

## WHAT IS EMOTIONAL ABUSE?

"How we feel about our kids isn't as important as how they experience those feelings and how they regard the way we treat them." - Alfie Kohn

Our parenting ethic for generations has been set in a hierarchy with mom and dad at the helm doling out punishments and rewards..

Criticizing, evaluating, name-calling, belittling, insulting, rejecting, ignoring, teasing and also excessive praise, rewards, punishments and seemingly benign methods like "time-out" are also responsible for critically damaging the crucial bond between parent and child. Repeated exposure to traditional discipline such as excessive, inappropriate demands and fear-based consequences can also damage the developing brain.

Our communication with our children has become violent. We scream, shout, demand and sometimes smack our children into compliance and yet we fail to see why the family happiness factor is falling. Many are struggling to parent effectively.

## FACTS TO CONSIDER

**FACT:** Humans are the only species born without a fully developed brain. We are born with billions and billions of brain cells and very few connections. 90% of brain growth happens in the first 5 years.

**FACT:** The nature and strength of the emotional bond between a child and his or her primary caregiver actually forms those vital connections (neural pathways) that are crucial to the success of later brain functioning.

**FACT:** A 1995 telephone survey identifying types of emotional abuse suggested that by the time a child was 2 years old, 90% of families had used one or more forms of psychological aggression in the previous 12 months.

[info@teach-through-love.com](mailto:info@teach-through-love.com)

## WHAT IS TEACH THROUGH LOVE?

Transforming the Emotional Abuse of Children is a grassroots organization and parent education resource promoting conscious parenting for progressive parents and dedicated to raising the awareness of the emotional abuse of children through the various forms of media.

The quotes on the front are real slices of life. Things I've heard mumbled and grumbled to children, one too many times.

A single, unkind word spoken to a child immeasurably ravages the spirit. Witnessing acts of violence, spoken or otherwise, instills a bitterness that is carried long into adulthood.

We have an opportunity be a vehicle of inspiration for children longing to escape the pain of a powerless struggle. By giving children a solid foundation of love and self-worth, they can overcome any circumstance to realize their true potential and achieve their wildest dreams.

Join our FACEBOOK community for daily inspiration and log onto our website and Make the Promise to **TEACH through Love** – commit to practicing nonviolent communication in your relationships with others.

Sharing this flyer with your community will help raise awareness. Together we heal the world, one kid at a time.

I invite you to help me make a difference!

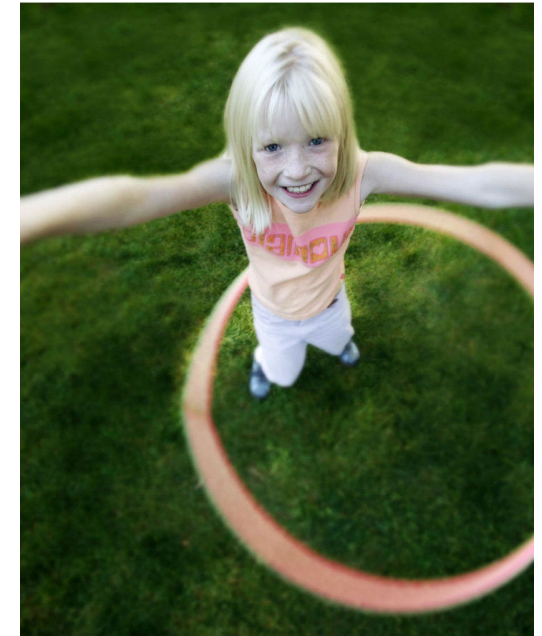
All the best,

Lori Petro

Educator/Founder

To find out more about Conscious Parenting or to Make the Promise please visit:

[facebook.com/TEACHthroughLove](https://facebook.com/TEACHthroughLove)



"Unconditionally respect, honor and love yourself by choosing to take responsibility for the words you use"  
~ Darren Weissman

**...because these words do hurt.**

*"Stop it, you're acting like a baby!"*  
- Mother of two

*"Get out of my face."*  
- Frustrated Mom

*"If you don't eat your breakfast, a stranger is going to come and take you away."*  
- Impatient grandmother

*"If you don't obey Mommy and do what she says, Daddy's not coming home tonight"*  
- Father on the phone with his child

[www.teach-through-love.com](http://www.teach-through-love.com)

## ADDRESSING THE DAMAGE

"Physical wounds heal, but psychological scars can last a lifetime," says Dr. Charles Johnson, professor of pediatrics at Ohio State University and chairman of the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) committee on child abuse.

Parental verbal aggression (yelling, insulting) or symbolic aggression (slamming a door, silent treatment) toward children can have serious consequences resulting in emotional and/or behavioral problems, including: depression, lack of attachment or emotional bond to a parent or guardian, delayed/low cognitive ability and educational achievement and poor social skills.

Psychology professor Laura Brown of the University of Washington says, "There's this myth that kids are resilient. When they have good social support, they are. But when they're subject to constant denigration, it's different.

When you tell them, "You're ugly," or "You'll never amount to anything," that's the mirror they see themselves in."

Children who experience rejection are more likely to exhibit hostility, to be extremely dependent, to have negative opinions of themselves and their abilities, to be emotionally unstable or unresponsive and to have a negative perception of the world around them.

"Children are human beings, just as we are, and behave in accordance to the way they are treated, just as we do." ~ Jan Hunt

## WHAT DOES AN EMOTIONALLY ABUSED CHILD LOOK LIKE?

- poor self-confidence/self-image
- unusual fears/clingy
- dependent/withdrawn
- anxious/depressed
- difficulty forming relationships
- aggressive (passive-aggressive)
- obsessive-compulsive
- self-destructive/cruel/suicidal
- alcohol or drug abuse



## WHAT DOES AN EMOTIONALLY DISCONNECTED PARENT LOOK LIKE?

- criticizes or puts down child
- blames child
- yells, name-calls, scares
- is cold and rejecting
- indifferent to child's problems
- withholds affection
- ignores child
- uses demeaning jokes to humiliate
- shows preferential treatment among siblings
- demands respect while giving none

It is necessary to shift our thinking from a traditional, power-over paradigm to a conscious aware paradigm. Only then can we end the cycle of generational abuse that has seeped into our parenting and contributed to the emotional dysfunction of so many.

You can't change anyone's  
behavior but your own!

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Every time another child commits suicide or goes on a shooting rampage, we struggle to understand - *Why?* Fingers are pointed in every direction; at the media, the music industry, video games, the NRA, but our fingers are never turned inward, toward our own hearts. It's time to recognize our own words and actions as the cause of an ever-eroding respect for life.

You can help end the cycle of abuse by pledging to raise awareness and parent education in your community.

- Join Our FACEBOOK COMMUNITY for daily tips and support & log onto our website and [Make the Promise...](#)
- Distribute this flyer in your neighborhood.
- [Find a parenting class](#) and read books on child development..
- Download the [TEACH tool](#) and [LANGUAGE Model](#) and improve your communication skills.
- Learn about your child's stage of development so you can set appropriate limits and expectations.
- Maintain control of your anger by practicing self-empathy and [techniques to help you stay calm](#).
- Build a support network of counselors, family, friends and community resources.

Emotional abuse is hard to detect. Many of the symptoms overlap with other disorders and are common even in children who have not been abused.

We must learn that in our fast-paced-techno-world, we need to *stop, take a moment* and engage our children with our full attention and not our total frustration.

Because our children deserve the best.