



Coaching at home: A Parent Guide

What is Coaching?

"It is helping them learn rather than teaching them." (Gallwey, 1986)

Coaching is about helping someone unlock their potential by asking probing questions, challenging their way of thinking and behaving, and most importantly by listening.

Coaching is a transformative process with children because it develops agency, ownership, independent thinking, and responsibility. It helps children to develop skills and attributes that will enable them to overcome challenges and make decisions. It raises their self-esteem and confidence, and it empowers them to take action.

How can I incorporate Coaching at home?

Becoming a coaching parent

The role of the coach is to listen, guide, encourage and importantly, allow the child being coached to take ownership of their development.

As a parent, it means you must take a step back from telling your children what to do. You need to create an environment at home that will allow your children to share their challenges and goals with you and empower them to make their own decisions.

Creating a coaching environment at home:

- Ask your child open questions (see some example questions below)
- Refrain from using "why" as it can have an accusatory tone. Instead, ask "what makes you think that way?".
- Encourage your child to set themselves a goal, and consider how they can achieve it. Try using the SMART method of goal setting (SMART=Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound.)
- Actively listen to your children and leave them enough space to think and come up with their own answers.
- Suspend your reaction and focus on their answers and reactions to events.
- Share your knowledge and experience so that they can reach the outcome on their own, rather than telling them what to do.
- Give feedback that will enable your children to learn from their mistake, instead of criticising and telling them off.
- Focus on their emotions, rather than their actions.

Active Listening and questions you could ask

To make coaching at home successful, you need to integrate it with your normal day-to-day activities, rather than making it a 'let's sit down for a big conversation' moment. You can have short, simple coaching conversations while you play, walk to school, cook, and eat lunch or dinner.

During these conversations, it is important to indicate to your child that you are listening. You can do this with open questions about what your child has said. For example:



Once you've started coaching your children, you should ask for their feedback, to make sure it works for them. Here are some questions to help you:

