

How to Create Safe, Stable, Nurturing Relationships and Environments for Kids



When kids feel safe, secure, and supported, they're more likely to thrive — now and in the future. **As a parent, there's a lot you can do to create safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for your child!**

What are safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments?

- **Safe** relationships and environments are free of violence and fear. Kids feel safe when they don't have to worry that someone will hurt them — physically or emotionally. Kids need to feel safe.
- **Stable** relationships and environments are predictable. That means kids know what to expect from their parents and other trusted adults. Kids need to feel connected.
- **Nurturing** relationships and environments are loving. To nurture a child means to meet their physical, emotional, and developmental needs. Kids need to feel supported.

Creating safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments:

- Builds kids' confidence
- Makes it easier for them to learn new skills and adjust to new situations
- Helps them cope with stress and face challenges
- Helps protect them from the effects of bad experiences



Get help when you need it

If you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed as a parent, remember that you're not alone! When you need help:



Ask family members, friends, teachers, or child care providers to support your child



See if there are programs or organizations within your community that support parents



Talk to your child's doctor about your concerns

Take care of yourself

It's a lot easier to support your child if you take steps to keep yourself mentally and physically healthy. For example:



Spend time with a friend doing something you both enjoy — like watching a show or sharing a meal



Get physical activity — it can be as simple as taking a walk or dancing with your child



Take some quiet time for yourself — try mindfulness meditation or breathing exercises

If you think you might have depression, anxiety, or another mental health problem and you need help finding treatment, go to **findtreatment.samhsa.gov** or call **800-662-HELP** (800-662-4357).



How can I create safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for my child?

Take these steps to keep your child **safe**:

- Don't spank, hit, or shame your child — and make sure other caregivers don't either
- Keep your child away from people who are violent to others
- Protect your child if other kids are bullying or hurting them — for example, tell the school

Here's how to create a **stable** environment for your child:

- Follow routines — like eating meals together or reading books at bedtime
- Set clear rules — and make sure your child understands them
- Show your child they can rely on you — for example, do your best to pick them up when you say you will

Here are a few ways to **nurture** your child:

- Encourage their talents and interests by helping them set goals and celebrating their successes
- Comfort them when they're sad or upset, and ask what you can do to help them feel better
- Spend time together doing things fun things, like watching movies or playing games

If you're in an abusive relationship and you need help, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline by calling **800-799-SAFE** (800-799-7233), visiting **thehotline.org**, or texting "**START**" to **88788**.

Visit **HealthyChildren.org/BuildingResilience** to learn more about creating safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments!

