



# Making Each Moment Count: Strengthening Your Legacy of Influence

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Explore family child care, parenting, toddlers, behavior guidance, and other resources to inspire and support your growth - and contact me:  
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**The work you do is your legacy.**

- You imprint the power of language.
- You give love and security that is a lasting blueprint for future relationships.
- You define how children feel about themselves and others for the rest of their lives.
- You instill a sense of purpose to serve others and contribute productively.
- You light a fire to be a life-long learner ignite the joy of discovery and growth.

**You are a tipping point.** You create an indelible experience of value, love, and worth, so that when children face decisions...

- They want the best for themselves.
- They treat their bodies with respect.
- They seek healthy connections with others.
- They know how to nurture themselves.

**You are a role model for others of how to be your best self.**

- To your family, you model courage and the entrepreneurial spirit.
- To your children, you model healthy choices and a well-lived life.
- To other family childcare educators, you model professionalism.
- To yourself, you commit to maximize your resources, time, and energy.

**PAIR AND SHARE:** Create a purpose statement that will fuel your energy, refocus your vision, and empower your work on a daily basis.

- What is your story of caring? What drew you to this profession?  
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- What is your motivation for this work? What legacy do you want to leave?  
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- What is your purpose statement? Write one or two sentences.  
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Your work is your passion. Your work is your purpose: Empowering children and families!

## Part 1: Transforming You

Strengthen your legacy of influence with essentials of excellence that will revitalize your effectiveness.

### ESSENTIAL 1: Empower with Vision

- Embrace change. Recognize resistance.
- Plan steps towards new goals.
- Accept ambiguity.
- Counteract fear with action.
- Live “as if” you already achieved your goals.
- See growth-fostering people.

**Reflection:** What changes do you want to make in your environment, business, or teaching? What will keep you from making change? What would you do differently living “as if” you achieved your goals?

### ESSENTIAL 2: Empower through Words

- Use positive self-talk: “I am becoming...”
- Use verbal persuasion: “I can do this.”
- Use reframing: “I am learning to...and I am taking positive steps.”
- Use affirmation. “Together we can...”
- Understand the lasting legacy of labels. Words are powerful.

**Reflection:** What negative messages do you need to discard? What are you learning to do? What are you becoming? How can you reframe your challenges to empower your growth?

### ESSENTIAL 3: Empower with Self-Appraisal

- Set up for success: Practice accurate self-assessment of your skills, abilities, and interactions (Muñoz et al., 2015).
- Know your emotions, strengths, limits, values, and motives (Goleman, et al., 2013).
- Use accurate appraisal of time and resources. Use a timer and a notebook.

**Reflection:** Do you plan enough time to accomplish all needed tasks? Do you wait until you are desperate before you ask for help? In what area are you short of resources? (Your answer can be physical, emotional, or mental.) How would documenting your use of time and taking daily notes help you plan for success?

### ESSENTIAL 4: Empower Awareness of Others

- Learn inter-personal and conflict mediation.
- Reflect back (paraphrase) to ensure meaning.
- Be comfortable with silence and “wait time.”
- Take notes to remember and revisit action steps.
- Understand your influence to build-up or weaken confidence, trust, and skills of others.

**Reflection:** Describe the last conflict you had with a family member or a child. How would reflecting back or paraphrasing have changed the outcome? How can writing notes help you reflect on a situation and create action steps?

### ESSENTIAL 5: Empower with Culturally Responsive Practice

- Be committed to inclusion, equity, and advocacy (Chen et al., 2009).
- Provide culturally responsive support for families (Halgunseth et al., 2013).
- Ask questions and actively learn about your families (Ruprecht et al., 2016).
- Practice a co-parenting model (Ruprecht et al 2016).

**Reflection:** How do you see differences among children in expectations between their home and yours? Describe a situation when communication with families was impacted by unique points of view? How did you resolve this?

### ESSENTIAL 6: Empower with Intentionality

- Practice deliberate self-management (persistent daily practice).
- Align mental states (thoughts, beliefs, desires, and actions) with your goals.
- Use purposeful, ongoing reflective practice (journal, feedback, self-review).
- Manage time. Keep lists of needed items and tasks. Organize spaces. Plan ahead.
- Goal is productivity: Work smarter, not harder!

**Reflection:** How can you work smarter, not harder? How can you improve time and space management? How can you better manage yourself and your personal, professional, and family needs?

### ESSENTIAL 7: Empower with Insight for Learning

- Activate reflective practice.
- Model the traits you want others to develop.
- Move from deficit/barrier mindset to strength & asset mindset. Challenges are opportunities to grow. Interruptions are opportunities to serve.
- Create growth-enhancing solutions by pairing with other learners.
- Change lives - starting with your own.

**PAIR AND SHARE:** In what area can you improve your strengths and mindsets?

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In what area do you need specific training?

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What two action steps can you take to move your family child care goals forward?

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## Part 2: Transforming Children

Infuse your work with key ingredients of high-quality that will promote positive behavior and learning. Here are the golden essentials:

| CHILD NEEDS                  | YOU GIVE                    |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Attachment security       | Responsiveness              |
| 2. Health and wellness       | Nurture                     |
| 3. Language development      | Serve & return              |
| 4. Stress mediation          | Predictability and soothing |
| 5. Effective skill building  | Positive guidance           |
| 6. Dispositions for learning | Rich cognitive stimulation  |
| 7. Family collaboration      | Co-parenting model          |

**1. Attachment Security.** Secure attachment results from contingent responsiveness of the caregiver – sensitive and tuned in to each child, anticipating and co-regulating – coming alongside to soothe, comfort and guide. Creates a blueprint for future relationships and wires the brain for stress or NOT stress. Secondary attachment figures are a re-patterning agent. Imprint a loving, secure brain for life.

