



All They Really Need: Trusting the Wisdom of Nature to Raise Resilient Kids

OARS

Open ended questions

When we ask yes or no questions, or ones that can be answered in one word, we end up putting our own biases on our kids. Try some of these the next time your child experiences a challenge:

- What came up for you when that happened?
- Did you feel that anywhere in your body?
- What would you have liked your friend to do/say instead?
- What do you think would fix this?
- What do you enjoy about so and so?

Affirmations

When kids are struggling, they may only be able to focus on what is tricky. Affirming where they are showing evidence of resilience or capability can help reframe their perspective. It's important not to argue about it if they disagree. A simple, "That's what I see," also affirms their truth.

- It sounds like you really made an effort to
- You are using some terrific descriptions. That tells me that you're getting skilled at noticing your feelings . .
- It must have really hurt your feelings when your friend did/said

Reflections

Brief paraphrasing (or direct mirroring) of what your child says both tells them you're really listening and allows them to hear it coming from outside their head. This can allow them to be more objective about their thoughts and can offer an opportunity to clarify their meaning.

- I'm hearing you say you're angry.
- You're really struggling with this decision.
- You're disappointed by your grades.

Summaries

Like paraphrasing, summaries confirm to your kid that you heard them correctly. This is best used at the end of a discussion, as a way of encapsulating things, possibly putting it into context, and perhaps (if appropriate), being clear on next steps.