



How to help when your child is struggling

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The hardest challenge as parents is sitting with your child's distress!

Acknowledge Feelings

Validate your child's emotions, even if you don't understand or agree with them.

Be Present

Stay calm and offer support. It's not about fixing, but being there.

Making the decision to have a child
-it's momentous.
It is to decide forever to
have your heart go walking around
outside your body.

Elizabeth Stone



Spot the Signs

Recognize when your child is struggling

1

2

When the Struggle is Healthy and When it's Not

Understanding the difference between necessary and unhealthy struggles

3

The Parent's Role: Empowering Your Child

Ways you can help and empower your child

4

Create a Positive Home Environment

Supporting your child's needs while also caring for your own wellbeing

5

Collaborate with School

Tips for effective communication with your child's school

6

Find the Right Resources

When and how to seek external support to help your child



How to Know When Your Child is Struggling



Trust Your Instincts

Parents often sense problems before they're verbalized. Notice changes in behavior or mood.



Open Communication

Use phrases like "I've noticed that..." to start conversations. Be curious, not judgmental.



Warning Signs

Watch for emotional outbursts, withdrawal, school refusal, or academic changes.



When Struggle is Healthy vs. Unhealthy

Healthy Struggles

Normal challenges build resilience. Children learn problem-solving through disappointments and setbacks.

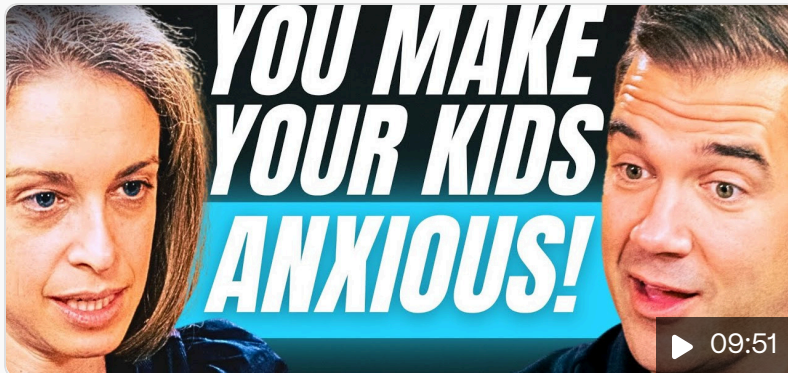
These experiences develop coping skills and emotional (regulation) strength when supported appropriately.

Unhealthy Struggles

Intervention is needed when struggles impact daily functioning. Watch for effects on school performance, friendships, or emotional wellbeing.

Children may directly ask for help or show persistent signs of distress.



(Duration, Intensity)



