

The Manuals

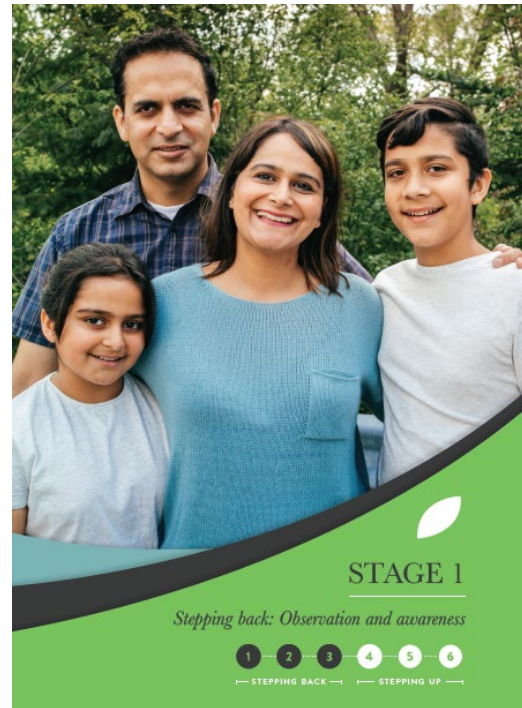
Note: Coach manuals can only be accessed by those who have registered for training.



Look at some of what is inside the Parent Hope Manual

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1. 'Stepping back' reflections

Your coach will ask you to describe an interaction in each meeting.

An example of a parent-child interaction:

Where did it take place?

.....

What started the interaction?

.....

What were the beginning behaviours? (What was said and actioned)

.....

What was the emotional tone?

For you

- anxious angry defensive agitated Thoughtful
 distressed withdrawn helpless Calm Confident

For your child

- anxious angry defensive agitated Thoughtful
 distressed withdrawn helpless Calm Confident

How stirred up were your emotions?

Did you experience any of these signs of high stress:

- racing heart rate tensed up shallow breathing shouting
 OR crying unable to think shutting off withdrawing

Who was there? What was your main worry? What were you thinking?

.....

Who wasn't there? Where were other family members?

How did other family members respond?

**PARENT
HOPE
PROJECT**

Session 1 Information Page 2

Healthy child & adolescent development

Connection and autonomy in balance encourages maturation. Maturity grows as connection with caregivers gradually allows more independence.

From birth through to adulthood a key developmental task for a child is to gradually reduce their dependence on their mother, on both parents, and on other adults, and increase their capacity to manage upsets, new challenges, and ways to socialise. Early opportunities to experience the stress of short separations from caregivers, is the start of the child growing some autonomy. The key to assisting a child to develop their resilience in growing more in independence is to provide balanced connection and autonomy experiences appropriate to their age. Connection shows interest and support while always treating the child as a separate person who is learning to manage their own life tasks. Allowing even a young child opportunities to explore their world independently from the caregiver is an important way to support healthy development.

At all stages of parent-child development, an equal balance of connection and opportunity for independence is optimal.

Milestones for managing emotions: self-regulation

2. Key idea

Investigate: Energy direction

One of the things this program considers is where most of your energy (as a parent) gets directed:

- 1 managing the child OR
- 2 reacting to the other parent OR
- 3 managing self?

Thinking back over an example of an interaction with the child you are concerned about: Where did most of your efforts go?

Did your energy go into:

CHILD FOCUS: Worried thoughts about the child, what the child might do, what you want the child to do, how to make the child feel and act differently.

OTHER PARENT FOCUS: Being irritated with the other parent, telling the other parent what to do, being critical or worried about the way the other parent is going about things.

PARENT FOCUS: Thinking about what you think is my role as a parent, what are you in control of, what do you want to take a stand on, what do you want to convey is important to you? How do you want to contribute to your child growing their own coping capacities?

| Energy to changing child | Energy to reacting to or changing other parent | Energy to what's in my control and responsibility-changing self |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| | | |
| | | |



What is in my control? What is my "I" position?

In the first three sessions you have been focusing on 'stepping back' to promote your child's development and to become aware of the patterns you are often in with your child and the other parent. The second half of this program moves to 'stepping up' experiments in adjusting parts of a parent's interactions.

Each session in Part 2 focuses on how you can adjust the way you have been interacting with your child/adolescent, based on observations so far. A goal is for you to change only what is in your control, rather than trying to change your child.

The focus is 'stepping up' as a parent leader by being: more calm; more clear about what you will and won't do; and more interested in your child, rather than reacting to your child.

1. Continued 'stepping back' reflections

Continue to reflect on your parent-child interactions:

An example of a parent-child interaction:

Where did it take place?
.....

3. Key idea

Connect with the maturing part of your child rather than their problem side

CALM CONNECTION: How do you connect with your young person?

HOW MUCH: connection time have you had in the past week with your child?

WHAT GETS FOCUSED ON? How much connection revolves around your child's difficulties and symptoms?

How much connection time enables you to:

- Get to know your child's interests?
- What they are experiencing with friends?
- Any accomplishments and disappointments?
- Any things they are satisfied with?

Does my connection encourage my child's maturity or give attention to their immaturity?

What efforts to connect go well?

What efforts don't result in a calm interaction and getting to know each other better?

If too much connection time focuses on the child's problems and symptoms, this can unintentionally reinforce/reward the child staying in a more dependent position.

4. Extension questions



What parenting goals have I been aware of today?

Are my goals for myself and how this can best facilitate maturity in my child/adolescent? Or are my goals more focussed on my child and their health, behaviour, happiness and/or success?

When I am aware of my own goal for how I want to parent what difference does it make?



What of my parenting efforts today have gone into trying to change what is not really in my control?

