

CHALLENGING THE IDEA OF A 'PERFECT' PARENT

Parents have a set of beliefs about what makes a “good parent”. This often develops during childhood. Parents who had a safe, secure, happy childhood can look back on the way their parents treated them and try to behave in a similar manner.

But if childhood was difficult, it may have been hard to learn “good parenting” skills. Parents who had a difficult childhood may not want to treat their children the way they were treated, but may not be sure how to parent differently.

Sometimes, when there is a lot of pressure in people’s lives, being the parent you would like to be can be really difficult. Even if you know WHAT to do, the DOING can be difficult. People can be left feeling as though they are just not good enough if they find that they can’t DO what they believe they should.

Trying to be a perfect parent can lead to stress, disappointment, frustration, guilt and anger. Having similar expectations of a child will also cause many of these emotions.

Young babies can often be stressful to manage. However, no matter how stressful this is, it is really important to remember that little babies do not INTEND to frustrate you. Their crying and distress may be difficult to understand at times. Being there and just holding and rocking your baby is often all we can do. But doing this is A LOT.

All young children disobey, whine, complain, make a mess, become upset and argue with their parents at times. Having unrealistic expectations makes it harder to be a consistent, patient and attentive parent. It is important to be realistic about what we expect of our children.

This module helps you to identify your own parenting values and beliefs, determine where these beliefs came from and whether these are realistic. The goal of this module is to find the evidence to support the two statements below.

Right now, what can you think of to support these statements:

“I am a parent who can provide a safe and loving home to help my child be the best they can be.”

“My child – baby is a wonderful little person.”

Consider the following questions:

Are your children growing and developing to be the best that they can be?
What are there challenges?

Do you tend to look at other parents or caregivers and think that you are not good enough?

What strengths do you have that are really important that you, or other people, don't always recognise?