



Smart Parenting for Smart Kids: Nurturing Your Child's True Potential

Eileen Kennedy-Moore , Mark S. Lowenthal

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Practical, research-based parenting tips to help children develop essential social-emotional skills. Chapters include: Tempering Perfectionism, Building Connection, Developing Motivation, Finding Joy.

A literal Godsend. Parents will find great wisdom in its pages.

– Stephen R. Covey, author of The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

A smart, deeply perceptive and important book.

– Wendy Mogel, PhD, author of The Blessing of a Skinned Knee

Filled with vignettes and strategies for raising smart kids to become healthy, happy and contributing adults.

– Vicki Abeles, producer and co-director of Race to Nowhere

Smart Parenting for Smart Kids: Nurturing Your Child's True Potential Details

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From Reader Review Smart Parenting for Smart Kids: Nurturing Your Child's True Potential for online ebook

Stephanie Dagg says

This book, written by two clinical psychologists, opens with talking about the 'child improvement industry' that has grown up so that all kids can fulfill their 'potential'. But what is potential? We learn that it's not about impressive accomplishments, but is the capacity to grow. We live in a narcissistic age where everyone seeks admiration through being good at this or excelling in that. Such an attitude is not healthy for our children. We all need to make mistakes in order to learn. The authors offer their alternative of seven core challenges that each child faces: tempering perfectionism, building connection, managing sensitivity, handling cooperation and competition, dealing with authority, developing motivation and finding happiness. Each of these is discussed through offering strategies for parents to adopt and finishes with a 'show the way' section with direct advice on how we adults can set the best possible example in this particular area for our kids.

Four components of smart parenting emerge which centre on compassion, setting limits, being committed to supporting our kids, and having faith in their abilities. This is a book I know I shall be constantly coming back to in the future as my children have their ups and downs. This is exactly the way the authors want us to use it. It's about the long term and steady progress. I've already seen that some of my reactions to these in the past haven't been the most productive so, like my kids, I need to adjust some of my own approaches and attitudes to help them live the most fulfilling lives they can. The book has an index, which is a fantastic feature.

Tanya says

Very helpful in understanding kids. I don't think these strategies are only for "smart" kids, but they highlighted trouble spots that many "smart" kids deal with. I found many ideas to help me with my daughter. I was surprised by how much the descriptions reminded me of myself. I guess "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree". Hopefully identifying some of these issues in myself will help me in my approach with my daughter. I joked that my husband should read it so he can deal with the both of us.

I got this book though inter-library loan, but I may buy myself a copy. Or buy the library a copy. I will definitely reference it again and that's difficult through inter-library loans.

Paul Fulcher says

Hmmm

This book would have been better titled Tips for Non-Smart Parents with Smart but Disfunctional Kids.

The book tends to assume that the "smart kid" is inevitably going to be socially and emotionally

dysfunctional - and then offers handy tips like telling your child that if all the other kids come out of a test saying how hard it was then saying "But that was completely trivial, you all must be morons" isn't likely to help him (does feel also book aimed more at boys) make friends and influence people.

Now I'm not saying smart kids don't do that - I may indeed have been guilty myself in the past - but as a parent I don't need a book written by two eminent psychologists to tell me that isn't a great idea.

Nor this helpful gem on how to make your child take more joy in life:

"To increase your child's awareness of little joys, print out the words from the song 'My Favourite Things' from the musical The Sound of Music and sing them with your child".

That's not to say there weren't one or two tips I took from the book - the section on motivation was quite helpful - but compared to other similar books I have read e.g. The Price of Privilege (<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>) or Mindset (<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>) this was disappointing.

sologdin says

Popular psychology approach to common parenting hypotheticals. The most engaging sections eschew advice and instead popularize the professional findings of clinicians and researchers. There is nevertheless much advice, all very sensible. I was somewhat disappointed when the ambiguity of the title went a different way than I had initially predicted. Book therefore has broader appeal, likely, than were it directed solely to those kids who test into the fourth standard deviation on Wechsler, say.

Probable that I will incorporate some of this advice when daughter enters within its target age (for the most part 6+).

