



# FINDING SOLUTIONS

TOGETHER

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## An Adaptation of “10 Routines That Will Strengthen a Parent-Child Relationship”

By Laura Markham Ph.D. Author of “Peaceful Parents, Happy Kids”

### Aim for 12 Hugs (or Physical Connections) Every Day

Snuggle your child first thing in the morning for a few minutes, and last thing at night. Hug when you say goodbye, when you're re-united, and often in between. Touse hair, pat backs, rub shoulders. Make eye contact and smile, which is a different kind of touch.



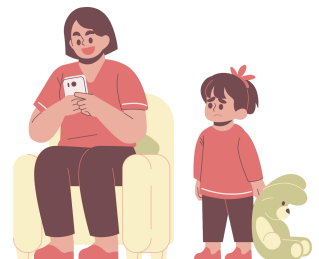
### Play

Laughter and rough-housing keep you connected with your child by stimulating endorphins and oxytocin in both of you. Making laughter a daily habit also gives your child a chance to laugh out the anxieties and upsets that otherwise make them feel disconnected — and more likely to act out. Play helps kids want to cooperate.



### Turn Off Technology when Interacting

Your child will remember for the rest of her life that she was important enough to her parents that they turned off their phone to listen to her. Even turning off music in the car can be a powerful invitation to connect.



### Connect Before Transitions

Kids have a hard time transitioning from one thing to another. If you look him in the eye, use his name, and connect with him, then get him giggling, you'll make sure he has the inner resources to manage himself through a transition.



### Make Time for One-On-One Time

Do whatever you need to do to schedule 15 minutes with each child, separately, every day. Alternate doing what your child wants and doing what you want during that time.



## Welcome Emotion

Sure, it's inconvenient. But your child needs to express his emotions or they'll drive his behaviour. Besides, this is an opportunity to help your child heal those upsets, which will bring you closer. So summon up your compassion, don't let the anger trigger you, and welcome the tears and fears that always hide behind the anger. Remember that you're the one he trusts enough to cry with, and breathe your way through it. Just acknowledge all those feelings and offer understanding of the pain.



## Listen and Empathize

Connection starts with listening. Bite your tongue if you need to! The habit of seeing things from your child's perspective will ensure that you treat them with respect and look for win-win solutions.



## Slow Down and Savour the Moment

You aren't just rushing your child through the schedule so you can spend a few minutes with him before bed. Every interaction all day long is an opportunity to connect. Slow down and share the moment.



## Bedtime Snuggle and Chat

Set your child's bedtime a wee bit earlier with the assumption that you'll spend some time visiting and snuggling in the dark. Those companionable, safe moments of connection invite whatever your child is currently grappling with to the surface.



## Show Up

Your child has only about 900 weeks of childhood with you before he leaves your home. Try this as a practice: When you're interacting with your child, show up 100 percent. Just be right here, right now, and let everything else go.

