



Model leadership in parenting

At different times in our lives we will all be expected to stand up and show leadership in some way or another. You might not have the official title that says you are in charge, but you can still be called upon to show leadership to work together towards meaningful and worthwhile outcomes. It might be to help others find ways ahead when they are feeling down or have lost their way. Sometimes it might be to stand up for what is right. It is not about being able to boss people around.

As parents we can prepare our children to develop his or her potential as a leader by demonstrating leadership ourselves.



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1. The capacity to care for others, show empathy and compassion and to relate to what others are experiencing are fundamental qualities of leadership. An important parenting behaviour is to look your child in the eye when you are experiencing positive emotions, rejoicing in good behaviour, or negative emotions such as disgust with bad behaviour.
2. As parents we need to model a respectful self-care (not self-love). Positive self-esteem means that we learn to deal realistically with the challenges of life and accept ourselves as a real person rather than craving for some escapist dream or Facebook image, or even trying to live out some unrealised dream of our parents. If we model this, our children will learn to accept themselves and to be able to express their natural personality with confidence and to grow and build on their natural strengths and interests in social settings.
3. As a parent you should support your child's confidence in working out how to tackle everyday challenges; build their capacity to support their friends in a genuine way; encourage their willingness to take on new tasks or challenges; teach them how to learn from setbacks and mistakes and build their capacity to be in touch with his or her emotions, to be able to communicate how he or she is feeling in an appropriate way to others.

At the end of the day, leaders are able to influence because followers see that the leader has self-respect and respects others as fellow human beings. It is from this basis that the leader-follower relationship begins.

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