



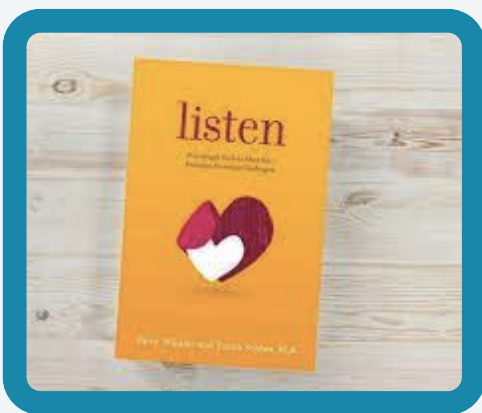
PARENT - CHILD PRESCHOOLS ORGANIZATION

BUILDING CONNECTION THROUGH PLAY

A Family Education Article - January 2025

It's widely acknowledged that building a strong connection with our children is essential for nurturing a lasting and meaningful relationship. Whether through cozy cuddles, reading together, sharing a laugh, or simply quiet moments spent together, these times of connection foster love, warmth, and a deep bond between you and your child.

However, have you ever considered how strengthening this connection can also play a pivotal role in effectively managing challenging behaviors? One approach that harnesses this concept is playful parenting. Also known as playlistening, this strategy is designed to create positive interactions while addressing behavioral challenges.



In her book, "Listen: Five Simple Tools to Meet Your Everyday Parenting Challenges", author Patty Wipfler explains the tool of playful parenting (known as playlistening in her book) as a way to playfully engage with children, in order to diffuse tension and build connections. Playlistening strengthens the parent-child relationship by ultimately building connection through laughter and giving children a sense of control.

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Key Components of Playful Parenting

Laughter

"Laughter connects us" says Patty. When children laugh they are able to release tension. Laughter should be unforced, not by tickling.

Child Led

Your child should sense they are in charge. Aim for power-reversing your interactions, where you as the parent takes the less competent role, which can elicit more laughter.

Try it!



Try playful parenting when your child is refusing to get dressed. You could playfully announce that you are the expert of getting dressed. But surprise your child by putting the underwear on their head, or the socks on their hands. Be playful and fun insisting that they wear their shirt on on their legs, which will surely elicit laughter. Let your child be the expert to show you how to get dressed. This type of play gives your child a sense of power and control, and the laughter helps to relieve the stress of the situation.

Connecting through physical play is a powerful tool that not only strengthens the bond between you and your child, but also offers an effective way to address challenging behaviors. By embracing laughter, reversing power dynamics, and allowing your child to have a sense of control, parents can diffuse tension and create a positive, supportive environment. Whether it's a simple task like putting on a jacket or navigating more complex emotions around fear or stress, this strategy is a joyful approach to parenting that helps children feel heard, empowered, and loved.

"THE MORE LAUGHTER YOU CAN ELICIT FROM YOUR CHILD THROUGH LISTENING IN THIS PLAYFUL WAY, THE SAFER THEY WILL FEEL TO LET YOU KNOW ABOUT OTHER UPSETS IN THEIR LIFE."

-PATTY WIPFLER



WANT TO LEARN MORE?



Please join us for our Family Education Workshop! We will hear from Patty Wipfler, founder of Hand in Hand Parenting, how to use physical play to address behavioral challenges, and how physical play can build connection.

Building Connection through Physical Play

February 18th

7-8:30 pm

Live on Zoom

[Register Here!](#)



RESOURCES TO LEARN MORE



Article:

10 tips for more Playful Parenting

Video:

Play that solves power struggles

Podcasts:

Reset your day with Roughhousing

Finding Fun

Healing Through Playful Parenting

Book:

Playful Parenting