

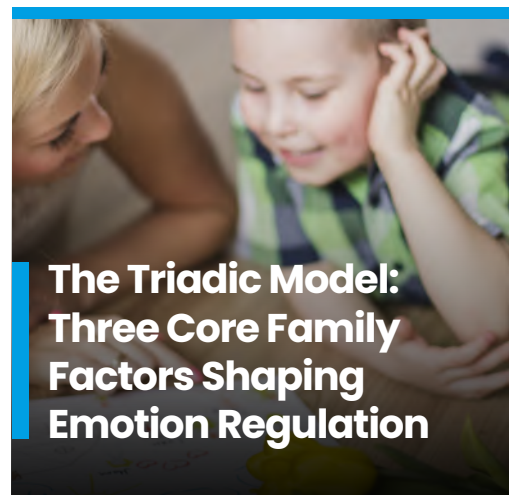
 ISTEK SCHOOLS

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Hello,

Starting school is one of the most important milestones in a child's life. Preschool is the first environment where a child regularly spends time outside the family, makes new friends, and meets teachers. This experience is invaluable for development but may also bring anxiety, uncertainty, and emotional fluctuations. Each child experiences the adaptation process differently. Some adapt within a few days, while for others this may take weeks. Reactions such as crying, reluctance to separate from parents, irritability, or regressive (age-inappropriate) behaviors may be observed. Most of these reactions are temporary and natural. What matters here is that families provide patient, determined, and consistent support to their children.

Happy reading!





THE ROLE OF EMOTION REGULATION IN PARENTING

Supportive Parenting Empowers Children

Studies indicate that parents who accept their children's emotions and guide them through problem-solving help their children express emotions more openly—fostering their social, emotional, and cognitive growth.

Conversely, approaches that belittle, punish, or suppress a child's emotions hinder healthy emotion management and negatively affect overall development.

Parents Use Different Coping Styles

- **Adaptive Support:** Parents who accept the child's feelings, encourage problem-solving, and show empathy.
- **Solution-Focused Approach:** Parents who emphasize solving the problem and labeling emotions, but use less emotional expression.
- **Mixed Strategies:** Parents who combine supportive behaviors with occasional punitive or dismissive reactions.

Families where positive emotions are expressed more openly tend to favor the "adaptive support" strategy, while households with fewer positive expressions often adopt a solution-focused but emotionally limited approach. Interestingly, even small displays of positive emotion by solution-focused parents are linked to better emotion regulation in children over time.

The Triadic Model, Three Family Factors That Shape Emotion Regulation

Parents' Own Emotion Regulation Patterns

Children learn by observing their parents' coping strategies. For instance, a mother who suppresses her emotions models the same behavior for her child. In contrast, a parent who practices cognitive reappraisal—viewing situations from different perspectives—teaches flexibility and constructive thinking. Parents who manage stress and emotions healthily help their children do the same.

Parenting Behaviors and Reactions

The way parents interact with their children directly influences how those children express their emotions. Warmth, empathy, and

playfulness during interactions—especially in mothers—are linked to stronger emotional regulation in children. Recognizing and labeling emotions, validating the child’s feelings, and replacing punishment or criticism with guidance and modeling are key elements of emotional socialization.

The Emotional Climate of the Family

The way emotions are expressed, accepted, or suppressed at home forms the emotional context children internalize most deeply. Notably, an empathetic father can indirectly support the child’s emotional growth by fostering the mother’s playful and positive interactions. Parenting style also plays a defining role: authoritarian parenting (high control, low warmth) negatively affects children’s emotion management, self-regulation, and peer relationships, while authoritative parenting (warmth, openness, clear boundaries, and guidance) promotes emotional balance and social competence.

What Can You Do as Parents?

