

# INTENTIONAL WAYS TO GROW A HEALTHY PARENTING RELATIONSHIP

## Why Is Intentional Parenting Important?

As a parent, or someone in a parenting role, you are the most important influence in your child's life. Intentional parenting is an approach where you use strategies to build a healthy parent-child relationship and increase the positive outcomes you and your child experience.

When children experience harsh or abusive parenting or live in an unsafe environment, research shows it has a negative impact on their brain development, which can have lasting detrimental effects into adulthood. However, the skills acquired through intentional parenting strategies can buffer against negative outcomes and increase the positive.

## What Is Intentional Parenting?

Intentional parenting is an approach to developing safe, stable, and nurturing parent-child relationships. Relying on brain science, the intentional parenting approach provides:

- Social and emotional skill growth for you and your child
- Ways to stay present and involved with your child
- Consistent structure and guidelines for your child to find their own way
- Intentional communication for comfortable, safe, and even tough conversations



# How to Practice Intentional Parenting:

## Be Involved

- Do things together
- Be around your child in their environment and bring your child into your environment
- Be present

## Be Consistent and Predictable

- Clear expectations and rules reduce anxiety in children
- Consistent and predictable relationships between parents and children buffer against mental and physical problems in adulthood
- Routines allow predictability
- Provide opportunities within which your child can find their own way
- Give your child practice making choices
- Provide guidelines to help sharpen their decision-making skills
- Be available if your child needs help
- Allow them to find their way within the guidelines you provide

## Practice Intentional Communication

- Grow thoughtful interactions between you and your child
- Create safe space for learning, exchanging, and curiosity
- Give your child a sense of ownership in your conversation, so it is more meaningful for them
- Model effective communication for your child in other aspects of your life
- “Talk with” rather than “talk to” your child

You make a difference for your child now and in their future. Intentional parenting is an approach that cultivates safe, stable, and nurturing parent-child relationships.

**Learn more at [ParentingMontana.org](https://parentingmontana.org)**