

PARENT SUGGESTIONS 'Parenting Exceptional Children' Session 2

31st January 2025

1. Related to the topic 'Managing challenges and problems' what has worked for you as a parent?

- Stepping into her shoes; Trying to pause reactions; Talking to her as an adult - or as if she was one of my adult friends most of the time - when she didn't go in to school one day this year - without telling me - well she tried to tell me and I didn't listen, I just became the authoritarian. And driving home from work - I was talking to myself - completely expecting she would have gone to school as that was the last dictat i had left when going to work - and then when she hadn't - I very calmly grounded her, for the first time in her life and took her phone. Then went for a walk with a friend - who said - 'but what is going on? Me: I don't know she won't tell me. Friend: but this is not like her AT ALL Me: I know.....came back from walk and had a conversation from an entirely different place (ie how would you react if I had come to you and said I didn't want to go to work today? - a brilliant question from my friend - Response from me: 'Entirely differently - and of course, if you really don't feel like it don't go to work,!!! The conversation as I was giving her back her phone that evening, saying I was triggered and if she had been an adult I would not have reacted that way - opened up an entire new level of how we relate to each other.....sorry for the stream of consciousness....but just to say finally - we are still in that purple patch in February - from an incident that happened in October! So that has worked for me - compassion, empathy and STOP being an autocrat - she is baked....and actually - she is beautifully baked - what a gorgeous person I have. Focusing on what she brings - rather than where I want to improve her has been a GAME CHANGER

- Maintaining the connection with at least one item that is important to them. Supporting a child in advance of social situations by suggesting what can be said in certain situations but keep the suggestions light and not instructional.

- Anticipating meltdowns and having strategies in place - this makes them emotionally easier for us (i.e. it's Thursday, he's going to have a meltdown - dinner can be later, is there a snack ready?) 2). Crunch Snack and easy sip flavoured milk straws - there's something about sucking through a straw that he finds really regulating) 3). Ear defenders, weighted blanket, music on headphones, proprioceptive/ vestibular regulating activities, engaging in passions 4). one on one playdates rather than groups, quiet time afterwards (e.g. movie after playdate) 5) setting time aside for us as a couple so our battery isn't on empty - e.g. low demand dinner for him in front of a movie (chicken nuggets and chips), while we have 'adult food' and a chat together 5). Routine (esp. around food) - gives a sense of control and security * Aiming to listen to his words rather than his tone - what he's saying is often very reasonable, it's just that he's shouting it

- Being more child focused.

- Very little. Patience and understanding work the best but almost always comes with a sense that whatever the underlying challenge was it was forgotten and essentially conceded. This has a demoralising effect over time.

- Admitting when I need help as the parent and primary carer

- Routine, sport, 1 on 1 time, family time, trying to instill confident and self worth, even though it is not what he wants to hear!

- We are the start of our journey to try manage and help our daughter in her development and coping with life's challenges

2. What resources have you found useful? (e.g. groups, books, websites, social media accounts...)

- The Disruptors' and can't remember the name of it exactly - 'Quiet' - An introvert living in an extroverted world, and masses of other books and articles on Neuroscience and Neuroplasticity - The Brain something itself.....can't remember - will have for next week!
- Dyslexia Support Ireland. Knowing No Boundaries - Hannah Daly
- Being Autistic (and what that actually means); discovering my own autism and learning about that - Neurotribes, Unmasked (Ellie Middleton), Women and Girls on the Autism Spectrum, As I am resources, Late discovered club podcast, blindboy podcast (CBT alert!), How we feel app (re alexythymia [sic] for taking a parenting pause, wonderfully wired brains, any memoirs by autistic people, Amanda McGuinness (little puddins), Autistic meetups with Thriving Autistic, Looking after your autistic self by Niamh Garvey
- This course, also a training I did with the Autism support group, Aspect in Cork City, previous webinars on ADHD from yourselves. for adults, or young people over 18 yrs.
- Some social media accounts, some podcasts.
- Naomi Fisher webinar on anxiety, Viv Dawes on burnout
- Positive Parenting book by John Sharry, it's my go to book, hence why I booked htis course! The Out-of-Sync Child Book by Carol Stock Kranowitz, Education Desty
- Books on parenting and chatting with friends for support .