Katherine Lavelle says

I think that this book is really helpful. Not that we like to use labels for our kid, but this book had a lot of good strategies and suggestions for more thoughtful and helpful parenting.

Deborah says

Did not finish

Marissa Morrison says

Especially nice are the "Predict Whether These Actions Are Likely to ATTRACT or REPEL Friends" quiz

for kids and parents on page 72, the calming strategies on page 103 (e.g. blow on a colorful feather, blow bubbles, put on hand lotion, sniff perfume samples), and the advice on page 158 to underreact to a child's victories and defeats (let the child's own reactions set the tone).

If your child has trouble losing at games, have a pregame talk about how he or she will act when other players are successful. Also, have the child plan a postgame snack for everyone.

I'm intrigued by the author's firm belief that parents should not check a kid's homework for mistakes. This sounds great for encouraging independence, but the parents would be missing opportunities to help educate the child.

Heather says

The section on perfectionism was really illuminating to me. Perfectionists are more concerned about relationships (what do people think/I don't want to disappoint dad etc) than performance or process. A lot of ideas presented in this book reminded me of Carol Dweck's "Growth Mindset," which they actually reference a few times. It also reminded me of the parenting book "Love and Logic." One take away: be a great role model (if you want to teach your kid how to have great social skills, deal with setbacks, work hard, etc, do it yourself).

Laura says

I am always on the lookout for good books on parenting, both as a parent and as an educational consultant. When I saw Smart Parenting for Smart Kids I knew I wanted to read it. My children are middle-graders with a new set of challenges from their toddler years, and I am a working mom with new challenges in my household management, parenting included! However, I didn't want a book on how to be a parent. I wanted one that helped me tackle specific issues as I helped my children to succeed in life. This was the perfect book for me.

Right off, I liked the tone in this book. It was intelligent, yet compassionate, chock-full of parenting insight and child psychology, yet practical and very readable. This book took me a long time to finish reading because it needs to be absorbed and it made me think a lot. It made me question my actions and my motives and had me observing more closely my children and their reactions toward my response whether positive or negative.

I'm on the bandwagon of parents who want to offer their kids good opportunities for learning, immersing our family in music lessons, extracurricular activities, sports, volunteering, homework supervision and so on. But I've learned to watch out for stress signals and to balance our family life so as not to be over-scheduled. Yet, I still struggle with this and reading Smart Parenting has assuaged my fears that my kids would be left out if not fully involved in activities that help them grow in some aspect of their life.

The chapters I focused on the most were: Tempering Perfectionism, which had me re-evaluating the way I supervise homework (I'm the perfectionist, not my kids!); Managing Sensitivity, which was so insightful for me on so many levels (both my daughter and I are sensitive); Handling Cooperation and Competition, which is helping me deal with my son's competitiveness; and Finding Joy, which made me realize how important it

is to make small changes that will result in my family experiencing more joy and happiness.

Throughout the chapters, there are scenes with dialogue (some of which will sound so familiar) followed by strategies that parents can implement to deal with that particular situation or behaviour. These vignettes easily had me identify if this was a problem I had encountered (not just as a parent but also in my field) and how I could deal with the social, emotional and intellectual needs of my children and clients. I learned a lot about myself, not only as a parent but also as a person. Sometimes, helping your child succeed means changing the way you parent—like not correcting your child's homework!

I can't stress enough how helpful and insightful Smart Parenting is for any parent who wants to nurture their children's true potential without heaping expectations on them (ours or that of society) that can be detrimental in the long run. All parents, of course, want the best for their children, and whether we admit it or not, we do have expectations for them. But each child is an individual with a complex emotional, social and intellectual make-up. Smart Parenting guides parents in understanding their children and working alongside them to maturity and success according to their abilities and desires.

I highly recommend this intelligent book to all parents who feel the stress of helping their kids' achieve, to educators, social workers and teachers. It's an excellent resource and a keeper on my bookshelf. It's a book I will refer to again and again.

Laurie Gray says

I reviewed this book for ReadersFavorite.com.

