



How to Improve Your Parent-child Relationship

Focus on building up equity in the relationship bank account with your child.

By: Psychology Today: Jeffrey Shahidullah, Ph.D.

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Getting kids to follow directions, showing respect to parents, and trusting parents enough to open up and share details and experiences from their lives depend on many factors. A major factor is the quality of the parent-child relationship. I explain the importance of the parent-child relationship to parents in my clinic by using the analogy of the relationship bank account

Most adults have experience with a bank account. You have a job so that you earn paychecks on Fridays. You then deposit those checks into your bank account to build up equity. Then when you need to purchase groceries or pay rent and bills, you have enough equity built up to make withdrawals as needed. As long as you continue to make deposits in the bank account, you will be able to make withdrawals when needed.

When parents complain that their children do not listen to them, don't behave, or they cannot get them to follow directions, it can be helpful to think about the state of the parent-child relationship. From the child's perspective, is the relationship strong? Have enough deposits been made into the relationship bank account recently so that parenting equity is built up? When there is built-up equity, the relationship is stronger, and kids may be more likely to comply when parents want to make a withdrawal (give a command or expect the child to complete their chores or homework or share when something is wrong).

When there is a lack of equity built up in the relationship, it can seem to the child as if the parent is withdrawing from a bank account that is empty or "in the red."

When you feel you are spinning your wheels as a parent, often the first step is to simply focus on building up equity in the parent-child relationship bank account. You can do this by placing fewer demands on the child (making fewer withdrawals) and simply focusing on increasing positive interactions—lots of labeled praise ("Great job using walking feet!") and affirmations ("You're a kid who keeps trying even when it's hard"), highlighting the positive (while ignoring the negative), having conversations with your child that do not include placing demands on them (telling them what they should do or asking them a bunch of questions since questions often come across as demands; for example, asking your child "Why are you doing that?" prompts them for a response which can be interpreted as "Tell me right now why are you are doing that?").

Depending on how low the relationship bank account is, it may take hours, days, weeks, or even months to build up enough equity in the parent-child relationship bank account. Eventually, as the parent-child relationship improves, so will the child's behavior.

One fairly simple way to get the ball rolling on building up parenting equity is making time every day (as little as a couple of minutes) for something called Child's Game. Child's Game is a form of child-directed interaction.

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Please check Brightwheel every day. There is important information there! Also, make sure your child always has a change of clothes and/or diapers/pull-ups, if necessary. Thank You!

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Caterpillars/Buttercup Butterflies



Buttercup Butterflies

The heat is here, the babies are getting ready for water day/ summer activities but most of all we will continue practicing fine/gross motor skills.

In the month of June, the Buttercups will focus on improving our language and writing skills. We will engage in many craft activities that involve writing utensils. We will also practice using our words with our friends and teachers

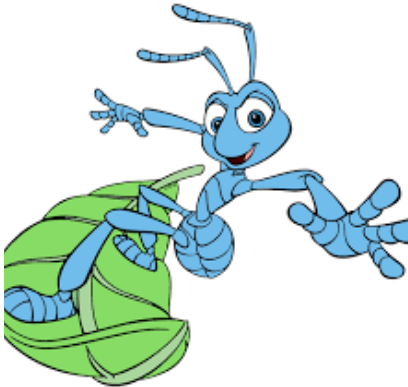
- Meme, Ms. Graciela & Ms. Cynthia

Summer is here and the Pixies are ready for some fun in the sun! We will be learning all about summer during the month of June and we are excited for all of our summer activities, including water days. The Pixies will also be welcoming a few new friends to our class this month!

- Ms. Megan K. & Ms. Joanne



Elf Butterflies



Hello Elf Butterfly families! We are finally in the summer time. This month we will be enjoying our water days and movie days! It will be lots of fun to cool off from the heat during the week. Each week we will have a different topic to learn that we will choose as a school family. Focusing on enhancing our imagination and creativity.

- Ms. Keyanni & Ms. Felicity

Julia Butterflies

Hello and happy June! This month we will be starting the summer schedule with movie days on Wednesday and water days on Friday. Please bring a swim suit and towel labeled with your child's name on each item to be left at school for water days. We will also be learning about outer space, insects, the ocean and The Fourth of July.

-Ms. Paige & Ms. Fallon





Ms. Keyanni's 1 Year Anniversary— June 6th
 Ms. Fallon's Birthday—June 20th
 Ms. Felicity's Birthday—June 20th

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Join with your child in something they want to do. Examples include playing with blocks, action figures, dolls, art, shooting basketball hoops, and video games. While interacting with them, you are using **PRIDE skills**:

- **Praise (P):** Praise your child as much as possible (Wow, you're really good at this game! You must have practiced a lot!)
- **Reflect (R):** Reflect on what they are doing (I wonder if you're building a castle or a house. I guess I'll have to keep watching to find out).
- **Imitate (I):** I was going to build a factory, but I think I'm going to copy you and build what you're building since it looks so cool.
- **Describe (D):** Simply describe what your child is doing. Think of yourself as a color commentator in a football game. All they do is simply detail the things happening in a game. (You're putting the green block on the yellow block. You're combing the doll's hair).
- **Enthusiasm (E):** Showing enthusiasm and making animated expressions is a way to make more deposits into the bank account faster.

Focusing on improving your parent-child relationship by building up parenting equity will often lead to improved child behavior. However, it's not all that needs to happen to improve child behavior in the long term. Building a strong parent-child relationship is simply the foundation that needs to come first. Focusing on reward and consequence programs is unlikely to gain traction if parents do not have built-up parenting equity.

Now go make deposits in the relationship bank account with your child!

Clothespin Grasshopper

I love that this craft needs just a few materials and turns into something so cool and creative!

Materials Needed:

- Clothespins
- Green Paint or Marker
- Green Pipe Cleaner
- Googly Eyes
- Glue



Instructions:

- Color or paint the clothespin green.
- Cut the pipe cleaner in half. Clip one half toward the back and one half toward the front of the clothespin.
- Glue on googly eyes.

Isn't this so cute? The kids will love how it turns out. You can even get creative and make different colored bugs with these materials. Hide them in the yard and go on a bug hunt or put them in the sandbox for pretend play.



Super Supper

We will not be offering super suppers for the month of June. We will continue them in July.

Thank you.

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