

The PuP FAMILY FRAMEWORK

Parenting Under Pressure

Parents Under Pressure is a program designed to help parents who are experiencing high levels of stress when raising their children. The program helps families build safe and nurturing relationships to make a strong foundation from which children can thrive. There are many reasons why parenting can be difficult. For some people, knowing what to do as a parent can be challenging, managing emotions while trying to manage family life can be stressful and juggling demands of work, family and health complex. Feelings of sadness or hopelessness will also make parenting difficult, as does ongoing stress.

All children are different, and each is special

You may be a parent of a very young baby or have lots of young children to raise. Whatever your particular situation, every child needs to know that they are special and loved.

The different influences on parents

There are a lots of reasons parenting can feel hard:

Children: All children are different, and some have behaviours that are more difficult to manage than others. Some babies sleep longer than others or seem easier to settle. This can make early parenthood tough at times.

Ourselves: At times strong emotions such as depression, anxiety or anger can be hard to control. Children need to have parents who can manage their emotions. At times this is difficult for parents and therefore extra help in learning how to manage emotions can make this task easier.

Supports: It is very difficult to be a good parent on your own. Without supportive friends or family to turn to, the job is harder and at times lonely.

Stress/hassles: Coping with the big problems (money, legal problems), as well as every day hassles, is emotionally draining. If these are left unsolved and build up over time, small problems can become crises. Sometimes life can feel overwhelming and it is difficult to know where to start to make things better. This is why we have come up with the PuP Family Framework. It is a way of looking at each part of your family life to identify what is going well, and where the challenges are. This will be different for each family.

STARTING YOUR PUP JOURNEY

The start of the PuP Journey begins with learning more about you and your family. We will talk to you about your family, ask you to spend some time playing with your child, and completing some checklists and questionnaires. We then share this information and work with you to identify the areas of challenge and the areas of strength.

Your child's development and functioning

It is important to know whether your child's development is on track. This includes growing as they should, learning the physical tasks and the thinking and language skills that are appropriate for their age. Showing connections to others that is also age appropriate.

Identifying areas of strength is as important as discussing areas of concern. Have you been able to talk this through with your PuP therapist? Perhaps also consider filling in a questionnaire to see how your child is tracking with their behaviour and emotional development. Your PuP therapist will give you feedback on this.

Your relationship with your child

Discuss the following with your PuP therapist: What kind of relationship do you have with my child or baby. Do you really understand his/her feelings and emotions or do I find these confusing at times? Are you able to show that you love your child? How do you do this? And what does your child do to show that you are important to him/her – special smiles, hugs, times where you are a source of joy or comfort?

Spend time playing with your child. Make a movie of this play session so that you can look at it with your PuP therapist.

Complete the questionnaire about your relationship with your child.

Your parenting values and expectations of your children

What is important to you as a parent?

What kind of person would you like your child to grow up to be? Think about your child in 10 years time – how would you like them to be?

How does this fit with your values?

Family Routines

Do you have family routines – does your child know what these are? Can you describe them?

Your wellbeing

Think about your own wellbeing – maybe fill in a questionnaire that helps you think about your mood and emotional wellbeing. There are several that you can complete as part of the PuP program and your PuP therapist will give you feedback on these.

Connections to family and community

Connection to family and community is really important for your family and you. Think about your connection to community – culture – faith. Are there relationships that you would like to make stronger?

Real world problems

There are lots of problems that are difficult to solve: housing, significant money troubles, court cases..... But there are also problems that we can think more about managing better. Discuss this with your PuP therapist.