

Wilder Foundation Attachment Oriented Parent "Job" description

1. **Read a child's nonverbal cues and body language** (rather than focus on what child is saying) to anticipate child's behavior and be "attuned."
2. **Make moments of connection happen** through countless interactions with child in daily life and find happiness in small increments of improvement.
3. **Be open to share own range of emotions with child.**
 - a. Can tolerate own ambivalence or strong negative feelings towards child
 - b. Can feel rage without acting it out
 - c. Can give child a "one minute reprimand" when angry
4. **Meet child's basic developmental needs so child repeatedly can experience that being dependent can feel okay.**
 - a. Persist in behaving as if one loves child in face of constant rejection by child.
Proceed with giving the nurturance that the child needs
 - b. Postpone one's need for regard from child for a long time
5. **Translate child's behavior.** See the desperate fear of closeness and faulty beliefs. See the trauma response. Investigate what basic need (for contact, power, protection or withdrawal) child is really seeking.
6. **Creatively craft many responses that sidestep power struggles.**
 - a. Be unpredictable on purpose
 - b. Drill in concept of "choice"
 - c. Don't question child, but guess out loud what is child's hidden agenda or feeling
 - d. Translate child's words or actions into less volatile words for self so one is not so triggered by child's "pushing buttons"
 - e. Provide lots of positive reinforcement and redirection
7. **Act in manner that Engages, Structures, Nurtures and Challenges Child** through "attachment- enhancing" activities.
 - a. **Engage-** Draw child into taking protection and care from adults and finding ways to enhance child's sense of belonging.
 - b. **Structure-** Help child to feel more secure through setting limits and creating routine.
 - c. **Nurture-** Build relationship with a child through doing art, play, cooking, respectful comforting touch, games, hair care, etc.
 - d. **Challenge-** Help child develop skills in expressing what his/her body and mind is communicating to him/her, shifting need to control others, trying to be flexible and acting with self-control.
8. **Be able to refresh oneself**, willing to share "mom" or "dad" roles with others in one's circle of support, keep a sense of humor and take regular breaks **away from** child.
Refuse to accept martyrdom as the price of parenting.