents encourage creativity in thoughts, projects and ideas



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How can I create a safe environment for my children to ask questions?

How do I foster creative and innovative thinking?

How do I provide opportunities for my children to explore the world around them?

How do I model a life of curiosity and inquisitiveness for my children?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Curiosity & Creativity, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

4-7 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They are naturally curious
- They need to know that painting, drawing and creating are opportunities for individual expression
- They will stop themselves from asking questions if you show your frustration with their endless inquires about the world around them
- They need to see the adults around them being creative in their everyday lives

DO TOGETHER

- Paint, draw, sculpt, and play instruments
- Dress up, pretend, and imagine
- Plant and grow a garden
- Create new games with rules developed by your children

TALK ABOUT

- The importance of asking questions and how finding answers frequently leads to more questions
- All the different colors that can be used in artwork
- Projects they are proud of completing and why
- Things they are interested in learning more about

8-10 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They want and need to pretend and imagine
- They are hesitant to ask questions if they think they will be ridiculed
- They begin to find it easier to conform, rather than be themselves
- They need opportunities to explore their interests

DO TOGETHER

- Put together and perform plays
- Rearrange your children's bedroom with their help and ideas
- Go on treasure hunts and "quests"
- Question and discuss what you watch on television together

TALK ABOUT

- Different points of view and how they can all be right
- Issues that interest your children
- Different cultures and customs
- Ways to be creative with school work and assignments

11-13 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They will begin to shy away from creative expression if they feel they do not excel
- They have more questions than answers and need someone to listen to them
- They often still see the world and issues in very concrete ways
- They need to be introduced to different perspectives and viewpoints

DO TOGETHER

- Read about and discuss people who stood up for their own ideas
- Visit places and exhibits to help broaden your children's horizons
- Question what you hear and read
- Paint, sculpt, build, or create anything

TALK ABOUT

- How to question and interpret information
- What it means to think creatively
- The difference between relevant and irrelevant questions
- Issues your children do not understand or find confusing

14-18 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They often do not have opportunities to be creative in school
- They feel they know all the answers
- They are used to being given answers
- They are curious about ethical questions and value systems

DO TOGETHER

- Develop at least two solutions for every one problem or issue
- Let your children plan a trip or outing that interests them
- Take an art or vocational class together
- Paint, sculpt, build, or create anything

TALK ABOUT

- Things you are still curious about as an adult
- The meaning of challenging the status quo
- Ways to explore their interests, questions and ideas
- Ethical and value-related issues at home and in the news

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY

Now that you have reflected on the ways you already promote the condition of Curiosity & Creativity for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of Curiosity & Creativity, I will...

SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE?

Spirit of Adventure is characterized by a child's ability to take on positive, healthy challenges at home and school, with friends, family, adults and peers. Children experience Spirit of Adventure when they tackle something new without the fear of failure or success. This condition is important to building children's self-confidence and enables them to face the challenges they encounter every day.

As a parent, you can encourage and support your children's Spirit of Adventure by urging them to explore new things. By creating an atmosphere that allows for healthy decision-making and healthy risk-taking, your children become more confident and resilient. They are less concerned with whether they succeed or fail, and more interested in the journey upon which they embark. Children with a Spirit of Adventure see life as full of opportunities worth exploring for their own sake.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN PARENTS SUPPORT SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE?

- Children often take healthy risks
- Children are not afraid of success or failure
- Children set goals for themselves
- Parents do not pressure their children to always be the best
- Parents allow their children to try lots of new things



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I let my children know it is okay to fail as long as they try their best?

How do I encourage my children to continually pursue new challenges?

How do I show my children I think it is important to set goals?

How do I model positive, healthy risk-taking behaviors?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Spirit of Adventure, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

4-7 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They may feel frightened about taking risks
- They need help setting short, attainable goals and recognizing when goals have been reached
- They do not like to lose and feel bad when they do
- They will boast about being the best

DO TOGETHER

- Set goals for the family
- Plays games that allow for your children to experience winning and losing
- Try new foods
- Take healthy risks

TALK ABOUT

- The idea that it is okay to fail and how to learn from such experiences
- How we all have to work hard to be successful
- Healthy challenges they see their friends taking
- Unhealthy risks they should not be attempting

8-10 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They want to win and can be very competitive
- They might not be interested in setting goals
- They are beginning to explore unhealthy risk-taking
- They get excited doing things they really enjoy

DO TOGETHER

- Take on a physically challenging task
- Try to learn something new and different
- Discuss healthy and unhealthy risks other people take
- Play games that require working and thinking to be successful

