

Issue # 6- March 2005

In this month's *Successful Child*:

March Issue

- ***Are You Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child?***
- ***Are You Working With or Against Your Child's Natural Inclinations?***

Although many parents are concerned with our children's intelligence quotient (IQ), research shows that a child's emotional quotient (EQ) is just as important for that child's personal success. So what is Emotional Intelligence? Emotional quotient is your child's ability to feel, while intelligence quotient is your child's ability to think. Although the term was coined in 1990 by psychologists [Peter Salovey and John Mayer](#), the person responsible for bringing more awareness to emotional intelligence is a science writer Daniel Goleman. Mr. Goleman's book [Emotional Intelligence](#) brought to light the importance of a child's skill of awareness, empathy and ability to manage emotions. Although there is some controversy regarding how emotional intelligence plays a role in a child's life, there is evidence of the value of emotional intelligence.

Two of the multiple intelligences of Dr. Howard Gardner are *Inter* and *Intra* personal intelligence. *Inter-personal Intelligence* is the ability to relate to and understand others. *Intra personal Intelligence* is the ability to self reflect and understand inner emotions and identify strengths and weaknesses. Emotional intelligence combines the two intelligences and helps a child to manage their feelings and emotions as well as empathize with the feelings and emotions of others.

Should we be concerned about the emotional intelligence of our children? Yes, because part of growing up is to be responsible, healthy and happy individuals is the ability to show respect, cooperate and have empathy. We live in a society that inundates us with so much technology that we sometimes forget the importance of human contact and relationships. Children need to be able to understand their feelings. We place so much emphasis on behavior, that we neglect the underlying feelings that create these behaviors. Misbehavior is sometimes caused by an unmet need. According to psychologist Abraham Maslow, "people are motivated by their unsatisfied needs". Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs illustrates the five basic human needs: **1. Biological and Physiological needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, etc. 2. Safety needs - protection from elements, security, order, law, limits, stability, etc. 3. Belongingness and Love needs - work group, family, affection, relationships, and etc. 4. Esteem needs - self-esteem, achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, managerial responsibility, etc. 5. Self-Actualization needs - realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences.** Only when the lowest of the needs (#1) is met, can a person start to move up toward fulfilling the other needs. For example, if your child does not feel safe at home, your child can not be expected to perform well in school (#3-Belongingness).

We also are not aware how our moods affect our children's moods. If a parent is stressed and constantly annoyed, the child picks up on that mood and starts to behave the same

way. If we do not speak to our children about their feelings, acknowledge their feelings and validate their feelings, our children will not understand how to be responsible for their own feelings and emotions.

When children have their emotional needs met, they are able to make healthy decisions in life. Some of children's emotional needs are to feel loved, safe, understood, valued, trusted, listened to, worthy, appreciated, needed, important and motivated. To find out what your child's emotional needs, think about how you want your child to feel and how you would like to create those feelings for your child.

So how can you raise your child's emotional intelligence? For starters with young children, as parents we can demonstrate healthy ways of expressing our own emotions. Use the word "I" to own the feeling. Start with I feel upset when I am not heard. Give the feeling a label for your child: "It looks like you're sad because your friend could not come over and play."

Validate your child's feelings. Listen, nod your head, and use short comments to get them to continue talking. Do not criticize or yell or your child will shut down. Make eye contact and pay attention.

As your child grows, help them to understand different emotions and why people react to certain circumstances.

Help your child to identify the following:

How am I feeling right now?

Why am I feeling this way?

How would I like to feel?

The more you help your child understand his/her emotions, the more your child will be able to control impulsive behavior and cooperate with others.

Resources

Abraham Mallow's Hierarchy of Needs:

<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/maslow.htm>

Emotional Intelligence for children ages 2-4

http://www.operationhomefront.org/downloads/Emotional_intelligence_2-4.pdf

Emotional Intelligence for children ages 5-7

http://www.operationhomefront.org/downloads/Emotional_Intelligence_5-7.pdf

Article: How Important is Emotional Intelligence?

