



Value your child- issue 3

To help your child to develop a healthy self-image, they need to feel that they are valued. Your child's development falls into your parental responsibilities and must be made a serious priority right from before birth.

Your child's development is closely linked to your parenting. If a child's basic needs are not met, their growth and mental development may be distorted or delayed in various ways.

The 7 basic needs all children require are Love, Shelter, Protection, Food, Appropriate Clothing, Healthcare and Education. Sound simple enough, but for many, some of these 7 needs can be a daily struggle for parents to provide. Remember in our last article, "it takes a Village", don't be afraid to ask for help to ensure you do have access to these 7 basic needs.

You can gauge your child's development by using Development

Milestones, which you can find by just Googling online, and keeping a chart of their progress...and yes you can even use a door frame to keep track of their growth in height.

As your children grow, you can creatively communicate and play with them both verbally and non-verbally. And remember good communication is a two-way street...talking and listening.

Only about 7% of our communication is made up of words, as tone and body language play a pivotal role in how our children interpret our message to them.

In order to bring out the best in our children, we need to communicate effectively with them as they grow and develop. Babies rely on hearing you talk and sing, your smile, holding them close, whilst toddlers need more mobile and have the need to explore independently. Tell them stories with accompanying pictures and when pointing to objects, say the object's name. By the time your child is of school going age, you can

talk and reason with them, they will still need you to read to them, play games and listen to them, let them tell you their own stories and above all else be patient and spend time with them, building relationships only happen with time. Time is the most important gift you can give your child.

As they become teenagers, you should take interest in their hobbies, music and get to know who their friends are. Even with their mood swings and tendency to want to pick a fight with you, they are still your children, so don't take it too personally. This phase will end in 3-5 years...

In our next column we will discuss how our children communicate with us and how play can help your child communicate.

And in case you miss out, you can always read more at www.gcf.org.za or www.southcoastfever.co.za