



Your family matters

Being part of a family matters, but more importantly being part of a *healthy* family matters. The way that your family functions, as well as your home environment, plays a critical role in the shaping of your emotional wellbeing. The relationships that we experience in our day to day lives, has a direct impact on our future relationships.

Families with healthy relationships provides love and security, trust, confidence, responsibility, and independence. Families tend to share common goals and work with each other to reach these goals, while still taking each individual and their personal goals into consideration.

To be part of a family is critical for a child, and a healthy family is the best environment that one could give a child to develop and thrive. A family provides a secure emotional base where a child can feel loved and accepted.

Being surrounded by people who can offer emotional support, security, and safety, can help children to navigate the ups and downs of their life. Therefore, it is important to make it a priority to strengthen your family's relationships.

Why do children need a family?

Children need a sense of consistency, predictability, safety and belonging. Families can meet those needs, by setting rules, boundaries, and standards of behaviour.

Family offers support

It is important for family members to offer their support when someone is going through a difficult situation. Having support from your family during challenging times can help to guide you in the right direction.

Important life lessons

Having a role model or mentor to look up to, can make big challenges in a child's life more manageable, by knowing that they have someone to turn to for advice.

Family supports mental health

Being part of a family can protect your emotional wellbeing by providing elements such as companionship, emotional support, and economic security. Family can be associated with physical health, psychological wellbeing, and low mortality. One study found that, considering every other risk factor for death that we know, including physical health status, rates of all-cause mortality are twice as high among people who are not part of a family as people who are part of a family

Children learn how to deal with their emotions in a healthy way by modelling coping skills in their home environment.

Why is it important to keep your family healthy?

Communication is what creates families. When family members communicate, they do more than send messages to each other – they enact their relationships. Effective communication, or a lack thereof, can be the difference between a healthy and unhealthy family.

It all comes down to the fact, that good family communication is important because we often turn to our family for support. If members of a family aren't talking to each other, it can cause a family to fall apart. Therefore, it is important for family members and especially for children, to know that they can turn to each other for emotional support.

When thinking about Family Awareness Month, we often limit ourselves by just thinking about our immediate family, but rather, we should start to think about the term *family* in terms of *community*. A community is a group of people with something in common.

The American author and psychotherapist, Virginia Satir, once said that “*If we can heal the family, we can heal the world.*” A healthy family starts with healthy individuals, which can lead to healthy communities and can so contribute to heal our beautiful country.

“If we can heal the family, we can heal the world.”

– Virginia Satir

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https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_your_social_life_might_help_you_live_longer

<https://www.all4kids.org/news/blog/the-role-of-family-in-child-development/#:~:text=Through%20this%20socialization%20with%20family,and%20strengthened%20with%20the%20family.>

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/how-to-support-your-childs-mental-health-5208688>