



## Parenting Today

Learning how to care for and nurture your child to become an emotionally strong and capable adult takes commitment, effort, support and some humour. To bring out the best in your child and family, we recommend a parenting approach known as 'responsive parenting'. This involves tuning in to your child's social, emotional and physical needs. You are being a responsive parent when you act promptly and match your actions to what your child is trying to communicate to you.

### What to Expect

- Whether you are parenting in a male-female couple, same-sex couple or single-parent family, there are challenges common to all families.
- Each parent brings their own experiences, values and beliefs about family life and parenting.
- It takes time to become confident in parenting.
- The early relationship you form with your child sets them up for life in terms of brain development and future relationship skills.

### Challenges

- Experiencing challenges in family life and parenting is common. Challenges include:
  - Financial pressures or adjustments.
  - Isolation.
  - Low parenting confidence.
  - Poor sleep.
  - Communication and relationship breakdown between parents.
  - 'Too high' expectations of yourself, child or partner.

### Parenting Tips

- Learn to read your child's verbal and non-verbal cues to respond appropriately to their needs.
- Occasionally you will misread your child's cues; this is normal.
- Discover what kind of family you want to be by defining your goals, beliefs and values.
- Develop family traditions, share responsibilities, and allow for moments of fun.
- Be open to advice, but remember every family is unique. What works for one doesn't always work for another.
- Parenting is about trying your best, not perfection.
- Healthy eating, sunshine, fresh air, time with friends and relaxing is good for everyone.
- Maintain friendships while making new social connections through parenting groups and supports.
- You are starting a new parenting partnership with your partner, so you'll need to negotiate how you're going to parent together as a team.
- Respectful and clear communication is key for couples. (Remember, you are both learning to manage the changes in your life).
- Tell your partner how you are feeling and listen to your partner. It's important to share how you're both feeling.
- Accept help or ask for support when needed.

### Safety

Seek help if:

- You are finding it hard to understand your child's cues.
- You aren't coping with parenting or there is ongoing conflict as you try to co-parent.
- You are finding it difficult to resolve common parenting challenges.