<http://www.parentsource.com/5.20.01.give.article.html>

Cultivate Emotional Intelligence in Your Child

<http://www.vtaide.com/png/EQ.htm>

Emotional Intelligence: What is it? Who has it? How to get it?

http://www.imageryforkids.com/art_emotionalintelligence.asp

Are You Working With or Against Your Child's Natural Inclinations?

This week, while at a forum for my son's school district, one of the Local Instructional Superintendents informed parents that many schools are debunking the learning styles. While the controversy over learning styles and multiple intelligences has been brewing for awhile, it seems to be that Dr. Howard Gardner's PhD, professor at Harvard University theory is well accepted in some schools and classrooms. [Dr. Gardner's Bio](#)

Dr. Gardner believed that there are seven multiple intelligences:

Linguistic intelligence: a sensitivity to the meaning and order of words.

Logical-mathematical intelligence: ability in mathematics and other complex logical systems.

Musical intelligence: the ability to understand and create music. Musicians, composers and dancers show a heightened musical intelligence.

Spatial intelligence: the ability to "think in pictures," to perceive the visual world accurately, and recreate (or alter) it in the mind or on paper. Spatial intelligence is highly developed in artists, architects, designers and sculptors.

Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence: the ability to use one's body in a skilled way, for self-expression or toward a goal. Mimes, dancers, basketball players, and actors are among those who display bodily-kinesthetic intelligence.

Interpersonal intelligence: an ability to perceive and understand other individuals -- their moods, desires, and motivations. Political and religious leaders, skilled parents and teachers, and therapists use this intelligence.

Intrapersonal intelligence: an understanding of one's own emotions. Some novelists and or counselors use their own experience to guide others.

Just recently an eighth was added: ***Naturalistic Intelligence***, which is the ability to recognize plants, animals and other parts of the natural environment.

While it is interesting to hear that some teachers will no longer be using multiple intelligences in classrooms, as parents we must not neglect the importance of accepting that all children are gifted in different ways. We tend to think of giftedness as being extremely intelligent, scoring high on IQ tests, or showing exceptional level of performance in different areas. Read [Characteristics of Giftedness](#)

The truth is that all children are not created equal and no test can fairly determine each child's natural gifts. We have an obligation as parents to nurture these gifts and work with our children's natural inclinations. During my parent teacher conference, I expressed to my son's teacher how I am aware that he demonstrates a strong interest in math, science and reading. However, my son abhors writing. Armed with this knowledge and knowing his learning style gives me the tools that I need to help him succeed.

If I worked against his natural inclination, I would be resisting him from being his true self. Forcing your child to go against his/her natural inclinations, only leads to frustration

on both sides. If a child is not being encouraged to embrace their natural gift at school, shouldn't that child be able to express it at home? Should you neglect the fact that your child's style is spatial or musical because you want your child to be logical-mathematical?

It is important that we know that our children are gifted and need our support in helping them to identify their strengths. Let them know that they are either "Word Smart, Logic Smart, Picture Smart, People Smart, Self Smart, Music Smart, Body Smart, Nature Smart". Help build your child's confidence by making them aware of their different intelligence and use it to maximize the use of their strengths. Support your child's natural inclinations and watch them grow in success.

Great Resources:

Multiple Intelligence and Learning Style: <http://www.casacanada.com/mulin.html>

Learning Style Quiz for Kids:

<http://quizilla.com/users/guiltfree/quizzes/What%20Is%20Your%20Learning%20Style%203F%20Quiz%20for%20Kids>

Your Child's Smart IQ:

http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0,1703,A%253D152081%2526M%253D50018,00.html

Multiple Intelligences and Your Child:

<http://www.wonderbrains.com/page/wb/miintro1>

Multiple Intelligence in Seven Steps:

http://www.newhorizons.org/future/Creating_the_Future/crfut_gardner.html

Recommended Book for Kids: *You're Smarter Than You Think: A Kid's Guide to Multiple Intelligence.*

<http://www.campusi.com/bookFind/asp/bookFindPriceLst.asp?prodId=1575421135>