Smart Parenting for Smart Kids: Nurturing Your Child's True Potential by Eileen Kennedy-Moore, PhD, and Mark S. Lowenthal, PsyD, explains how and why children struggle and distills "smart" parenting into four essential components: A compassionate ability to view the world through our children's eyes; the confidence to set judicious limits; a commitment to turn toward our children more often than away; and faith in our children's ability to grow and learn. The authors identify seven fundamental challenges, devoting a chapter to each: Tempering Perfectionism, Building Connection, Managing Sensitivity, Handling Cooperation and Competition, Dealing with Authority, Developing Motivation and Finding Joy. Drawing upon their own professional training and experience, they offer insightful strategies and research-based solutions, demonstrating practical application through the use of two, three or four specific vignettes that represent typical behavior issues in each chapter. The book includes an index and an extensive selection of recommended reading for both parents and professionals.

This is one of the most encouraging and empowering parenting books I've encountered. There is no elaborate system of rewards and punishments to "fix" children by controlling and manipulating them into conformance with our desired outcomes. Instead, the strategies are ones we can use to "parent" ourselves, turning us into positive examples of the behavior we desire for our children and giving us the "parenting" experience we need to parent our children more successfully. Dr. Kennedy-Moore and Dr. Lowenthal emphasize that a child's true potential is not about performance and achievement, but about the capacity for personal growth and life-long learning innate in every child. I highly recommend this practical guide for all parents who want to cultivate their children's inner strength and outward compassion and help their children create their own meaningful and satisfying lives.

Stephanie says

This parenting book was well-researched, well-written, and exceptionally well-organized. It gave me practical tips for dealing with one of my kids' perfectionism, sensitivity, and authority struggles. Additionally, I found the advice about building connection, handling cooperation and competition, developing motivation, and finding joy useful for all of my kids.

Jennifer says

I swear the authors have met my kids! Lots of helpful ideas and strategies. I love it and will use it as a reference often!

Simone says

Overall I was not impressed with this book. There is a lot geared towards helping kids fit in and blend into their social hierarchy at school. They dismiss Dabrowski's overexcitabilities, as being something Gifted kids can change completely (good luck with that). The writing style is to the point but also very dry and somewhat repetitive. The advice comes across as being a bit patronistic. I would not recommend this book to parents of Gifted kids unless maybe if they are stuck in a regular school without a Gifted program and no support, in that case it might help them manage to survive at least till college. But who wants to survive when you can thrive?

There are much better books out there. For parenting I would recommend "Hold On To Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers" by Dr. Gordon Neufeld, and "Raising Great Kids" by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend. For Gifted kids to read I would recommend "101 Success Secrets for Gifted Kids" by Christine Fonseca. For parents, "The Highly Sensitive Child" by Elaine Aron is also a good resource, as is the vast library of articles on the SENG website.

Linda Carlson says

This book is for people who are bright or perfectionist, have bright or perfectionist kids, or work with bright kids or perfectionist adults. As the authors point out, if you have a bright child, you're probably fairly bright yourself, and this will help you understand yourself and better parent talented and/or perfectionist kids. It provides valuable suggestions for guiding any child who has difficulty making friends, accepting criticism or dealing with authority figures.

Unlike some books written by clinical psychologists (which both authors are), Smart Parenting for Smart Kids does not rely on lengthy examples of example patients. Vignettes are short, accompanied by straightforward explanations and recommendations. "Reflect but downshift," for example, when a child is convinced that a terrible mistake has been made; "Resist the temptation to offer pointers," and "Identify what went right."

Content is very helpful, and even better for those tired parents among us who read late in the evening, it is extremely well designed, with easy-to-read type and a reasonable amount of white space on the page.

A review of this book is scheduled for the Summer issue of Parenting Education Practitioners Talk, to be published by Parenting Press. See www.parentingpress.com/peptalk.html.

Angela says

A helpful and very practical book with specific strategies for addressing challenges for kids, like being a sore loser, having difficulty with authority at school, perfectionism, anxiety, etc. I liked the lack of fluff in this and the focus on really specific ideas - if they work, great, if they don't, I can quickly move along. I found myself highlighting a lot of things to come back to as needed! In particular the suggested language for celebrating children's accomplishments or correcting their failures may be helpful.

I think the best audience is probably parents of 5-10 year olds.
