

# Promoting Positive Parenting: An Annotated Bibliography

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Editor's Note: As I was compiling this bibliography of books to promote positive parenting, my children's piano teacher called to say he was running late because of some problems with his very willful pre-schooler. He was immensely grateful when I said I had a few books to show him that might be useful. I hope that the families you work with will also find some of the books on this list helpful as they journey through various stages of child development and parenting.

Positive parenting is built on respect for children and helps develop self-esteem, inner discipline, self-confidence, responsibility, and resourcefulness. Positive parenting is also good for parents: parents feel good about parenting well. It builds a sense of dignity. Positive parenting can be learned. Understanding normal development is a first step, so that parents can distinguish common behaviors in a stage of development from "problems." Central to positive parenting is developing thoughtful approaches to child guidance that can be used in place of anger, manipulation, punishment, and rewards. Support for developing creative and loving approaches to meet special parenting challenges, such as temperament, disabilities, separation and loss, and adoption, is sometimes necessary as well. This annotated bibliography offers resources to professionals helping parents and to parents wishing to develop positive parenting skills.

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The Family Matters section focuses on issues, information, and strategies relevant to working with families of pediatric patients. To suggest topics, obtain author guidelines, or to submit queries or manuscripts, contact Elizabeth Ahmann, ScD, RN; Section Editor; Pediatric Nursing; East Holly Avenue Box 56; Pitman, NJ 08071-0056; (856) 256-2300 or FAX (856) 256-2345.

here is no perfect parent. We are all human. At the same time, most parents have a desire to do their best. All parents would like to raise healthy, confident, happy children. Yet, there are times when parents are not sure how to approach a general or specific parenting issue in a way they would like, in a way that would provide clear and loving guidance while keeping the child's self-esteem intact. It is easy to react to situations and regret it later. It is easy to hurt or shame a child without meaning to. When this happens, parenting can feel frustrating and demoralizing.

Positive parenting is an approach that is built on respect for children and helps develop self-esteem, inner discipline, self-confidence, responsibility, and resourcefulness. Positive parenting is also good for parents: parents feel good about parenting well. It builds a sense of dignity. In this regard, Barbara Colorosa, author of *Kids are Worth Itl*, offers several tips for evaluating parenting techniques, paraphrased here: (a) Kids are worth the effort; (b) Parents should not treat a child in a way the parent would not want to be treated, and (c) Choose a course of action that leaves a child's and the parent's dignity intact.

Positive parenting can be learned. According to Elizabeth Pantley, author of Perfect Parenting, positive parenting approaches are "[B]ased on action, rather than reaction. Knowledge, rather than chance. Thoughtfulness, rather than Common sense, rather than nonsense.' Understanding normal development is key, so parents can distinguish common behaviors in a stage of development from "problems." Also important are learning and developing thoughtful approaches to child guidance that can be used in the place of anger, manipulation, punishment, and rewards. Constructive communication, setting clear expectations, meaningful praise, and the use of consequences and other non-punitive approaches to discipline are some of these approaches. Support for developing creative and loving approaches to meeting special parenting challenges are sometimes necessary as well.

This annotated bibliography highlights selected books and authors that have contributed to the popular literature on positive parenting, parenting approaches that will leave both parents and children feeling good about themselves and each other.

### **Understanding Normal Development**

All parents benefit from understanding normal development and having a ready reference to help distinguish stages from problems. Some of these books focus solely on development. Others are more comprehensive, also addressing common health concerns. (Note: Several books by Dr. William Sears, listed in the section on Guidance and Discipline, can also serve as general reference books for parents, including – The Baby Book: Everything You Need to Know About Your Baby from Birth to Age Two; and Safe and Healthy: A Parent's Guide to Children's Illnesses and

Accidents).

Brazelton, T.B., & Greenspan, S.I. (2000). The irreducible needs of children: What every child must have to grow, learn, and flourish. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing.