**Responsiveness:** Learn and practice the art of presence.

- Put away all distractions and stay tuned in. Notice and anticipate needs.
- Adjust your words, movements, and touches to stay connected.
- Use contingent responding to sooth and reassure.
- Strengthen resilience traits: Flexibility, seeking help, optimistic, sense of humor.

**2. Health and wellness.** Children treated with patience and gentleness feel worthy of self-care. Children who are “listened to and responded to” will listen and respond well to their bodies and needs.

**Nurture is essential:** Provide information to parents about:

- Prenatal care, exercise, and nutrition.
- Media protection and stress mediation.
- Mental health awareness and support.
- Health and wellness for families.

**3. Stress mediation.** The Zero to Three parent survey shows adults do not understand the emotional needs of young children. Explore the Zero to Three Website.

**Predictability & soothing:** Manage your own stress: Then attend to children.

- Without conscious effort, adults may use defensive, reactive, or angry communication strategies when under stress. Practice self-awareness and healthy self-care.
- Attend to your own emotional health. Pay attention. Make adjustments.
- Learn and use effective soothing, physical touch, and predictable, calm routines.

**4. Language development.** Language is the powerhouse tool for self-regulation, resilience, and social skills. It increases cognitive processing skills and vocabulary (Suskind et al. 2013), better outcomes for children at risk (Kuhl 2011), and fosters positive brain development (Fox et al. 2010; Shonkoff, 2010).

**Serve & return:** Create a rich language experience.

- **Serve and return.** Tune in, take turns, talk more.
- **Parallel talk.** Narrate children’s actions, strategies, and experiences using specific words to describe their actions.
- **Open-ended questions.** Ask “how, why, what if, and what else” questions to encourage higher-level thinking and concept development.
- **Repeat and expand strategies.** Add information and elaborate to extend understanding.
- **Advanced language and vocabulary.** Use specific descriptive words for objects, events, and emotions.

**5. Effective skill-building.** We expect too much of children’s INDEPENDENT ability to behave and **too little** of their learning. Children engaged in awesome learning use their curiosity and creativity in positive ways. Meet their need for thirst, sleep, nutrition and exercise. Teach manners. Model and support. Children learn how to behave by watching adults.

**Positive guidance:** Focusing on what TO do and teaching skills for success.

- Be consistent. “We eat at the table.”
- Narrate success. “Awesome! You put your box away by yourself.”
- Keep it simple and say what TO do. “Throw the ball in the basket.” (Rather than, “Don’t throw the ball at Tim.”)
- Aim for success EVERY time. “You are learning to…” “Let’s do it together.”
- Strength-based talk only! “You are making progress.”
- Teach responsibility and helping skills.

**6. Dispositions for learning.** Show children the **world is bigger** than your yard. Answer their curiosity with books and conversation. Give them a vision for making a difference. Inspire imagination and creativity through music and art as a unique expression of themselves. Instill 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving.

**Rich cognitive modeling:** Over-plan purposeful, interesting activities.

- Follow children’s passions, ideas, interests.
- Prepare materials, activities, books, resources.
- Offer stimulating & varied explorations and activities.
- Notice and write down what children say/do. Share with families and plan to foster skills.

**PAIR AND SHARE:** It is our job like a gardener to help children grow up to be all they can be. Describe the children you care for and teach. Which child will benefit most from the each of the following and what can you do differently?

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| Attachment - Responsiveness                            |
| Health and wellness - Nurture                          |
| Language development - Serve & return                  |
| Stress mediation - Predictability and soothing         |
| Skill success - Positive guidance                      |
| Dispositions for learning - Rich cognitive stimulation |

### Part 3: Transforming Families

Discover the impact of strength-based essentials that reinforce and foster the competence of families.

**Family Collaboration:** The co-parenting model requires coordinated care (Ruprecht et al. 2016). The family is the expert. Families can show you what works best for their child, such as rocking, holding, and feeding.

#### The Co-Parenting Model of Care

- Schedule a regular touch-base meeting. Invite parents to talk other than at pick-up/drop off.
- Set a strength-based pick-up policy. All personal issues aside from general daily business are discussed another time.
- Write a clear handbook. All policies must be explicit & reinforced. Include non-negotiables.
- Discuss only one issue at a time. Choose the most important priority.
- Ask, “If you did see this (or if this happened) at home, what would you do?”
- Set a time to revisit the issue. “Let’s talk next week and see how things are going.”

#### Monitor Communication

- Keep professional boundaries. Business and friendships do not mix.
- Keep confidences. Attend to this commitment with integrity.
- Seek professional relationships with other providers and personal relationships with friends.

**PAIR AND SHARE:** Why is it difficult to incorporate family ways of caregiving, yet ensure your own non-negotiables are carried out? \_\_\_\_\_

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What are some cultural differences between you and your families and among families?

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What goals can you set to be more intentional about family communication?

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### Part 4: Transforming Advocacy

Dream big and elevate your professional vision as a family childcare provider. Step out on new journeys.

1. Make yourself valuable.
2. Go the extra mile. Be a good listener. Identify needs.
3. Learn your strengths. Strengthen your weaknesses.
4. Find purpose in supporting, encouraging, and empowering others.
5. Connect with local and state professionals.
6. Attend conferences and pursue accreditation and QRIS involvement.
7. Grow! Improve quality. Be the best leader you can. This goal is a mindset as well as an action.

**PAIR AND SHARE:** Step out on new journeys.

It’s time to dream BIG. What is it YOU want to do to grow?

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