TALK ABOUT

- The importance of having goals and dreams
- The ways we all learn from our mistakes
- How unhealthy risks can hurt not only themselves but others
- What it feels like to be successful

11-13 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They do not want to fail in front of their peers
- They have much uncertainty in their lives
- They begin to fear success as this might set them apart from their peers
- They often act before they think

DO TOGETHER

- Learn a new sport
- Play games where there are no winners and losers
- Create a resumé of past successes and hopeful future successes
- Attempt something you both find scary and intimidating

TALK ABOUT

- The hard work that goes into being successful
- Peers who are taking unhealthy risks and the consequences of their decisions
- The satisfaction found in completing healthy challenges
- Risks, failures and successes you have achieved as an adult

14-18 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They all have different levels of comfort about risk-taking
- They still want support and guidance
- They are often afraid of success if it sets them apart from peers
- They are scared of not reaching their goals

DO TOGETHER

- Seek new challenges
- Visit people in jobs that interest your children
- Explore restaurants, venues and towns you have never been to before
- Visit colleges and technical schools

TALK ABOUT

- Setting goals for the future and how to achieve those goals
- Ways to re-group and improve after disappointments and failure
- What it feels like to succeed when friends are failing; and to fail when friends succeed
- The difference between healthy and unhealthy risk-taking

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE

Now that you have reflected on the ways you already promote the condition of Spirit of Adventure for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of Spirit of Adventure, I will...

LEADERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY LEADERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY?

The condition of Leadership & Responsibility means children are able to express their ideas and are willing to accept the consequences for their actions. It cultivates accountability at home and school. Fostering leadership allows children to make just and appropriate decisions and to take pride in their actions.

Parents who promote this condition teach good decision-making and expect their children to be good decision makers. They provide real decision-making opportunities, seek their children's input, and expect their children to be responsible for their actions and words. Children are trusted to make the right choices and are recognized for doing so. This condition is about both learning to lead others, and learning to lead one's life, responsibly.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN PARENTS SUPPORT LEADERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY?

- Children's input is valued and respected
- Children are willing to accept responsibility for their actions
- Children are honest and trustworthy
- Parents teach leadership skills
- Parents allow their children to make tough decisions and experience the consequences of those decisions



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I allow my children to be leaders at home?

How do I teach my children leadership skills?

How do I help my children to be confident in their opinions and ideas?

How do I allow my children to be responsible for decisions they make?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: LEADERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Leadership & Responsibility, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

4-7 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They are eager to make decisions that please adults
- They want to be involved in family chores, especially with you
- They can make real decisions
- They can learn to be leaders

DO TOGETHER

- Plan activities that require choices to be made
- Make decisions together about dinner and weekend plans when appropriate
- Allow your children to choose from a variety of chores
- Give children the opportunity to choose how they spend their money

TALK ABOUT

- Good and bad decisions
- How your children can be leaders at school
- How to have your ideas and opinions heard
- Ways to be a good follower and listener

8-10 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They may not think they can be a leader
- They see the same kids being chosen to be classroom leaders again and again
- They might not always understand the consequences of their actions
- They enjoy being seen as responsible

DO TOGETHER

- Share responsibility for making lunch or dinner
- Include your children in decisions that concern them
- Attend a meeting where either you or your children have the opportunity to speak
- Read stories about children who are leaders and make a difference

TALK ABOUT

- Ways to have their opinion heard
- Good and bad leadership traits
- All the different types of leaders
- The consequences of decisions and actions

11-13 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They do not always realize there is more than one choice in a given situation
- They often only see popular kids as being able to be leaders
- They need to be given responsibilities
- They often fear making a decision that is unpopular to their peers

DO TOGETHER

- Attend a meeting where people and students are voicing their opinions
- Find opportunities to become involved in service activities
- Invite your children to take the lead on planning a family outing
- Take your children with you when you vote

TALK ABOUT

- What it means to be a responsible leader
- How to stand up for what you believe to be true or right
- How to have other people believe in your ideas
- How do develop trust amongst your peers

14-18 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They have already made many decisions
- They still want their parents' input even though they rarely show it
- They often do not think they can be leaders
- They need to be given responsibility for some decisions regarding money

DO TOGETHER

- Write to the editor of a local paper about an issue of concern
- Attend a school board meeting and speak if appropriate
- Become involved in local politics
- Find opportunities to become involved in service activities

TALK ABOUT

- The decisions they might face in the upcoming years
- How they can become better leaders
- The importance of listening to other people's ideas
- The importance of realizing that their opinion may not be the opinion of others

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE LEADERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY

Now that you have reflected on the ways you already promote the condition of Leadership & Responsibility for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of Leadership & Responsibility, I will...

