

# Maintain A Positive Presence (Support Environment)

A positive presence can be characterized by the encouragement, support, and gentle guidance children receive from the adults that care for them. When children feel safe and protected, they are better able to explore their surroundings, use their skills, and gain new ones. Positive interactions help children to organize their emotional responses and behaviors, develop healthy attachments, and resolve conflicts.

**Practices that promote nurturing and responsive relationships include supporting children's play, responding to children's conversation, providing positive feedback, encouraging appropriate behavior, and building ties with each child and family:**

- **Caring Connections:** Responding to children's or families' needs or requests builds positive emotions and secure relationships.
- **Positive Guidance:** Helps children learn what behaviors are safe and appropriate.
- **Provide Comfort:** Maintaining a calm presence and voice tone helps children self-regulate.
- **Preparation:** Changes in the professional or typical routines are shared with children and families before they occur to help prepare children for what to expect and who will be caring for them.

## Benefits:

1. Provides a foundation children will use to build future relationships.
2. Reassures children that they are safe and cared for.
3. Supports children in how they respond to their experiences and regulate their reactions.

## 10 CONSIDERATIONS FOR MAINTAINING A POSITIVE PRESENCE

1. Support children in building relationships with you by providing one-to-one opportunities for each child.
2. Establish a plan to exchange information with each family.
3. Show respect, warmth, and interest in all children and their families.
4. Support children's independence by recognizing their strengths, efforts and accomplishments.
5. Set realistic expectations for each child based on his/her abilities and development.
6. Involve children in creating some important rules and guidelines.
7. Follow a child's or parent's lead when building a relationship.
8. Tailor positive guidance to fit the child and the situation
9. Maintain a pleasant voice tone and use caring words when assisting or supporting a child.
10. Provide cues or phrase expectations so children know what they can do rather than what they cannot do.

### Putting it to Practice:

Pay attention to your tone of voice this week. When did you notice that it is more difficult to maintain your tone of voice? How does your tone of voice affect children and families?

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