The following strategies offer concrete steps to support your child’s emotion regulation:

Be a Role Model

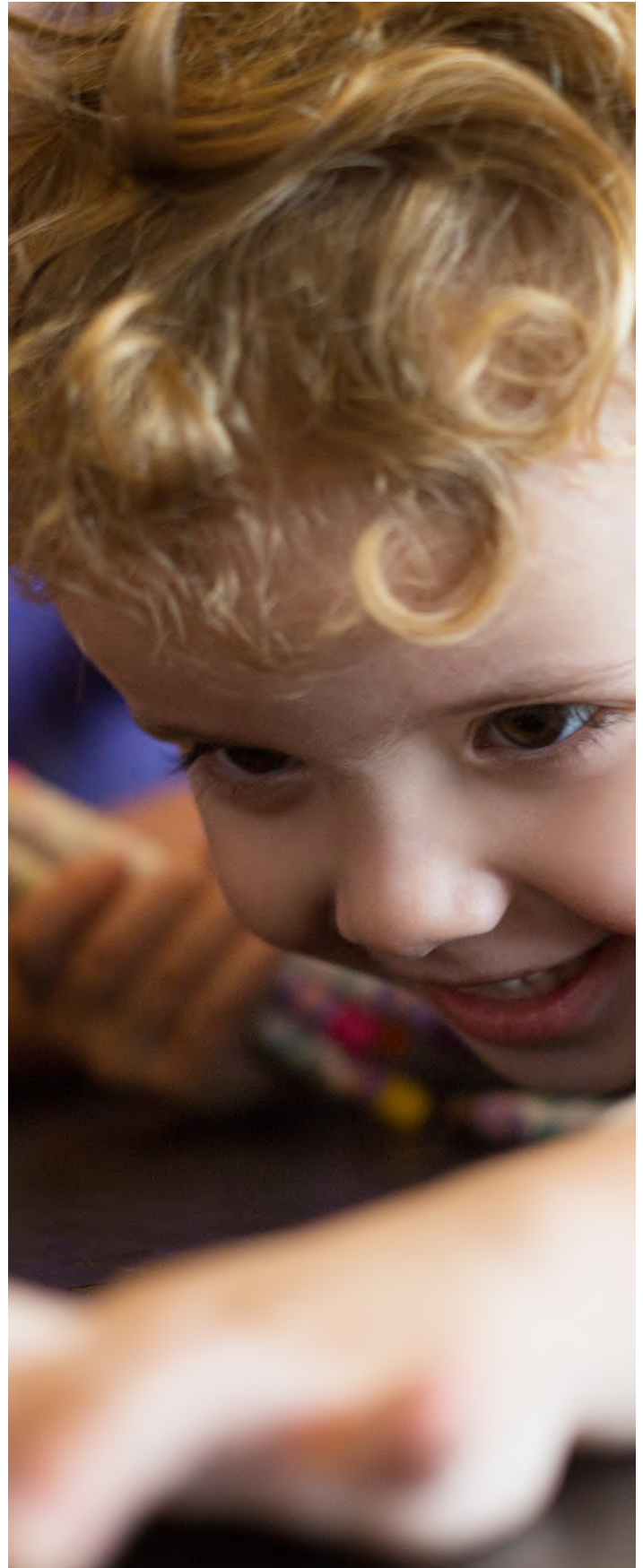
Children learn from how you handle your own emotions—how you calm down when angry, or express sadness or disappointment. Demonstrating awareness of your feelings and expressing them appropriately is a powerful lesson.

Label Emotions and Validate Feelings

Try using curiosity-driven statements like, “I think you’re feeling angry because your toy was taken away.” This helps your child feel seen and supported, rather than dismissed.

Explore Coping Strategies Together

Teach calming techniques such as deep breathing, counting, drawing, or hugging. Guide your child toward calmness without suppressing emotions. Allowing them to cry, express anger, or show sadness—with your supportive presence—helps them communicate emotions more effectively next time.





Provide Consistent Boundaries and Structure

Children manage emotions better when they feel secure. Daily routines, predictable expectations, and clear limits create stability. Balance love and discipline; when your child reacts with sadness to boundaries, stay consistent and compassionate without withdrawing support.

Practice Empathy and Patience

Emotional outbursts and uncontrollable behaviors are natural parts of development. Instead of yelling or punishing, try responses like, "You're really upset—let's see what we can do together." This strengthens your bond and teaches emotional regulation through empathy. Curiosity often works wonders.

Use Positive Reinforcement

When your child expresses emotions appropriately, notice and verbalize it: "You stayed calm so nicely!" Acknowledging this reinforces emotional maturity and confidence.

Dear parents, although emotions can seem complex, you can nurture your child's emotional skills step by step, through small but consistent actions. Remember, your love, consistency, and the quality of your relationship form the strongest

foundation for your child's emotional well-being. Both mothers' and fathers' emotional processes and mutual interactions play vital roles in fostering healthy emotional development.

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