



The Pandemic Parenting Guide

THE PARENT COACH
NAAMA CAMERON, M.S.

Building a Healthy Family Dynamic

The Parenting Guide

Hi there, I am Naama - the Parent Coach and Child Behavior Specialist you're looking for. I'm so excited that you've taken this step to better your family dynamic and relationship with your children. Family is at the core of everything we do and now more than ever is important to strengthen and teach values that last a lifetime. For as long as I remember, I knew I had a gift with children. Friends and family always called me "the child whisperer" and now I love helping other parents reap the benefits of my knowledge and gift!

From high profile/celebrity parents to your "average" parent next door, my approach allows me to be flexible with my techniques to accommodate your individual family needs. Being a very happy mommy (and yes I want to be called mommy for as long as possible) of two kids further reiterated and emphasized the techniques, expertise, and knowledge that I have accumulated and used with so many families. And because I have two beautiful children of my own, I truly do understand the emotional roller coaster of parenting.



The purpose of this e-book is to walk you through simple, approachable tools that ACTUALLY work. As a parent I can attest to the lack of time to read an entire book or attend yet another virtual class to better my parenting skills. This ebook is designed to work at your own pace and allows you to pause, reflect, implement, change and try again. I cannot wait to help you and your children have loving, healthy relationships with everyone around them.

What is a parent coach anyways? Great question! My job is to help bring out YOUR best qualities as a parent and create a balanced, healthy and most importantly, POSITIVE family life! We start with the basics and work through what a day in the life of your household looks like, challenges you incur, obstacles that make life difficult and your goals for your home. My goal is not to change the dynamic of your household entirely, because if we are being realistic that's not going to create long term habits. Instead, we will set realistic expectations and goals for your family that are achievable and worth celebrating.

Starting small is key. What small steps can we take to move towards a healthier relationship with your kids? What are simple tweaks we can make in your response to your child's temper tantrum? How can we take care of you to ensure your family gets the best version of you that day? After all, I am your parent COACH! I'm here to coach you through this crazy life we call parenting! With that being said, I can't wait to provide simple, effective tips for becoming the best parent you can be through this e-book. Let's dive in!



Take this page to reflect.

What do you like most about your current family dynamic?

What is working for your family?

What is a current struggle you are working through as a parent?

What is the root of that struggle? (Be honest with yourself.
Not sure? That's okay too!)

What is one simple, achievable goal I can set for myself to reach my goal?



Take a moment to think about your children. Sometimes we tend to think of our kids as just that - KIDS. In reality, our children's minds are chaotic and constantly absorbing everything around them. What sort of example are you modeling for your children? Think of your children as your personal sponges. They are constantly absorbing- do you allow them the opportunity to fully process everything they have absorbed? This is where we find temper tantrums and over expression of emotion.

Since the time we were children we have been taught to suppress our emotions, act our age and not throw a fit when we can't have our way. While I'm not supporting allowing children to rule your household, it sets a double standard. As adults we can all agree that we have meltdowns, shed tears, wake up feeling grumpy, lash out when we disagree or feel unheard and that is okay! Why should the bar be any different for our children?

Being a purposeful parent means recognizing your child's emotions and taking an approach that comes from a place of love and holds intention. Let's walk through a real life example.



Example Scenario

Scenario: Dinner has been served. Your child has managed to make a mess and will not stop screaming. What do you do?

Option 1: You get frustrated that you just spent time making a meal and your child has managed to heighten your stress through their loud expression of emotion and manic behavior. Maybe you raise your voice, maybe you tell them to stop, maybe you remind them big kids sit still and eat their dinner or maybe you say nothing at all.

Reminder: Children have yet to learn how to articulate and express their emotions. Guide your child through their emotions by asking simple questions and making observations. Response Suggestion: When you scream it hurts my ears. I notice you are upset. Can you tell me in a calm voice why you are mad?

This response sparks a conversation, validates and acknowledges that your child is upset and reminds them that their actions are having an impact on you. Rather than invalidating their emotions by telling them to stop or giving them a negative punishment if they do not suppress how they are feeling, this method allows them the opportunity to discuss their feelings and reflect on why they may be acting this way. I recognize this method may seem counterintuitive as they are just kids but I can promise you'd be surprised at how far a question can go with your children.



