

The Principles of Nonviolent Parenting

In nonviolent parenting, we define violence as anything that hurts the heart, mind, body, or spirit of a child. This includes physical punishment, manipulation, and shaming.

- In our commitment to build a just, loving, and peaceful world, we must respect the dignity and value of each human being and life force on this planet.
- Children are born loving, curious, trusting, whole human beings. We must remember to always see them in this light and to encourage these natural traits to bloom throughout their childhood.
- Children deserve to be raised with unconditional loving, free from physical hurt, shaming, and manipulation. It is damaging to children to be raised to fear their parents.
- Building an intimate relationship with a child is a complicated process that requires acceptance and understanding of basic human needs and feelings. It is natural that both parents and children will experience anger and frustration as well as warmth and affection.
- Parenting is not something that is done to a child, but the process of being in a relationship together. Parents are allies to their children, offering support as they work with—not against—them to build mutual understanding, respect, and honesty.
- Parents work to maintain awareness and continually reevaluate the effect of their power in their relationships with their children. The misuse of power over children is a form of violence against them.
- It takes time to grow up and reach an adult understanding of the world. The child's maturation and brain development is respected as an ongoing, complex process. The child's view of the world is right for a child, and needs to be supported and recognized as true.
- Each person's reactions and feelings are respected, heard, and recognized as true. Through deep listening, empathy, and loving speech, children are guided to learn nonviolent ways to express their feelings and needs and to resolve their problems. This is the process of building emotional competency and emotional intelligence.

- Children need nurturing guidance and age-appropriate limits to keep them safe, and to teach them the values that are important to the family. This process creates a scaffolding of support around a child. The caregiver is an emotional coach who guides the child in loving, supportive ways that respect the child’s innate desire to satisfy his/her basic human needs.
- Nonviolent parenting is a daily practice using skills such as empathy, self-regulation, and problem solving—skills that both parents and children can learn.