

19 May 2010

## Strong families create strong kids

**This Families Week (May 15 – 21) Parentline reminds parents that strong and positive families mean confident children who grow into confident adults.**

Parentline General Manager Wendy Protheroe said children who grow up with robust relationships with their parents are more likely to do well at school, build friends, and feel good about themselves. They are also much less likely to develop behavioural and emotional problems when they get older.

“Our counsellors undertook almost 10,000 counselling sessions with parents across Queensland and the Northern Territory last year and we know that no matter the issue a strong relationship with your child will help you and them to weather the ups and downs,” she said.

“Parents who have strong relationships with their children feel more confident and competent in managing daily parenting tasks, are less depressed, less stressed and have less conflict with their partners over parenting issues.”

Parentline’s tips for strengthening relationships with children include:

- Spend time with them – try listening to some of their music, watch their TV shows or take them to a movie you would both like.
- Listen to them – Parents can often give advice before letting kids have a chance to say how they feel. It is important for parents to listen to their children and invite them to talk more.
- Respect their privacy – Give them space of their own, don’t go into their rooms without permission and don’t pry for information except when you are making sure they are safe.
- Show your love for them – tell them often that you love them, hug them as much as they will allow and let them know that you think about them.
- Make special memories – Doing special things together can have lasting effects so create a new tradition, go to a special show you normally wouldn’t attend or make a photo album of family and friends.

Ms Protheroe said parents should also have realistic expectations of themselves.

“It is good to want to do your best as a parent but having exceptionally standards and trying to be perfect with only lead to feelings of frustration and inadequacy,” she said.

“Try not to be too hard on yourself, everyone makes mistakes and learns through experience and remember you do not have to do it all alone - help is available.

“Parentline provides over-the-phone counselling and parenting training and is even able refer callers to local face-to-face services if necessary.”

If you need to talk to someone, call Parentline on 1300 30 1300 between 8am and 10pm, seven days a week.

Parentline is a confidential telephone counselling service providing professional counselling and support for parents and carers of children and young people. It is service of BoysTown and receives funding support from the Queensland and Northern Territory Governments.