

Modeling : Confidence

Parents learn very quickly that children will do as they do, more than do as they say. A child that sees their parent act with confidence and assurance is more likely to have those same characteristics. Confident characteristics include staying calm in new situations, celebrating others instead of being envious, asking for help when needed, and being decisive.



What parents might do

An adult who is starting a new job may feel nervous. How they prepare for their first day will be observed by their children. They can either approach this experience with nervousness and anxiety, dreading meeting new people and worried about how they will feel in the new environment, or they could approach their first day with confidence. A confident adult will be excited to start something new, they will be encouraged by the opportunity, and they will look forward to meeting new people.

What the child will see



The child that sees their parent modeling confident behavior will then use the same characteristics when they are in a similar childhood situation. On the first day of school, they will look forward to seeing who is in their class. They will be excited to find their new classroom and to meet new people.

Modeling : Coping Skills

Practicing healthy coping skills is a learned behavior. Parents and children can develop these healthy habits together. Parents help their children discover what their child needs to manage times of stress and anxiety.



What parents might do

Parents who know their own personal preferences when it comes to coping skills will teach by example. When children see their parents taking time out for themselves, talking things through, or even listening to music when they are feeling anxious, they will try to copy that behavior. Parents can also take the opportunity during times of anxiety for their children to practice coping skills that their child prefers. What helps the adult may not always be what helps their child. Listening to the child's opinions or reactions is important to helping them find the best habits for themselves.

What the child will see



If a parent and child work together to create and form self-care habits such as coping skills, the child will be prepared for anxiety producing situations and it will likely result in less anxiety. They will benefit from having that time spent with their parents where they felt heard and respected. They will take these coping skills into adulthood, and most likely use more and different coping skills as they age.

Modeling : Risk Taking

Risk taking does not have to mean giant risks. Although sky diving and rock climbing are great physical and mental accomplishments for some, children learn the most from watching adults in their life consistently and confidently explore new activities and opportunities.



What parents might do

Parents can model risk taking by facing their own fears and anxieties and talking to their children about them. When a child sees their parent facing their own difficult situations, they will try to emulate that. An adult facing a big career change is taking a risk. It takes self-assurance and sometimes courage to take on new responsibilities. When children see trusted adults taking risks, they learn that they should trust themselves to make decisions as well.

What the child will see



The child that sees their parent trying new things that take them outside of their comfort zone sees courage, coping skills, and success. They will be witnessing a first-hand example of the popular phrase “We can do hard things.” These kinds of characteristics promote confidence, self-reliance, and independence.