




PARENT WORKSHOP



 **HELPING
YOUR CHILD
NAVIGATE
BIG
FEELINGS &
BUILD
RESILIENCE**



HELPING YOUR CHILD NAVIGATE BIG FEELINGS & BUILD RESILIENCE

- Children's Mental Health Week theme: "Know Yourself, Grow Yourself"
- Strengthening emotional understanding & relationships
- **Key message:** Connection matters more than perfection
- **Icebreaker:** *Think of a time when you felt truly understood. How did it impact you?*



THE SCIENCE OF EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

Good Enough Parenting (Tronick, 2008): 30% attunement builds secure attachment

Rupture & Repair: Missteps happen—repair builds resilience

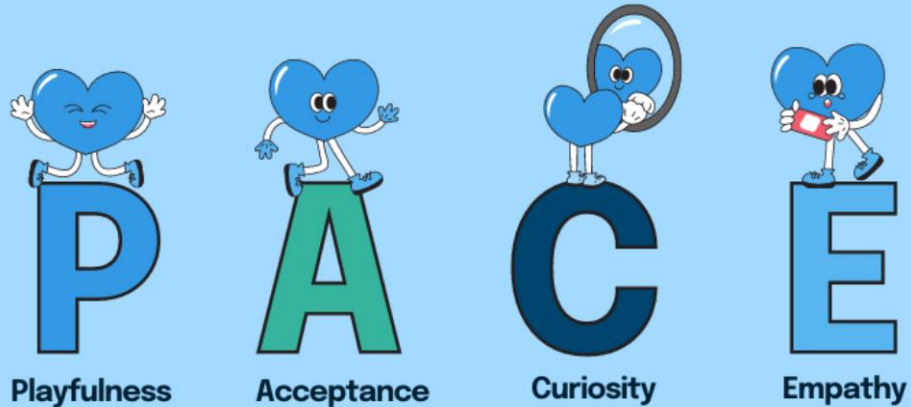
The Gift of Imperfection: Mistakes don't harm children—repair teaches emotional growth

Discussion: Have you ever repaired a moment with your child?



INTRODUCTION TO PACE

Building strong relationships with the PACE Model



- Developed by **Dan Hughes** to strengthen parent-child relationships
- **PACE = Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy**
- Helps children feel emotionally safe and understood
- Small, daily moments of connection make the biggest impact

PLAYFULNESS

"Playfulness is about joy, delight, and unconditional warmth. It's how we tell children: 'I enjoy you, just as you are.'"

Pros:

- Keeps interactions light and engaging
- Reduces tension and helps children open up

Examples:

- Instead of *"Hurry up!"* → Try *"Let's be race cars zooming to the door!"*
- Instead of *frustration over mess* → Try *"Oops! The juice escaped! Let's catch it!"*
- **Getting ready struggles?** *"Let's race to see who can put on their shoes first!"*
- **Brushing teeth resistance?** *"Uh-oh, is there a grumpy monster hiding in your mouth? Let's chase it away!"*
- **Discussion:** When have you used playfulness to shift a tricky moment?



ACCEPTANCE

Validates feelings without needing to "fix" them

Helps children feel safe expressing emotions

Examples:

Instead of *"You're fine, it's okay, you don't need to cry."* → Try *"It looks like that really upset you. That makes sense."*

Discussion: How can we show acceptance, even when emotions seem overwhelming?

Key takeaway: *"Children who feel their emotions are accepted are more willing to talk about them rather than act them out."*



"Acceptance means acknowledging emotions without trying to fix them. It reassures children that their feelings make sense, even if we don't agree with their behaviour."

CURIOSITY



Wonder about feelings rather than assuming or reacting

Helps children reflect and communicate

Examples:

Instead of *"Why are you angry?"* → Try *"I wonder if something upset you today?"*

Practice: How would you respond to *"I hate school!"* with curiosity?





EMPATHY

Feeling *with* your child, not solving or reassuring

Brené Brown: Empathy vs. Sympathy

Examples:

Instead of *"It's not a big deal."* → Try *"That sounds really tough. I'm here."*

Discussion: When has feeling truly heard made a difference to you?





BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

- You don't need to "get it right" all the time—just be present
- **Ways to use PACE:**
- **Morning routines** – Playfulness starts the day on a positive note
- **Difficult moments** – Use curiosity instead of frustration
- **Bedtime** – Offer empathy and connection

COMMON CHALLENGES & Q&A

"What if my child
won't talk?" →
Playfulness &
curiosity invite
conversation

"What if I lose
patience?" →
Repair matters
more than
mistakes

"How do I manage
my own
frustration?" →
Self-care helps
parents show up
with PACE

Discussion: Which
PACE element
feels easiest for
you? Which is
hardest?

FINAL THOUGHTS & NEXT STEPS

1

Parenting is about
connection, not
perfection

2

Try one element of
PACE this week—see
what happens!

3

Thank you for coming!
Your presence already
makes a difference 