Two highly regarded pediatricians address the critical and vulnerable stages of early childhood development by examining vital questions such as the types of nurturing interactions essential for infants and small children. While not a parenting guide, per se, this book addresses some fundamental philosophical and practical issues of importance for parents to consider.

Eisenberg, A., Murkoff, H.E., & Hathaway, S.E. (1996). What to expect the first year. New York: Workman

Publishing.

This book by the authors of the popular What to Expect When You're Expecting is a useful guide for boosting parental confidence. It begins with an overview of key issues in preparing for parenthood and caring for an infant. Additional chapters offer a detailed month-by-month guide addressing: common behaviors, what to expect at the check-up, feeding issues, common concerns, and important issues. Specific chapters address illness, first-aid, adoption, low birth-weight, and disabilities. Others address specific parenting issues such as the first postpartum days and fatherhood. A "Ready Reference" section offers recipes and a chart of common illnesses. Parents may not agree with all the advice, but much is useful.

The authors have also written a companion guide, What to expect the toddler years, which follows a similar format, addressing toddler care, health and safety, feeding, toileting, and other concerns.

Ames, L.B., Ilg, F., Haber, C. (1995). Your one-year-old: The fun-loving, fussy 12-to-24- month-old. New York: Doubleday.

This book is the first in the Gessell Institute Child Development Series by Dr. Ames and colleagues, recognized authorities on child behavior and development. This series of books offers accurate and detailed descriptions of each stage of child development. The thorough explanation of common behaviors will help parents both appreciate each stage and maintain realistic expectations. Many parents, picking up a book relating to their child's stage, will experience an "Ah ha!" recognition that their child's behavior is normal for that stage rather than a problem to address.

Other books in the series include: Your Two-Year-Old: Terrible or Tender; Your Three-Year- Old: Friend or Enemy; Your Four-Year-Old: Wild and Wonderful; Your Five-Year-Old: Sunny and Serene; Your Six-Year-Old: Loving and Defiant; Your Seven-Year-Old: Life in a Minor Key; Your Eight-Year-Old: Lively and Outgoing; Your Nine-Year-Old: Thoughtful and Mysterious; and Your Ten to Fourteen-Year-Old.

Spock, B., & Parker, S.J. (1998). Dr. Spock's baby and child care (7th ed.) New York: Pocket Books.

Dr. Spock's book, originally copyrighted in 1945, has been a handbook to several generations of parents. This recent update and expansion of Spock's classic still begins very positively with Dr. Spock's comment: "You know more than you think you do." This encouraging attitude and the comprehensive range of topics addressed, covering infancy through adolescence, including parenting, behavioral, and medical issues, make this guide a useful reference for information-oriented parents or others needing a boost of confidence. Parents may not agree with all the advice.

### Guidance and Discipline

Many books address guidance and discipline. The books listed here were chosen for their positive approach and their

respect for both child and parent.

Brazelton, T.B. (1995). Touchpoints: Your child's emotional and behavioral development. Reading MA: Perseus Books.

In this bestseller, Dr. Brazelton, an internationally-known expert on child development, addresses the basic stages of early childhood and offers information on recognizing, understanding, preventing, and defusing common challenges in the development of the young child such as allergies, feeding problems, hospitalization, sleep problems, and toilet training.

Cline, F., & Fay, J. (1990). Parenting with love and logic: Teaching children responsibility. Colorado Springs,

CO: Navpress.

This psychiatrist/educator team aim to help parents raise responsible children while enjoying the process of parenting. The book is divided into two parts. The first part, which includes eight chapters, describes the general principles and approaches recommended by the authors. Chapters address such topics as: children's mistakes are their opportunities, setting limits through thinking words, gaining control through choices, and empathy with consequences. In this section, the authors also offer 26 "tips" neatly boxed for quick reference. Part two consists of 41 short chapters, each addressing a common parenting concern with tips on how to apply the book's principles to that issue. While parents may not agree with each suggestion, this book offers much food for thought.

