

Significance

Significance comes from child's sense of belonging, feeling that one matters and that one is loved. Feeling significant goes beyond basic needs, it explores emotions and feelings, which are a significant part of growing up healthy and balanced. Significance is a child knowing that she or he is important, feeling that one is in the right place; that one fits in.

Read Together: Let your child pick out his/her favourite books and spend time reading together. Enhance literacy by helping your child follow along with the words by pointing to the sentence with your finger as you both read along. You can also have your child turn the page for you, or ask your child what he/she thinks will happen next.

Laugh with Each Other: Appreciate when your child acts in a way that may seem silly to you and be silly with him/her. Sing a goofy song. Make up a new game and change the rules as you go along. Tell jokes - even ones that don't make sense. Practice tongue twisters. Dance.

Encourage Cooperation: As your child's friendships become increasingly important, help your child develop skills to interact positively with other children. You can do this through encouraging play time activities that require cooperation. You may suggest a game of hide and seek or challenge your child and friends to see how high a tower they can build together.

Use Names: An act as simple as saying your child's name often and making a habit of using eye contact will have a big effect on his/her feeling of importance and create a stronger connection.

Draw a Family Portrait: Have your child draw a picture of your family. Use this as an opportunity to discuss the roles of each member and the important contributions each person makes to the family. Frame the portrait and hang it on a wall where it will be seen by everyone in your home. Showing off your child's work will help him/her feel valued and can also be a reminder for the whole family of the important role each person plays.

Show Approval: Although your child may want to do more things without your help, your child still likes to hear when he/she is doing something well. Let your child know when you see him/her doing something you appreciate. Take the time to watch your child show you a new skill he/her learned and hang his/her artwork on the wall or fridge.

Each family member brings something wonderful to the family they belong to.

Success

Success: is based on mastery, being able to set goals, and achieve them. The “how to” of the process is very important; it is where opportunities for learning, growing, and improving are present. Success is about achieving personal, family, or community goals rather than being better or superior to others.

Provide Healthy Choices: Children can gain a sense of accomplishment through making choices about their lives. Allow your child the opportunity to choose for him/herself while ensuring he/she makes healthy choices by giving him/her two equally appropriate choices. For example for a snack you can ask your child if he/she would like grapes or an apple.

How You Play the Game: Play games with your child that focus on playing, not necessarily on winning. This will help your child feel successful for having fun and building new skills. If your child does brag about winning, allow him/her to feel pride but gently remind your child how much fun he/she had *playing* the game. This will create a foundation for good sportsmanship down the road.

Teach Problem Recognition: When a small, every day problem comes up, such as a missing sweater or a conflict over bath time, involve your child in the process of finding a solution. Help him/her identify possible steps and clearly lay out his/her options he/she has to choose from.

Do Household Tasks Together: Involve your child in some of the everyday tasks such as cooking a meal or putting laundry away. Let your child choose which tasks he/she will help with to ensure he/she will take part willingly. Give your child small jobs that will allow him/her to feel a sense of accomplishment. As you go through the task, talk about what you are doing and discuss why things are done a certain way (ie: matching socks before putting them away). Your child is still learning so be patient if he/she gets distracted or makes a mess.

Plan Ahead: Help your child learn to anticipate future events by doing some simple planning together. You can do this by picking out activities for a long car ride, choosing the next day's clothing based on the weather forecast or, in the morning, discuss with your child what activities he/she would like to do after lunch. Learning to plan ahead prepare your child for goal setting later on.

Each family is unique and has its own strengths and abilities.



Self-Awareness

Self-Awareness is about independence, and being able to make choices that affect one's own life. Giving children the power to make decisions, appropriate for their developmental stage, will help children to learn self-discipline and acquire the confidence to make choices. Children become aware of what they can and cannot do (their own strengths) from an early age. This helps them build their own value system and understand their own limitations.

Learn Together: As your child is learning more and more about the world, he/she likely has a lot of questions for you. Answer his/her questions honestly and to the best of your ability. When you don't know the answer, find out the answer together to help your child learn how to find information in the future. It's never too early to learn about problem solving skills!

Go For a Walk: Take your child on a walk around your community. Every once in a while, stop and take time to focus on what you and your child perceive in each of your senses. Ask your child questions about what he/she can see, hear, smell and feel. Help your child learn new ways to express themselves by using a variety of words to describe how you feel.

Listen to Music: Play a variety of different types of music for you and your child to listen to together. Talk about the way each song makes you feel. Try out different types of dance movements based on the rhythms of the music.

Safety First: Being able to identify his/her first and last name is an important part of safety. Your child will also be starting to learn to recite his/her phone number and address. Discuss with your child times when knowing this information can help him/her stay safe.

Play Dress Up: Pretend play and dress up games offer your child many opportunities to practice taking on different roles. Playing in different roles will help your child discover what kinds of things he/she enjoys doing. Spend time playing dress up with your child and ask questions about his/her different jobs. What does he/she like about playing teacher? What is the best part about being an astronaut?

Discuss Feelings: Look through a book or magazine with your child and discuss what a person might be thinking based on their facial expression or activity. Talk about other people's feelings, ask "how do you think so and so felt when..." You can help your child learn new words that he/she can use to express his/her feelings.

What are some of the special gifts you share as a family?

Service

Service is linked with generosity, doing things for others, knowing that one has something to offer to one's family, friends, and community in general. Service is about knowing that you can be helpful and contribute with what you have to offer.

Visit a Sick or Elderly Friend: If you have a sick relative or an elderly neighbor, consider taking your child with you to visit them. Allow your child to bring a "show and tell" piece such as a book they would like to read together, or a toy that he/she would like to talk about.

Make a Birthday Card: Next time your child has a friend's birthday to attend, have your child make a birthday card for his/her friend, rather than buying one at the store. This will help your child think about the way that he/she can have an impact on other people by using his/her own special way to share a meaningful message with a friend.

Be a Role Model: One of the best ways to teach your child about being respectful to others is to model this behavior for him/her. Actions such as asking your child before moving or using an item that belongs to him/her or using manners when you speak to him/her will have a great impact in showing your child how to treat other people with respect for them and their belongings.

Plan an Event: Next time you have a family gathering you will need to plan for, ask for your child's input in making decisions. You can even put your child "in charge" of one of the aspects of the event. Your children will probably still need lots of adult help in completing the task, but will benefit from being given some extra responsibility.

Plant Something: Allow your child to tend to a small section of a garden, or plant some seeds in a cup or small pot that can be kept inside. Teach your child about responsibility and explain how the plant needs to be watered and put in the sun in order for it to grow properly.

Donate Used Items: You can ask your child to consider an old toy or item of clothing that they no longer play with or wear. Find a local charity that collects used items and ask your child if he/she would be willing to donate the toy or clothing that he/she no longer needs. Take some time to explain how much the boy or girl who receives this item will benefit from having it given to him/her.

What does service mean to you and your family?