CONFIDENCE TO TAKE ACTION

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CONFIDENCE TO TAKE ACTION?

Confidence to Take Action is the extent to which children believe in themselves. It encourages them to dream about their future while being motivated to set goals in the present. This condition is what we strive for; all other conditions must be established and supported for a child to attain this level of aspiration. Confidence to Take Action is characterized by a positive and healthy outlook on life and by looking inward rather than outward for approval.

Parents have the ability and potential to help build their children's Confidence to Take Action by providing support, celebrating diversity, and encouraging independent thinking. By enhancing the quality of academic and personal growth, parents encourage their children to be active and involved members of their communities.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN PARENTS SUPPORT CONFIDENCE TO TAKE ACTION?

- Children believe they can achieve their goals
- Children take action in causes that are important to them
- Children make connections between future dreams and current actions
- Parents understand their children's personalities, interests and skills
- Parents support their children in the pursuit of their dreams



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I help my children be self-reflective regarding their decisions and actions?

How do I help my children articulate their dreams and desires?

How do I let my children know I believe in their current and future potential?

How do I build my children's confidence every day?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: CONFIDENCE TO TAKE ACTION

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Confidence to Take Action, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

4-7 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They gain confidence through verbal praise
- They want consistency in actions from adults; only make promises you can keep
- They need opportunities to think about the choices they make
- They need you to believe in them

DO TOGETHER

- Learn a new skill and practice to get better
- Talk with teachers about the positive traits your children are displaying at school
- Celebrate new knowledge gained at school and home
- Plan together for holidays, school breaks, weekends and time with you

TALK ABOUT

- The ways your children make you proud
- The things your children excel at doing
- The skills you are trying to improve as an adult
- Your children's fears and how to lessen these fears

8-10 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They will verbalize much self-doubt
- They take adult praise and criticism very seriously
- They want to feel good about themselves
- They are easily jaded when adults break promises

DO TOGETHER

- Spend time doing things your children feel confident about
- Allow your children time to express their frustrations and doubts
- Work towards improving skills in an area your children find difficult
- Reinforce the learning that takes place in school

TALK ABOUT

- The different accomplishments your children are proud of achieving
- All the new skills and knowledge they learn at school
- How your children can boost other children's confidence
- Ways to take action in a school or community cause they believe in

11-13 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They have varying levels of confidence that change daily
- They are immensely affected by peer comments which can either bolster or destroy their confidence
- They may have a difficult time being criticized
- They have many insecurities

DO TOGETHER

- Explore different ways to celebrate your children's uniqueness
- Let your children teach you something they have learned
- Help your children be reflective
- Encourage independent thinking

TALK ABOUT

- Insecurities...yours and theirs
- Dreams, hopes and beliefs
- Expectations you hold for your children and expectations they hold for themselves
- Proud moments you remember about your children

14-18 YEAR OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They might be overconfident in some of their skills
- They need help assessing their skills and strengths
- They need to hear parents say, “I am proud of you”
- They need opportunities where they can shine

DO TOGETHER

- Let your children teach you something they learned
- Enter writing, photo or other contests
- Visit your workplace and give your children a task to complete
- Attend a rally or forum where people are taking action in a cause

TALK ABOUT

- All the steps necessary to reach their dreams
- Different ways to take action in a cause
- What difference your children want to make in this world
- The personal and professional goals your children hold for their future

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE CONFIDENCE TO TAKE ACTION

Now that you have reflected on the ways you already promote the condition of Confidence to Take Action for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of Confidence to Take Action, I will...

The 8 Conditions that Make a Difference

BELONGING:

Feeling like you are an important part of a group, while knowing you are special for who you are.

HEROES:

An everyday person who encourages you to do your best. Someone you look up to and who you can turn to for help when you need it.

SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Being recognized for many different types of success, including hard work and being a good person.

FUN & EXCITEMENT:

Enjoying what you are doing — whether at work, school, or play.

CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY:

Asking “why?” and “why not?” about the world around you.

SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE:

Being excited to try things even when you are not sure if you will be good at them.

LEADERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY:

Making your own decisions and accepting responsibility for those choices

CONFIDENCE TO TAKE ACTION:

Setting goals and taking the steps you need to reach them.