Cline and Fay have authored several other books, including a similar guide to the teen years: Parenting Teens with Love and Logic: Preparing Adolescents for Responsible

Adulthood.

Colorosa, B. (1995). Kids are worth it! Giving your child the gift of inner discipline. New York: Avon Books.

Colorosa's approach to parenting is based on a strongly held respect for children and a view that a clear parenting philosophy can help guide one's actions. In all of her works, she distinguishes three styles of families: jellyfish, brickwall, and backbone – and offers suggestions that encourage developing the latter, a family style that is firm yet flexible and creates a backbone for raising healthy and confident children. Colorosa is humorous – consider chapter titles such as "Bedtime Doesn't Have to Be a Nightmare" – yet thorough in explaining her philosophy and reasons for recommended strategies. She offers inspiration by using quotations from wise persons throughout the ages, ranging from Aristotle to Maurice Sendak. This book is a thoughtful and practical guide to parenting children of all ages.

A Pocket Guide to Kids are Worth It! might interest parents who have limited time to read. An audiocassette version of the book, titled Discipline: Kids are Worth It, was published in 1983 but is currently out of print. Colorosa also has a dynamic and entertaining lecture on videotape and audiocassette titled Winning at Parenting... Without Beating Your Kids. Finally, she is the author of two books on parent-

ing during difficult times (see following section).

Crary, E. (1993). Without spanking or spoiling: A practical approach to toddler and preschool guidance.

Seattle, WA: Parenting Press, Inc.

As the author says in chapter one, "This book is designed to make the time parents and children spend together more enjoyable for both" (p. 7). Several approaches to child guidance are blended into this practical guide for parents of toddlers and pre-schoolers. Over 100, 000 copies of this book have been sold, and it is no surprise, given both the clear descriptions of how to handle common developmental challenges faced by all parents and the author's obvious enjoyment of children and of parenting.

Crary's 365 Wacky, Wonderful Ways to Get Your Children to do What You Want is another of her books for parents of young children, offering practical (and fun) ideas to help parents cope with the challenging behaviors of the toddler and pre-school set. The suggestions set the stage for parenting older children as well. Her Magic Tools for Raising Kids is a short, easily-read book, illustrated with common examples and cartoons, addressing key aspects of positive parenting that can be applied in various developmental stages. In this succinct text, Crary covers the following parenting strategies: looking for good behavior, avoiding problems, setting reasonable limits, acknowledging feelings, reducing power struggles, distinguishing a stage from a problem, and problem-solving in action.

Faber, A., & Mazlish, E. (1999). How to talk so kids will listen and listen so kids will talk. New York: Avon

Books.

This book begins humorously: "I was a wonderful parent before I had children." Faber and Mazlish are instructive and entertaining as they share tips for positive parent-child communication. Chapters in this book address: helping children deal with their feelings, engaging cooperation, alternatives to punishment, encouraging autonomy, praise, freeing children from playing roles. Short sections in each chapter that are accompanied by examples, practice exercises, concise summaries, and cartoons illustrating key strategies make the book's content easy to read, digest, and put into practice.

Faber and Mazlish are also authors of the best-selling Siblings Without Rivalry, an indispensable and easy-to-read guide for parents wishing to reduce friction between siblings in their family. Their most recent book is How to Talk so Kids Can Learn: At Home and in School. Their first book was Liberated Parents – Liberated Children: Your Guide to a Happier Family.

Glenn, H.S., & Nelsen, J. (2000). Raising self-reliant children in a self-indulgent world. Rocklin, CA: Prima

Publishing.

These authors offer clear guidance and straightforward approaches to parenting designed to encourage confidence, competence, and responsibility in children. Chapters address developing strong perceptions of personal capabilities, fostering perceptions of personal significance, fostering perceptions of personal significance, fostering perceptions of personal control over the environment, fostering strong intrapersonal skills, fostering systemic skills, and fostering strong judgmental skills. Parents of older children will be grateful for examples that go through the teen years.

Gordon, T. (2000). Parent effectiveness training. New

York: Three Rivers Press.