Sometimes as parents we underestimate the intelligence and capabilities of our children. When you look at your children as just that, you are closing off the opportunity for them to flourish by expanding their skillset and independence. A crucial component of building a healthy relationship with your children is trust. Trust that your children can see a task through start to finish. Trust that your children can play independently for 10 minutes a day. Trust that your children can adapt to change. The second we start making excuses for our children by virtue of their age or life experience is when they stop growing. We've all heard the parallel. Talk to your children like you would an adult! Try it! When in a coaching situation with your child pause and ask yourself, how would I feel if I was told this? Let's walk through some examples.

Situation: You working on your phone and your child misbehaving.

Would you rather be told... "Stop it, I'm working" OR "When you misbehave it makes me frustrated. Can I offer you a coloring book or a puzzle for the next 30 minutes while I finish my work?"

Result: In this scenario, you explain that your child is misbehaving and how it makes you feel or how it is effecting you. Rather than providing no solution and simply shouting "NO!" you provide an alternative for the next 30 minutes,



While no situation is perfect, starting with this mindset shift while your child is young can make your life so much easier for years to come. Set the expectation with your children that you trust them to make good choices but remain present when guidance is needed. So often as parents we focus on the “don’ts” and forget to highlight the “do’s”! Encourage your children to do, not stop! This mindset can propel them further in life as they will be conditioned to find positive alternatives to things that may not work out in their favor.

Our jobs as parents never turn off. We are always on the clock!

That being said, setting healthy boundaries with your children can allow for breathing room, personal time and mutual respect. Never be afraid to tell your children your needs. We listen and tend to the needs of our children all day long- remind them of yours! Often starting your day with an intention or schedule can help keep the entire family aligned.

This does not have to be a huge production or anything fancy, rather a simple run through of what you have in mind for the day. Our children need to be reminded of things multiple times so this is an excellent way to establish a schedule, create expectations and build healthy boundaries with your children! Setting boundaries for your children does not mean you do not love them.

Exercise on the next page!



Reflection

What are some boundaries you can set with your children?

How would setting this boundary help you as a parent?

What is your goal in setting boundaries?

REMINDER: Setting boundaries does not mean you don't love your kids.



Practice makes perfect. Habits take days, weeks and sometimes months to form and that is okay! The goal is to consistently show up for your children and be a guiding force for them. Are you allowed to change your mind? Absolutely. Are you allowed to change the rules? Absolutely. Consistency is not about resisting change, rather, following through with the changes you say you're going to make. Being consistent in your expectations will allow your child to familiarize themselves with your parenting style and overall habits. This leads to a healthier relationship because guess what? Your child becomes aware of your predicted behaviors and most likely will act accordingly. If you are inconsistent in your decision making or parenting behaviors it further confuses your child.

Kids are not complicated! Most often children will continue the behavior that is reinforced or they are given attention for in your home. Behaviors that do not attract attention or are not reinforced will most likely dissolve. Remember, if you want your child to continue a behavior, reinforce it! If you want it to stop, ignore it or simply don't give it attention. This may require your form of a time-out or body break and that is okay!



Our children's brains are growing. Their minds are chaotic and are still in their formative years. Creating a consistent household will allow them to associate their parent(s) with behaviors they can expect, understand and anticipate. Creating a safe environment where there are no doubts about how or why their parent(s) might say something is imperative to a well balanced home. As a parent, being consistent may force you to fight the urge to lash out or possibly do something you normally wouldn't, however, the simple act of change and shifting your perspective will allow you to grow as a parent. What more can we ask for than to be a conscious, mindful parent that is actively working towards a happier, healthier home?

Ask Yourself...

Are you consistent with the expectations you set for yourself?

Are you consistent with the expectations you set for your children?

(If yes) What allows you to be consistent?

(If no) What keeps you from being consistent?



