

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.

Relationship Building: Find a song or with your child that represents your family and make it your family song. If you can't find a song that captures your family's unique spirit, write your own!

Build Community: Make a point to get to know your neighbors and make it a family affair. By getting to know your neighbors, you'll build a greater sense of community in your neighborhood and create a greater network of supports for your family.

Friends and Supports: Talk to your child about the universal truths of friendship: trust, listening and caring, having someone who will stand up for you, respect, someone you are able to have fun with, who you are able to be yourself with.

Trust Building: Talk to your child about the importance of honesty and how it affects him or herself as well as other people. Explain how honesty builds trust, which is a key aspect of healthy relationships.

Discover: Look at a picture of yourself and your child. Talk about the similarities and differences you share. If you have an adopted or foster child, you can talk about the differences or similarities you in your personality characteristics.

Groups: With your child, make a list of the groups (ie: family, friends, sports, place of worship) he/she belongs to. What groups do you belong to as a family? How do your contributions support that group?

Tell Them You Love Them: Make a point of telling your child you love him/her at least once a day, or write a note and leave it in his/her backpack. Use touch as a way to connect with him; a pat on the back, a hug, a kiss, or something that is appropriate for him/her.

Family Time: Whenever possible, eat meals as a family. Use this as time to talk as a family. Take turns sharing one great thing that happened for each person that day.

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.

Expand Learning: Find out what topics your child is really interested in and help him/her discover ways to continue to learn about that topic, even after the school day has ended. Look up books at the library or help him/her find information on the Internet related to the subject. You can even help your child write a letter to an expert on the topic to find out more information.

School Connection: Talk with your child about something he/she is proud of at school. Ask him/her what helped her succeed in this.

Goal Setting: Help your child set goals for the near future. Set short term goals that can be accomplished in a week, two weeks or in a month. Setting small goals will lead to setting bigger ones down the road.

Goal Template:

What do I want to achieve? (Goal)

How will I do this?

Completion date:

Practice a Sport: Join your child in a sport or some other physical activity of his/her choice. Schedule 30 minutes a day to play or practice with her.

Communicate: Use magazine clips to create a poster or collage with your child to showcase his/her strengths. Use this activity as a time to let him know that you appreciate his/her contributions.

Provide Choice: Allow your child to plan a family event (ie: go play sports in the park, take a walk). Your child will benefit from making choices and feeling a sense of control over his/her life.

Create Balance: Talk with your child about the importance of setting up boundaries to create balance in life (ie: playing on the computer, spending time with friends, spending time on homework). Children will do what you do, so model a healthy, balanced lifestyle. For more information on setting boundaries for tech-obsessed kids see:

www.parentfurther.com/blog/setting-boundaries-technology

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.

Give Tools: Practice with your child situations where he/she may need to say no (ie: someone offering drugs, or alcohol). Talk about what might happen if he/she says yes or no? For more information, see page 22 of: www.albertahealthservices.ca/AddictionsSubstanceAbuse/if-par-kids-drugs-parent.pdf

Routine: Work with your child to come up with a daily routine to commit during after school hours. Work with him/her to develop a structure to accomplish daily responsibilities (ie: homework, free time, sports, play, chores). Make sure to schedule time with family everyday!

Safety and Boundaries: Have a conversation with your child to reinforce the importance of staying safe with using the Internet. These may be things like not giving out personal information, or not responding to online ads. What are the computer use guidelines in your home?

School Connection: Ask your child what his/her favourite subject in school is. Ask what are the things that make it his/her favourite?

Get to Know Their Friends: Have your child invite a friend to your house for supper. It is important to stay involved in your child's social life as friends become more and more important at this age.

Body Image: Help your child learn about some of the changes that may be occurring in his/her body at this stage as a result of puberty. For more information check out:

www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetails.aspx?p=114&np=122&id=1497

Exploration: At this stage, children are starting to think imagine a future for themselves (ie: career, adult life). Have a conversation with your child about the future. Ask what things are important to him/her. What are his/her goals? How will he/she achieve these goals?

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.

Cook Together: Allow your child to plan a family meal. Take him/her shopping for ingredients for a recipe of his/her and cook the meal together. This will help build confidence and independence in your child.

Volunteer: At this stage, children understand that good behaviour brings social approval. Helping other people and learning to accept help from others will help make child feel good about him/herself. Take part in volunteer opportunities in the community with your child, such as shoveling a neighbour's sidewalk. For more ideas, check out:

www.volunteercalgary.ab.ca/programs/youth_volunteering.html

Neighbours and Community: In addition to getting to know your neighbours with your child, make a point of doing something nice for them (ie: shovel their sidewalks, send them some baking, etc). Use your imagination and plan to do something creative to help someone in your community.

Explore: What can you do to help police so your community is safe? Connect with your Community Liaison Officer as he or she is a valuable resource in your community.

Showing Gratitude: Help your child write a "thank you" note to someone in your family or community. Talk about the importance of showing other people our appreciation.

Calgary Police Service: Learn more about the Calgary Cadet Police Corps (for kids age 12 and up) by visiting: www.calgarypolice.ca/kids-cadetcorps.html

Develop Responsibility: Help your child develop a sense of responsibility by developing with him/her a list of tasks he/she can perform on a regular basis (ie: caring for a pet, reading stories to younger siblings, folding laundry, loading the dishwasher, washing dishes, sweeping the garage, etc).

What does service mean to you and your family?