

## Creative activities for emotional development

Here are examples of creative activities that you can use with your child to support their emotional development.

1. Dance together: perhaps teach your child a dance you did when you were younger. Be willing to learn one from them.
2. Decide on a bedtime routine and keep to it as much as possible.
3. Do loud singing then quiet singing, or very active movement then slow movement (what's important is that the child is learning about the change of pace).
4. Feed your child something sweet and gooey; swap roles. Allow them to be messy.
5. Find every opportunity to catch your child doing something 'right' and praise them.
6. Find something to celebrate each day.
7. Give your child an object to take with them that reminds them of you when they have to be away from you.
8. Have a goodbye or goodnight routine that is predictable.
9. Have clear boundaries that the child/young person understands and try to keep these as much as possible.
10. Hold hands while walking.
11. Keep instructions simple.
12. Let your child know how much you enjoy their features, for example, colour of eyes, hair, shape of nose, long limbs, chunky body, etc.
13. Leave a note with a loving message on it beneath their pillow or in a lunch box or pocket.
14. Listen to what your child has to say: be interested and show it.
15. Give lots of 'Hi Fives'; share a greeting gesture or signal.
16. Make mealtimes fun.
17. Massage your child's hand with hand lotion; alternatively, after baking, making dough, using clay or painting, wash each other's hands or wipe the fingers free of substance.
18. Massage your child (with aromatherapy oils).
19. Play a game where your child has to keep looking at your face while you pull faces designed to make them laugh and they have to keep a straight face; when they laugh, swap roles. With older children extend this to faces like a character in a film or story, for example, Mr Bean, Edward from 'Twilight', Zippy from 'Rainbow'.
20. Play Treasure Hunts: take it in turns to hide things for each other.
21. Play a clapping game; learn one from the child or young person.
22. Play hide and seek.
23. Play peek-a-boo together.
24. Put a sticker on your face and wait for your child to notice it.
25. Remember to tell your child what's happening each day and where you will be.
26. Sing along together, with or without a background song.
27. Spend time just being with your child doing something they enjoy.
28. Trace a word on your child's back with your finger, which they have to guess.
29. Tuck the child in at night after having a 'goodnight' hug.
30. Use a finger to draw a flower on your child's hand; extend this to a guessing game with older children by drawing a shape, number, pattern or creature.
31. Use face paints together.
32. Wrap a blanket or rug around you and your child, making a warm safe cocoon.