Thomas Gordon has won a number of awards for his outstanding contributions to psychology and parenting. This book is a recently revised version of his earlier, classic work of the same title. *Parent Effectiveness Training*, also called P.E.T., began nearly 40 years ago as the first national parent training program to focus on improved family communication and conflict resolution. Its approaches remain relevant and useful to parents today.

Kurcinka, M.S. (2000). Kids, parents, and power struggles: Winning for a Lifetime. New York: HarperCollins.

Influenced by Daniel Goldman's Emotional Intelligence, Kurcinka takes a thoughtful, informative, and entertaining look at the seemingly inevitable problem of power struggles in family life. This book examines causes of power struggles and addressed the need to understand, recognize, and deal with parent and child temperament and emotions underlying these struggles. Kurcinka's approach emphasizes viewing power struggles as opportunities to teach children

important life-skills – how to manage strong emotions and how to constructively solve problems.

Nelsen, J., & Lott, L. (2000). Positive discipline for teenagers: Empower your teens and yourself through kind and firm parenting. Rocklin, CA: Prima Publishing.

Many books address positive approaches to parenting younger children. Fewer resources exist to help parents negotiate the teen years. Nelson and Lott introduce their book, part of a series of books on positive discipline, by saying: "[W]e wrote a book to help parents educate, challenge, and support their young people in an atmosphere of mutual respect, which affirms the self-worth of youth and parents." The first section of the book explains the teen years and the importance of individuation, so that parents understand the developmental changes occurring in this stage. Non-punitive parenting is addressed in chapters that discuss parenting approaches that are not helpful, such as control and punishment, and parenting skills that are valuable, such as nurturing individuation, teaching life skills, communication, and letting go. A third section offers guidance for drug use and other dysfunctional teen behavior. Parents may not agree with every suggestion offered, but they will find a great deal of value in this book, as well as the entire Positive Discipline series.

Samalin, N. (1998). Loving your child is not enough: Positive discipline that works. New York: Penguin

Books.

Samalin's book begins with a chapter most parents would love: Avoiding Daily Battles. Choosing which battles to fight, how to handle non-negotiable issues without confrontation, how to get children to listen, and how to involve children in solving everyday problems are some examples of practical strategies the author offers. Lots of examples and sample dialogues illustrate common problems and offer approaches to addressing them. In other chapters, Samalin addresses concerns such as: difficulties in limit setting, why punishment doesn't work, the use of consequences, dealing with anger, the fallacy of constructive criticism, and sibling issues.

Loving Your Child is Not Enough is available in print and on audiotape. Samalin has also written Loving Each One Best: A Caring and Practical Approach to Raising Siblings.

Sears, W., & Sears, M. (2001). The attachment parenting book: A common sense guide to understanding and nurturing your baby. New York: Little, Brown and

Company.

This doctor/nurse, husband/wife team have been writing about parenting for years. They offer advice and information on pregnancy and parenting issues. Dr. Sears writes a column for *Parenting* magazine, is frequently interviewed on television, and his Web site, www.askdrsears.com, shares much helpful parenting advice.

Nearly 20 years ago the Sears coined the term "attachment parenting" as an approach to parenting based on careful reading of a baby's cues and appropriate responses to them. This book describes attachment parenting, outlines its benefits, and details key parenting strategies that the Sears used themselves in parenting their eight children.

