

Everyday Moments Parenting Life

Parents are the magic ingredients young children need to THRIVE. The parent-child relationship is one that will last across the miles and years. This doesn't mean parents have to be perfect. There is no such thing as a perfect parent...or a perfect baby...or a perfect anyone. It also doesn't mean parents can or should try to do it alone. Every parent needs the support of other adults.

Raising a child is an awesome, challenging, exhausting, rewarding, demanding, life-changing task. Over time, parents continue to learn about their child(ren) as they interact during daily routines and play time. Together, each parent and child create their own unique *dance* that reflects their temperaments, preferences, interests, and culture.

In this section, you will find Chapters and *Family Pages* that will support you in conversations with families as you discuss parents' self-care; co-parenting; and sharing the care of a child with other trusted adults, including family members, babysitters, and child care providers.

Co-Parenting and Sharing Care

Parenting together and finding trusted partners to share in the care of children are significant tasks of parenthood. These important others often include extended family members, close friends, healthcare providers, early care providers and teachers, and neighbors. When co-parenting and extended care relationships are healthy and stable, they build parents' sense of safety and connection and provide additional early models of healthy, nurturing, and trusting relationships for very young children. In this chapter, parents are invited to consider reasons why co-parenting and sharing the care can evoke strong feelings, and they learn how to build genuine partnerships with a shared focus on the best interest of the child.

Parental Self-Care

Parents taking care of themselves is a win-win for parents and children. This is true for moms and for dads. Self-care activities help parents refuel their emotional and physical energies. It can help parents be healthier, more focused, and optimistic—even when the road of life gets bumpy. In this chapter, parents are invited to see that self-care is not about being selfish but, instead, about being aware of what they already do to support their well-being and building upon this as needed.