Consistency has no leg to stand on if you don't actively follow through with the promises you make to both yourself AND your children. As adults we constantly put pressure on ourselves to be the best, excel at our career, learn new skills and all of that is made possible because we follow through with the goals we set for ourselves. Parenting should be no different! For those that consider yourselves goal-oriented, consider taking a birds eye view look at your parenting style. Assess your parenting goals, your areas or weakness and most importantly, areas of strength. Similar to a job review, give yourself an honest review and plan ahead for your next milestone. While every company has it's high level 5 or 10 year plan, they also have small, achievable goals every quarter! What are your high level goals as a parent? When you look at that goal, what small steps can you take to achieve that goal? Following through should be on that list!



Let's talk about an example when looking at following through. While minute, a request from your child may seem like a small part of your day but most times your child has been thinking about that request all day long. Let's take ice cream. Your child rolls out of bed and asks if they can get ice cream after they finish virtual learning today. You set realistic expectations for your child and promise that if they meet those expectations you will purchase ice cream after virtual learning. As parents we know all too well how an entire day can slip away from us. Your child pesters you all day long until you finally tell them we simply just don't have time today and will have to go another day. Or lucky for you, maybe they forgot about the ice cream! What do you do in this situation? Did you get lucky because your child forgot? No! Follow through with the expectation you set for your child. You created realistic expectations for them to meet so you should too! Your child will not only be thrilled that they're getting ice cream, but more importantly they will feel heard, respected and valued by their parent figure. The dream! Following through with your promises establishes trust between parent and child.



Once you've mastered creating and following through with clear, consistent expectations for your child it's important to continue fostering healthy growth for both you and your child. Being consistent in your parenting style will allow you to not hesitate with your decision making and will allow for predictability when your child makes a poor decision or has a question. How can you take that relationship a step further?

Create expectations for your children with small steps towards independence. Sharing your expectations and following through shows your child you mean what you say and that is essential for a healthy, trusting relationship. As always, start small with your expectations. Maybe you set a timer for 10 minutes a day where you invite your child to participate in quiet time. Set the expectation that once the timer rings quiet time is over. Over communicating your expectations will show your child you are serious and help them understand the situation. Following through with daily quiet time or the goal you set to foster independence will create healthy habits for your child and in turn provide more parenting freedom for you! Allow your children to participate and contribute to household tasks while following the same process. The more independent your child is, the more confident they will feel.



Save this page!

Outline Expectations

Repeat Expectations

Ask if there are any questions about the expectations. Remind your child leading up to the expectations.

Follow through with the expectation.

Praise your child.

Be consistent!

Repeat, repeat, repeat.



Let's dive in to the importance of recognizing that our children are in a constant state of growth. Some or all of their behaviors are in direct correlation to the growth and confusion associated with maturing and gaining life experience. Life is already chaotic for children, even more so during a pandemic. Creating a comfortable, safe environment that reinforces that their parents are in charge reminds kids to just be kids. Just as we retract when we feel undervalued, not heard or unsafe, our children may withhold in attempt to feel in control of their surroundings. An example of this is through encopresis- a fancy word for your child withholding their bodily functions. While every child is different, it is important to recognize the behaviors your child is exhibiting. By no means does your child withholding directly correlate to your performance as a parent. There are a multitude of reasons for your child to want to feel in control, however, it is your responsibility to pivot and ensure you create a healthy, comfortable environment for your child so they can overcome this behavior. While withholding, you may find yourself in a situation where you are in a power struggle with your child. What steps can you take to make your child feel comfortable? What observations can you make about your household that may be causing this behavior? This leads into the simple but effective tool of observation.



Similar to teachers who observe the children they teach and report back to parents, it is incredibly important to take a removed look at the behaviors of your child. You will be shocked at how much you discover when you simply observe and evaluate. Rather than always intervening simply wait and observe. Often as parents we get frustrated and jump into situations which may build character for our children, foster independence or teach them essential problem solving skills.

When you observe and allow both you AND your child to discover what they're capable of you are one step closer to a happier, healthier child and parent relationship.



You got this.

I hope this brief guide to navigating parenting during a pandemic serves as a resource for you in the coming months. Remember that it is okay to not have it all figured out. Taking this step is one step closer to being the best parent you could possibly be for your children. Try new things, create new habits and be consistent!

If you're feeling stuck and would like to explore my services, please visit my website to schedule a consultation.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Naama Cameron

www.naamaparentcoach.com

[@naama_parent_coach](https://www.instagram.com/naama_parent_coach)

