



# EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

MOVING LIVES FORWARD

## PROMOTING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN *During Stressful Times*

Caring for children can be a very rewarding experience but can also have its challenges. Everyday life can add unexpected pressure and expectations that can be difficult to balance while caring for children at the same time. Parents and caregivers sometimes struggle with this stress while trying to do what's best for their children while having a positive relationship with them.

Having a healthy parent-child relationship supports healthy development for children across their entire lifespan. These types of positive relationships lay the foundation for children as they learn and grow, make choices, and develop their own relationships with other people. Healthy relationships are essential for children in their social/emotional development, mental and physical health beginning from infancy into adulthood. Some major benefits for children who have positive relationships with their caregivers are:

- Young children who grow with a secure and healthy attachment to their parents stand a better chance of developing happy and content relationships with others in their life.
  - A child who has a secure relationship with parent learns to regulate emotions under stress and in difficult situations.
  - Promotes the child's mental, linguistic and emotional development.
  - Helps the child exhibit optimistic and confident social behaviors.
  - Healthy parent involvement and intervention in the child's day-to-day life lay the foundation for better social and academic skills.
  - A secure attachment leads to a healthy social, emotional, cognitive, and motivational development. Children also gain strong problem-solving skills when they have a positive relationship with their parents.
- (Source: [www.parentingni.org](http://www.parentingni.org))

Promoting positive relationships is not always easy to do, especially when unexpected life situations and/or major changes take place. It's important to remember that children are like little sponges-watching, noticing and absorbing everything in the world around them.

If their parent or caregiver is stressed and having a difficult time coping with a situation, they notice this shift in the caregiver's emotional state. As an adult, it is natural to sometimes feel overwhelmed, emotional, irritated, and stressed out. Here are some tips on how to promote positive relationships with children even under stressful situations:

- Ask for help when needed; seek out support from family, friends and community members
- Recognize when you need a break-ask someone to help watch your child for a few minutes; give yourself some down time
- Show appreciation and affection for one another (model for children how to show positive acknowledgment)
- Share daily tasks and responsibilities when possible (clean up together, do chores together)
- Have positive communication (using kind words; saying thank you)
- Make time to spend together (it is okay to make time for yourself, too!)
- Model healthy coping skills (talk to children about how it's okay to have feelings and what they can do to feel better when they are mad, sad, angry, etc.)
- Do fun things together

If you feel that you need extra support or would like any additional information, please contact our Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation team.

### Sources:

- \* <https://www.verywellmind.com/healthy-family-relationships-and-stress-relief-3144541>
- \* <https://www.parentingni.org/blog/parent-child-relationship-why-its-important/>
- Additional resources for parents and caregivers:**
- \* <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/index.html>
- \* [www.consciousdiscipline.com](http://www.consciousdiscipline.com)
- \* <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/blog/why-relationships-are-so-important-children-and-young-people>
- \* <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2017/09/positive-parenting>
- \* <https://www.positiveparentingsolutions.com/parenting/start-10-tips-better-behavior>



# MEET CENTENNIAL'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM



## LAUNCHING ZOOM SECURE TELEHEALTH SERVICES!

Our ECMH team is excited to announce that consultation services are now available using Zoom Secure Telehealth Services. These services are available to client families, schools, childcare centers and community partners with group and individual meetings available. All services will be provided using this private, secure video platform, and can be accessed using most electronic devices. For more information or to set up a consultation appointment, please contact our ECMH team or your local Centennial Mental Health Center office.



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#### **Ages 0-5**

Covers the following  
counties:  
Logan, Morgan

For additional support during  
the COVID-19 Pandemic you  
can call Centennial's  
**COMMUNITY  
SUPPORT LINE**

You can do this by calling your  
nearest Centennial office:

Akron - 970.345.2254  
Burlington - 719.346.8183  
Cheyenne Wells - 719.346.8183  
Elizabeth - 303.646.4519  
Fort Morgan - 970.867.4924  
Holyoke - 970.854.2114  
Julesburg - 970.474.3769  
Limon - 719.775.2313  
Sterling - 970.522.4392  
Wray - 970.332.3133  
Yuma - 970.848.5412

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#### **Ages 0-8**

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Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson,  
Lincoln & Yuma

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

[WWW.CENTENNIALMHC.ORG](http://WWW.CENTENNIALMHC.ORG)

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# ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH YOUR CHILDREN AT HOME



	Practice Taking Turns	Find Shapes in the Clouds	Enjoy Reading a Book	Draw Smiley Faces	Play Games Together: Simon Says, Duck Duck Goose, Red Light Green Light	Family Picnic Inside or Outside
Cuddle and Look at the Stars	Share the Best Part of Your Day	Learn and Draw Shapes	Listen to a New Story	Look for Your Favorite Colors	Be a Helper	Have Fun in the Sun
Sing and Dance to Music	Color a Picture	Make a Healthy Snack	Make a Tent or Fort	Find Items that Start with the First Letter of Your Child's Name	Family Movie Night	Take a Nature Walk
Hop, Skip and Jump	Taste a New Food	Play I Spy	Play a Matching Game (Socks/shapes)	Read a Bedtime Story	Make Dinner Together	Make Funny Faces in the Mirror
Have Fun Playing	Tip Toe Around the House	Tell Someone You Love Them/Give Hugs and Kisses				