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THE FEVER: FYI COLUMN-

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Relationships, Rights and Responsibilities.

Having a healthy relationship with your children occurs when they feel valued, understood, accepted and is helped by you to make choices. This allows your children to develop self-esteem and a capacity to think and manage their thoughts, feelings and behaviour in an acceptable way.

Babies and tots need appropriate physical contact like hugging and cuddling, as well as face-to-face contact like playing 'peek-a-boo'. Sing and repeat rhymes to them, use a softer tone of voice and as they grow work with them to develop age appropriate skills.

With our older children, there are more methods to develop strong and healthy relationships, through understanding, encouragement recognition, behaviours that encourage closeness, consistency, listening, sensitivity, reliability and predictability, helping children and young people express their feelings and lastly positive pro-social behaviour and modelling such behaviour.

Children are well versed in their rights, but some choose not to know their responsibilities. Parents need to know their children's right as well as their responsibilities. Building

onto these healthy relationships our children have rights and responsibilities, such as:

- Children have the right to be taken seriously
 - And the responsibility to listen to others.
- Children have the right to quality medical care
 - And the responsibility to take care of themselves. (Brush teeth, wash hands and face etc.)
- Children have the right to a good education
 - And the responsibility to study and respect their teachers.
- Children have the right to be loved and protected from harm.
 - And the responsibility to show love and respect for others.
- Children have the right to special care for special needs
 - And the responsibility to be the best people they can be
- Children have the right to be proud of their heritage and beliefs
 - And the responsibility to respect origins and beliefs of others
- Children have the right to a safe and comfortable home
 - And the responsibility to share in keeping it neat and clean.

- Children have the right to make mistakes
 - And the responsibility to learn from their mistakes
- Children have the right to be adequately fed.
 - And the responsibility not to waste food.

Building good relationships with children, as with adults, takes time. This is time well spent, and will help us avoid a lot of negative behaviour from our children and teenagers. Growing your relationships with our children is the first step in behaviour management. It takes a lot of effort to build a good relationship with our children, but the rewards are many. Remember as the parents, it is our responsibility to build the relationship with our children.

In our next column we will discuss behaviour management and understanding some of our children's challenging behaviour.

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