Dr. Sears, sometimes with his wife, has authored many other helpful parenting books over the years. Their titles

include:

25 Things Every New Mother Should Know

Becoming a Father

Growing Together: A Parent's Guide to Baby's First Year
 The Breastfeeding Book: Everything You Need to Know

about Nursing Your Child from Birth through Weaning

The Baby Book: Everything You Need to Know about

Your Baby from Birth to Age Two

 Parenting the Fussy Baby and the High-Need Child: Everything You Need to Know from Birth to Age Five (see below)

Night-Time Parenting

- The Discipline Book: Everything You Need to Know to Have a Better-Behaved Child, from Birth to Age Ten
- Creative Parenting: How to Use the Concept of Attachment Parenting to Raise Children Successfully from Birth to Adolescence
- The A.D.D. Book: New Understandings, New Approaches to Parenting Your Child (see below)

 Safe and Healthy: A Parent's Guide to Children's Illnesses and Accidents

 The Family Nutrition Book: Everything You Need to Know about Feeding Your Children, from Birth though Adolescence

Dr. Sears has also authored a number of books jointly with Elizabeth Pantley, including *Perfect Parenting* and *Hidden Messages*.

## Special Parenting Challenges

Numerous books for parents have been written that address children's special medical, developmental, and emotional needs. Others address family transitions, such as divorce, death, and adoption. Many include quality, helpful information and would be of great benefit for parents in understanding and addressing these challenges. This small selection of books was chosen because the authors address how to parent in challenging circumstances, and how to do so in a way that benefits the child, parent, and family as a whole.

Challenging temperament

Kurcinka, M.S. (1998). Raising your spirited child: A guide for parents whose child is more intense, sensitive, perceptive, persistent, energetic. New York: HarperCollins.

This book will be indispensable to some parents who cannot understand or manage a child who has a challenging temperament. Kurcinka describes temperamental traits that can be challenging to parents and offers simple scales

for evaluating a child on each trait.

She masterfully reframes difficult temperamental traits in positive language. For example, in the book's title itself, she chooses the term "spirited" instead of the term "difficult" child. This reframing can help parents. The book is filled with many practical suggestions for families that can increase parental competence and confidence, help children with challenging temperaments, and smooth out family life in the face of these challenges. A companion volume, the Raising Your Spirited Child Workbook, may also be helpful to parents.

Sears, W., & Sears, M. (1996). Parenting the fussy baby and the high-need child: Everything you need to know from birth to age five. New York: Little Brown &

Company.

This book is useful for the parent of a fussy, difficult, or high-needs child. Having parented their own "fussy baby" and having worked for years in a pediatrics practice, the Sears can offer wisdom from experience. The authors help parents see the child with a challenging temperament in a positive light and offer a wealth of practical advice for understanding, respecting, and helping the high-needs child from infancy through the preschool years. The book addresses: why babies fuss and what to do about it, the importance of early recognition of infant temperament, the interaction between infant and parental temperaments, and how parenting style can affect the child's personality development.

As the authors say in the preface to the book: "A fussy baby can bring out the best and worst in a parent. This book is designed to bring out the best."

Selected developmental and emotional issues

Good, J.D., & Reis, J.G. (1985). A special kind of parenting: Meeting the needs of handicapped children. Franklin Park, IL: La Leche League.

This book is old but valuable for its point of view. In a caring tone, the authors share how to cope with unmet expectations, how to develop strategies for daily life, how to allow love to grow, how to meet the needs of all family members, and how to work as a team member with health care professionals. The authors address some developmental needs of children across the years from preschool through adolescence. The title could be updated, and the section on hospitalization could be updated to reflect newer, more familycentered practices, but many of the tips for parents remain valuable.

Sears, W., & Thompson, L. (1998). The A.D.D. book: New understandings, new approaches to parenting your

child. New York: Little, Brown & Company.

As an increasing number of children are diagnosed with attention deficit disorder (ADD), an increasing number of books are available on the subject. This collaboration between a pediatrician and psychologist is among the very best of the books. A thorough discussion of ADD is offered, and chapters address medications, neurofeedback, nutrition, and other approaches for managing ADD. At the same time, the authors offer extensive guidance on effective parenting for the child with ADD. In-depth chapters address understanding and steering development, strategies for improving behavior, setting up the family for success, and helping the child to maximize school success. As in other books by Dr. Sears, the parenting advice is clear and positive in its approach.

Colorosa, B. (2000). Parenting through crisis: Helping kids in times of loss, grief, and change. New York:

HarperResource.