 YouTube

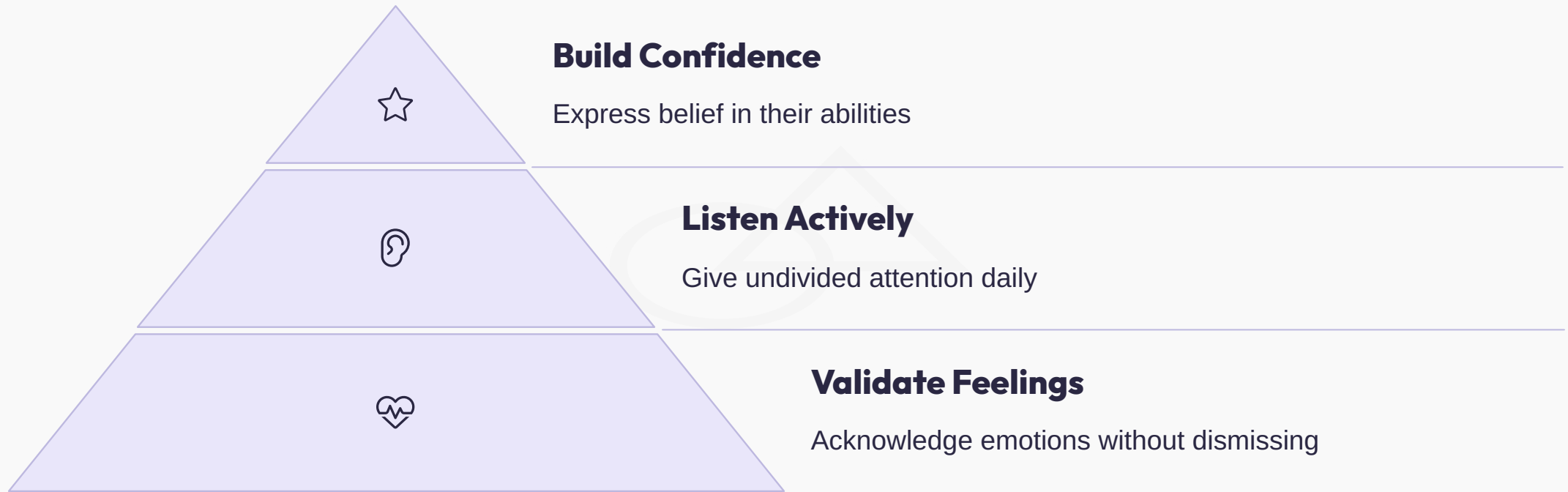


It's NOT Your Job to Make Your Kid Happy | Dr Becky Kennedy

 Get my NEW book, Make Money Easy! <https://lewishowes.com/moneyyou> 

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The Parent's Role: Empowering Your Child



Parents are guides, not problem-solvers. Being in the "passenger seat" rather than the "driver's seat" helps children develop independence.

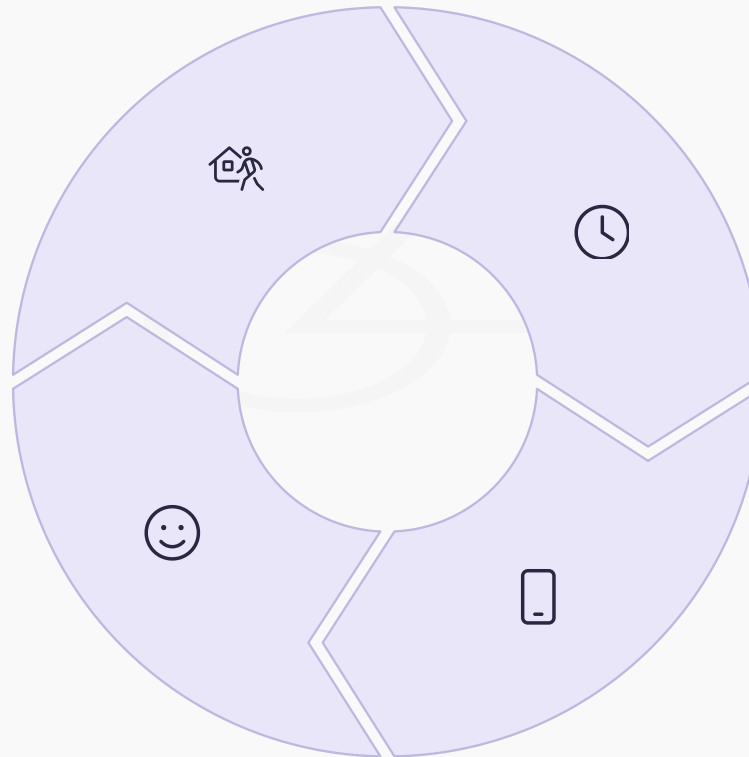
Creating a Positive Home Environment

Connection First

Prioritize relationships over tasks

Encourage Play

Make time for joy and unstructured activities



Balanced Schedule

Avoid overscheduling at the cost of connection

Tech Boundaries

Set clear limits on device usage



Navigating School Communication



Gather Information

Collect details about concerns from your child, teachers, and school mental health staff.



Establish Partnership

Approach teachers, counselors, and administrators as allies in supporting your child.



Communication is Key

Consistent and open communication between school staff, outside providers, and families.



Wrap Around Support

Most effective outcomes involve wrap around support where everyone is working together in support of the child.



