

Why emotion coaching improves children's behaviour

'Emotion Coaching works alongside positive forms of discipline that rely on providing children with clearly understood consequences for misbehaviour' (Gottman, 1997: p 67).

When parents begin to Emotion Coach, they find that discipline problems often decrease. This might be because:

1. Emotion Coaching parents respond to their children when their feelings are still at a low level of intensity, which means that they get attention sooner and don't (unconsciously or consciously) need to escalate their behaviour or start to feel more intense emotions
2. If children are Emotion Coached from an early age, they become well practiced at self-soothing. They are more likely to stay calm, even when they are experiencing strong emotions
3. Emotion Coaching parents don't disapprove of their children's emotions, so there are fewer points of conflict. At the same time, they set clear limits about inappropriate behaviour — they ensure that children know the rules and the consequences for breaking them
4. Emotion Coaching creates a strong emotional bond between parents and children, so children are more responsive to their parents' requests.