In this book, the author of the international best-selling Kids are Worth It! offers parents guidance on helping children through various crises. This book offers a general approach to crisis, which consists of time, affection, and optimism (the "T.A.O. of Family"), and illustrates its application to common major and minor family crises. Suggestions are offered for helping children at each developmental stage respond to death, illness, divorce, adoption, blended families, and the less major crises the author calls "Mistakes, Mischief, and Mayhem." Colorosa has also authored a similar title – Through the Rough Times: Parenting with Wit and Wisdom in Times of Chaos and Loss.

Foster care and adoption
Delaney, R.J. (1998). Fostering changes. Oklahoma City,

OK: Wood 'N' Barnes.

This book and several others by Delaney, including *Troubled Transplants* and *Healing Power of the Family*, offer help to parents of emotionally disturbed foster children. Delaney explains why foster parents often feel stymied in their attempts to connect with children who have been abused, neglected, and/or abandoned. Attachment and bonding issues are addressed, and a framework for treatment is offered. The book is filled with rich examples from various case studies. *Fostering Changes* provides an overview of common problems, while Delaney's other books address strategies in more detail.

continued on page 401

Physical Medicine Rehabilitation, 77, 754-764.

Robinson, G.C., & Clarke, H.F. (1980). The hospital care of children. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rossen, B.E., & McKeever, P.D. (1996). The behavior of preschoolers during and after brief surgical hospitalizations. *Issues in Comprehensive Pediatric Nursing*, 19, 121-133.

Teichman, Y., Raphael, M.B., & Lerman, M. (1986). Anxiety reaction of hospitalized children. British Journal of Medical Psychology, 59, 375-382.

Thompson, R.H. (1986). Where we stand: Twenty years of research on pediatric hospitalization and health care. Children's Health Care, 14, 200-210.

Tiedeman, M.E. (1997). Anxiety responses of parents during and after the hospitalization of their 5- to 11-year-old children. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 12, 110-119.

Tiedeman, M.E., & Clatworthy, S. (1990). Anxiety responses of 5to 11-year-old children during and after hospitalization. Journal of Pediatric Nursing, 5, 334-343.

Vernon, D.T.S., Foley, J.M., Sipowicz, R.R., & Schulman, J.L. (1965). Psychological responses of children to hospitalization and illness. Springfield, MA: Charles C. Thomas.

Vernon, D.T.S., Schulman, J.L., & Foley, J.M. (1966). Changes in children's behaviors after hospitalization. American Journal of Diseases of Children, 111, 581-593.

Ziegler, D.B. & Prior, M.M. (1994). Preparation for surgery and adjustment to hospitalization. *Nursing Clinics of North America*, 29, 655-669.

Zimmerman, J.J. (1998). The pediatric critical care patient. In B.P. Furhman & J.J. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Pediatric critical care* (2nd ed.) (pp. 220-254). New York: Mosby.

# Family Matters

continued from page 385

Jewett, C.L. (1978) Adopting the older child. Boston: Harvard Common Press.

This book is considered a classic in the field. The author, an adoptive parent and family therapist, is well experienced in the issues she addresses. The book addresses the common transitions from the honeymoon phase through the testing phase and eventually to the child's full integration into the family. Practical guidance is offered for handling each transition in a way that is caring and respectful.

A more recent book on the topic with a slightly different approach is Tricia Maskew's *Our Own: Adopting and Parenting the Older Child*, considered by some to be an "essential" handbook for adopting older children.

Van Gulden, H., & Bartels-Rabb, L.M. (1995). Real parents, real children. NY: Crossroad/Herder & Herder.

This book has been called the "Dr. Spock of raising adopted children." The authors, who possess a thorough understanding of child development, share insight into common thoughts and feelings of adopted children. They address the ways in which adopted children grieve for their birth parents and offer parents guidance on helping their children achieve a healthy resolution of this grief. A best-seller among adoptive parents, this book can help boost parental confidence and help parents assist their children in living happy and healthy lives.

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