

## ***Tuning in to Kids: Emotionally Intelligent Parenting***

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“Every person has the capacity for a huge range of emotional experience and expression. Indeed, emotions are a fundamental part of being a human.” Connecting with children during emotional moments can be most rewarding but also be very challenging. The objective of Tuning in to Kids is to raise emotionally intelligent children through emotion coaching. It focuses on developing supportive, emotionally responsive parenting and children who have the capacity to think about emotional experiences and regulate their responses.

### **Workshops**

Tuning in to Kids hold two-day professional development workshop that gives trainees a grounding in the concepts of Emotional Intelligence and Emotion Coaching, using a mix of lecture-style and experiential learning activities. This workshop is suitable for all experienced and qualified workers in the caring sector whose client base includes children aged 3-12 years and their parents. Participants who complete the workshop receive a certificate that authorises them to deliver the Tuning in to Kids program. The purpose of the Tuning into Kids workshop is to train facilitators to run a six-week parenting program, however the strategies, language and program philosophy are also most applicable to educators in how they respond to their students’ emotions.

### **What is emotional intelligence?**

It is the ability to;

- Identify and understand your own emotions
- Successfully use emotions during social interaction
- Use your emotional awareness to guide you when solving problems
- Deal with frustration and be able to wait to get what you want
- Keep distress from overwhelming your ability to think
- Be in control of how and when you express feelings

Emotional intelligence is believed to be a better predictor of outcomes in life than intelligence. High emotional intelligence is associated with greater life satisfaction, better relationships, and lower rates of psychological difficulties.

### **Emotion Coaching**

- Become aware of their emotion, especially if it is of a lower intensity (such as disappointment or frustration)
- View their emotion as an opportunity for intimacy and teaching
- Communicate your understanding and acceptance of the emotion
- Help them use words to describe what they feel
- If necessary, help them to solve problems. You may also communicate that all wishes and feelings are acceptable, but some behaviours are not

### **Five Steps of Emotion Coaching**

1. Tuning in – notice or become aware of emotions
2. Connect and teach – it's an opportunity
3. Accept and listen – show understanding and empathy
4. Reflect – what you hear and see. Name the emotions
5. End with problem solving and setting limits – if necessary

### **Why Emotion Coaching improves children's behavior?**

Those who begin to Emotion Coach find that discipline problems often decrease. This might be because:

- Response to a child is when their feelings are still at a low level of intensity, which means they get attention sooner and don't (unconsciously or consciously) need to escalate their behaviour or start to feel more intense emotions
- If children are Emotion Coached from an early age, they will become well practiced in self-soothing. They are more likely to stay calm, even when they are experiencing strong emotions
- People who Emotion Coach don't disapprove of children's emotions, so there are fewer points of conflict. At the same time, they set clear limits about inappropriate behaviour – they ensure that children know the rules and the

consequences for breaking them

- Emotion Coaching creates a strong emotional bond, so children are more responsive to requests.

### **Program Outline**

Session 1 – Setting out: How to raise emotionally intelligent children

Session 2 – Naming the emotion

Session 3 – Understanding your child’s emotional experience

Session 4 – Self-care, problem solving and coaching fears and worries

Session 5 – Emotion Coaching your child’s anger

Session 6 – Emotionally intelligent parenting: now and in the future

### **Benefits of Tuning in to Kids in the Classroom**

- Assist teachers to be able to recognise both students’ and their own emotions when dealing with challenging behaviours
- Teachers understand how to use students’ emotional experiences as an opportunity for teaching and strengthening relationships
- Develop further skills in assisting children to verbally label, manage their emotions and problem solve
- To guide children’s behaviour with appropriate limits
- Facilitate positive relationships between home and school
- Improves social and emotional health and wellbeing.

A trained facilitator can conduct sessions for parents to support their relationships with their children as well as develop a greater sense of partnership between home and school when dealing with social and emotional issues. The content is also applicable for staff in an effort to support their interactions with students.

The Tuning into Kids program relates well to Circle Time and the Positive Behaviour Support approach. By delivering a combination of these, students will be helped to regulate and label their emotions and also develop problem-solving skills. More information can be found at; <http://www.tuningintokids.org.au>.