



Teach Your Child to Operate with Optimism™

Written by Doctor Katherine Larson
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Parents ask me all the time, Katherine, what is the MOST important personal mastery skill I can teach my child, so they will thrive in the global economy and uncertainties of the 21st Century?

What I tell parents is this

OPTIMISM is one of the most important skills your child can learn.

Learning how to maintain optimism is key to your child's future!

Our parent training teleseminars and audios, are dedicated to showing parents that raising an inspired child is raising an optimistic child.

An Epidemic of Pessimism

Worry about the economy, worry the environment, worry about global peace, global warming and lack of resources surrounds us every day. Not to mention how pressed we make children feel about academic achievement, getting into the best college, the best internship, the best career, etc. etc.



As a consequence, we have created an EPIDEMIC OF PESSIMISM in our children and youth...

and along with pessimism goes increases in youth depression, anxiety, binge drinking, and many other mental and physical health problems seen in today's youth.

It's VITAL to your child's self-confidence that they learn to stay positive so that they dream the big dreams and sustain the grit to accomplish them. The future will be bright and abundant for those who face it with optimism! All highly successful people know this to be true. Optimism is their secret advantage and this has been true over the centuries. Developing personal mastery in kids teaches them the skills of optimism.

Therefore, I chose the topic of OPTIMISM for today's Parenting Pointer.

Tips to Teach Your Child to Be Optimistic!

The science is clear.

Highly successful people are OPTIMISTIC!

Exceptionally persistent people are OPTIMISTIC!

Deeply satisfied people are OPTIMISTIC!

Tremendously compassionate people are OPTIMISTIC!

Starters and finishers are OPTIMISTIC!



Shall I go on?

Longer life, better health, less anxiety are all related to ...
You guessed it! **OPTIMISM!** The research is clear about this.

Imagine giving your child the successes I've listed above?

And the good part is ...

BEING AN OPTIMISTIC PERSON IS A SKILL!!!

A skill anyone can learn at any time.

A skill you can teach your child.

A skill **YOU** can learn if you don't already know it.

That's right. Optimism is not a personality trait.

Optimism is not something you're born with or without. Being an optimist is learned just as being a pessimist is learned.

And, just to make sure you really get how important this topic is for your child...

I'm letting you know that there are well over 1000 studies showing that pessimistic people do less well than optimistic people... far less well.

The tips I'm going to give you on how to teach your child to be optimistic are powerful!

I'm sure you'll see a difference in your child's persistence after you begin using these tips!



And why do I refer to your child's PERSISTENCE?

Optimism Builds Persistence

Optimistic people keep going - they persist and we now know from a neurological perspective that struggle to success brings deep satisfaction to the soul of human beings. Optimists have grit and a can-do attitude and they feel good while they work to achieve goals!

Optimistic people aren't shut down by defeat. They are undaunted because... they BELIEVE a good outcome will eventually follow their efforts! It's so much harder to move forward if one feels success is doubtful, so optimists REFUSE to buy into doubt! Optimistic children are persistent children.

That's the kind of attitude you want for your kids, do you not? At Raise Inspired Kids, we're all about teaching parents to give their kids the tools to create winning mindsets!

So, what is optimism anyway?

Remember, I said that optimistic people BELIEVE they can make their goal.

That's because ...

Optimism is a mindset. Optimism is a way of thinking. Optimism is a habit or style of looking at challenges, failure and setback in ways that increase one's own hope and persistence.



Optimism is confidence that one can take on challenges, cope with what the world dishes out, and fulfill dreams.

Optimists don't feel they have to settle or downsize their dreams!

Teach Your Child to Use Thoughts To Create Beliefs

What's so powerful is that we now know beliefs can be created! Beliefs and attitudes that create an optimistic outlook are created by each of us through our thoughts... or not.

We create our thoughts. Too often unconsciously. What I am talking about is how you can teach your child to create certain thoughts CONSCIOUSLY so they can create an optimistic attitude for themselves.

This is exactly what optimists - read highly successful people - do. They create specific types of thoughts.

Specific Things You Can Do Immediately to Help Your Child Think the Way Optimists Do.

1. Focus on what your child DOES not just on making them feel good. Don't try to always boost up their disappointments. Notice and encourage effort. You want to acknowledge going the extra mile, trying again after a setback.
2. Encourage your child to take on challenges even when they are afraid to fail or are anxious about the outcome. Put less emphasis on the outcome and more emphasis on their willingness to take a risk. Express your pride and respect for your child doing it anyway, despite anxiety. Let your



child know that fear and anxiety are *normal* feelings whenever anyone takes on a high goal.

3. Refrain from making statements about yourself that are putdowns of your personality (e.g., "I'm such a ..."). You don't want your child to copy this discouraging habit!
4. Listen to how your child describes himself. If your child makes a putdown statement about himself or herself that denotes a permanent trait, encourage and help your child REFUTE this putdown with counter examples. (e.g., refute "I am such a lousy writer" with "I didn't do well on this book report." Or "this was a flop but I have improved or I did well on my last report." Refute "I am so stupid." with "I didn't do this right.").
5. When YOU fail or experience setback explain it ALOUD in front of your child by pointing out that setback is only temporary, that the cause of the failure is confined to this one situation and that actions you can change, not your personality, are responsible for the failure. (say "Oh, I really goofed this up, next time I need to ... and I am sure the outcome will greatly improve. I think I can improve.")

Your Child's Words are Critical CLUES to How They Think and Their Assumptions About Life

6. If your child indicates a failure is going to last a long time ("I won't ever get this.") you need to take the time to discuss this outlook and help your child realistically put a limit on how long the failure is going to impact them. Belief that failure will last a long time will cause your child to give up, so you want to help your child learn to refute this kind of thinking.



7. If your child indicates a failure has a pervasive effect or undermines many areas of their life, (e.g., "I struck out! I am such a lousy player on the team. I am never going to have friends!") you need to take the time to help your child to stop magnifying the negative and specify what the failure actually effects. Point out what the failure does NOT effect.
8. Listen if your child indicates failure is caused by who they are as a person or a permanent trait about themselves ("I am just so lazy! "I am really a thoughtless kid." "I am such a klutz." "I am stupid." "I am not good at math." "I am shy and cannot do it."). You need to help your child assign the blame to their actions not who they are as a person or a trait they feel they cannot change.

I hope this Parenting Pointer helps you see the importance of teaching your child to be an optimist. I encourage you to implement the parenting tips I have listed.

These strategies will make a positive difference for your child!

Wishing you the best,

Dr. Katherine Larson

PS: Check out www.raiseinspiredkids.com to get free tips and free Audios that help parents teach their child skills from the science of personal mastery.

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About the Author

Katherine A. Larson, Ph.D. is Researcher Emeritus in education from the University of California and during the past twenty years has authored many articles and directed many notable research studies on youth and families. Her work is sighted in the prestigious What Works Clearinghouse as well as many professional journals and books. Dr. Larson has been trained in neurolinguistic programming and other personal success courses. She has been a parent coach for the past eleven years and is the parent of a son and daughter. Dr. Katherine is the President and Chief Instructor of Raise Inspired Kids.