Seeking External Support

Crisis Resources

- Call **988** for any mental health crisis
- Call **211** for immediate mobile crisis assessments
- **Wellmore Urgent Crisis Care** (alternate assessment to ER)
- **Kids in Crisis** - 24 hotline
- **74141** text crisis line

Professional Help

- **Psychology Today therapist finder**
- Pediatrician referrals
- **Wilton Youth Services** (Social Services)
- **Resources to Recover**



Key Takeaways



Trust Your Instincts

You know your child best. Notice changes and respond with compassion.



Connection Is Key

Spend quality time together. Ten minutes of undivided attention daily makes a difference.



Balance Support

Guide without trying to fix. Help children develop their own problem-solving skills.



Seek Help When Needed

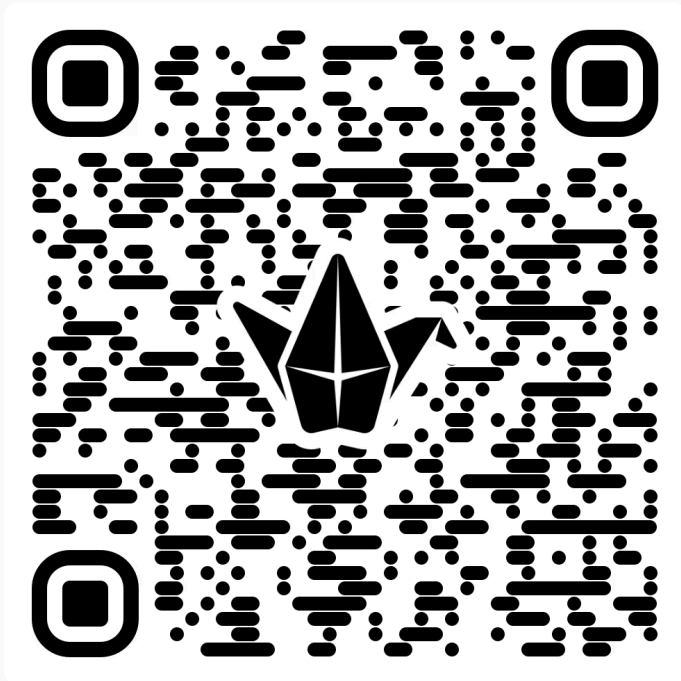
Don't hesitate to use available resources when struggles affect daily functioning.

Resources for Parents

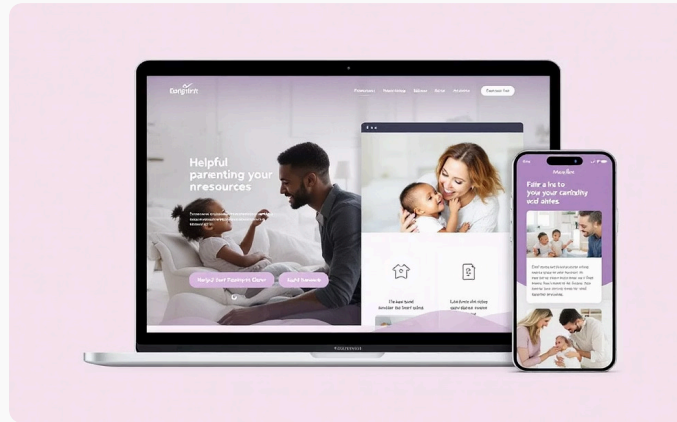


Recommended Books

- See List [linked here](#) or QR code



These trusted resources offer practical strategies for supporting children through difficult times. Many are available through your local library or online.



Online Resources

- Dr. Laurie Santos, [The Science of Well-Being for Parents](#) (launching May 1st)
- [New Canaan Behavioral Alliance](#)
- [Child Mind Institute](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Let Grow](#)
- [School Avoidance Alliance](#)
- [Plan4children](#) CT roadmap for behavioral healthcare



Community Support

- Local parent support groups
 - [NAMI](#) of Southwestern CT
 - [Triangle Community Center](#)
- School-based parent education workshops (DBT)
- Parent coaching services
- [Wilton Youth Council](#)

Contact Us



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