Trying to get the other's co-operation or compliance instead of changing what I will do if certain core principles are not met by my child (or another family member)?



What have I noticed today about ways my child/adolescent invites me to take over their responsibilities for managing them self or their tasks (often subtle and not consciously)?

When I don't take up these invitations what happens?



How have I responded to these invitations today?

How have I managed when my child/adolescent is distressed, anxious, angry, down, procrastinating or helpless?

What does this tell me about what is hardest for me to tolerate in my child?

When I manage to tolerate my own anxiety a bit more what difference does it make?

A dad regains his agency with his oppositional daughter and connects with her differently.

More from the story of a father, Joe and his daughter Chloe.

This is another example from the story of one parent, Joe, as he worked to figure out how he could be a resource to his defiant 13 year old daughter Chloe. Previously Joe recognised that his pattern of rushing in to smooth things over for Chloe resulted in increased entitlement from his daughter. He began to accept that changes for Chloe would be slow but that the first step he could make was to stop trying to create peace by bribing Chloe. His stepping back from an ineffective pattern was the launch of becoming a more hopeful parent. Joe started to shift his focus from trying to change Chloe to a focus on what he could change.

Look at some of what is inside the coach manual

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Parallel process for parent and coach

Remember: It is a similar challenge for a parent to shift their anxious fixing focus from their child as it is for the helping professional to restrain their fixing focus on the parent. A focus on fixing another person reduces their growth in personal agency.

| PARENT managing self not child | COACH managing self not parent |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Shift focus on fixing child to self | Shift focus from fixing and directing parent to managing self |
| • Observe patterns | • Research not fix |
| • See own part without blame | • See patterns not fault |
| • Patience not quick fix | • Patience not push |

Seeing parents together or separately?

ONE OR BOTH PARENTS - WHO IS BEST TO ATTEND?

If both parents are motivated to attend it is positive to have them working in parallel on themselves – with their own manuals. They can learn from listening to each other, but the coach always focusses them on reflecting on their part in family interactions. With both parents present the coach ensures that each parent is given equal opportunity to participate. Time keeping becomes an important responsibility for the coach with 2 parent participants.

If having both at the same session results in them reacting too much to each other – so that they are unable to reflect on themselves - it may be best for each to do the program separately with their own manual.

If only one parent is motivated it is best for them to come on their own and not to try to push the reluctant parent to participate. The coach will get caught in a reactive triangle if they try to engage a reluctant parent on behalf of the more engaged parent. The principle is always that one person working on their part can contribute to a less intense family environment that is positive for a child growth in responsible independence.

Key to symbols



LEAF

Key idea to be introduced



WHITEBOARD

Use whiteboard to create visual impact



INFORMATION PAGES

Refer to information page

The parent is asked to consider:

Are there ways I can step back a bit from rescuing or trying to do too much for my child?

The in-between project is to **OBSERVE, OBSERVE, OBSERVE!**

Summarise that the effort for the next week/fortnight/... is to observe as many of these kinds of interactions as possible.

- Observe self – what you are doing?
- Observe the child/adolescent – how do they respond to what you do?

Explain the manual worksheets and information Pages

The worksheets in the manual are to back up the thinking from each session. The tracing of an example of family patterns is part of every session. They are encouraged for getting the most out of the program but not required homework to fill in. Let the parent know that this is a guide for what will be explored each session. If they are able to observe and reflect on their interactions between each session it can add to the value of the program. The worksheets are the essential part of the program, because they support your learning in the interactions that occur in your everyday life.

Information pages at the end of each session provide additional input that may be useful for parents.



Information Page 1 | Tracing an interaction: Example from one father, Joe and his 13-year-old daughter Chloe

Information Page 2 A | Adolescent healthy development

Information Page 2 B | Child healthy development

Explain to parents that the information pages for this session may be useful for parent reflection about ways they might contribute to an environment that facilitates growth in independence as well as maintaining good connection.

STAGE 1: SESSIONS 1-3

Stepping back: Observation and awareness



Overview

Each session focus is on what has been observed of parent-child/adolescent interactions. A goal is for a parent to become more of an observer than a reactor. Continued 'stepping back' reflections consolidate parent awareness. A new **KEY IDEA** (LEAF) is introduced each session.

- 1 Reflect on observations:
 - What went well and what didn't go well?
 - Did interactions promote increased independence or immature dependence?
 - Where was the energy of the parent focused – on managing themselves to the best of their capacity or managing the young person?
- 2 Ask for a detailed description of either a progress example or a setback example – both are helpful to learn from.
- 3 Share your observations about the pattern of interaction and how each person might be affecting the other. Ask if this rings true or whether they see it differently.

For parents who are sensitive to blame, the question about what helped and didn't help might be hard for them to engage with. You may find it more engaging to stay with questions of promoting independence and questions about energy focus.

STAGE 2: SESSIONS 4-6

From stepping back to stepping up



ADJUSTING PARTS OF THE PARENT'S INTERACTIONS

Overview

Each session in Stage 2 focuses on how the parent can adjust the way they have been interacting with their child/adolescent (based on observations so far). A goal is for a parent to change what is in their control, rather than trying to change the child.

Stage 2 will add experiments in actively stepping up and handling interactions differently.

The focus is on any examples of stepping up as a parent leader by being calmer, clearer about what the parent will and won't do, and more interested in their child rather than reacting to their child.

Each session will have: Continued 'stepping back' reflections and will add: Continued 'stepping up' reflections. This repetition aims to reinforce principles of parent agency covered in previous sessions.

Continue reflections from parent's interaction observations, asking:

- What went well and what didn't go well?
- Did interactions promote increased independence or immature dependence?
- Where was the energy of the parent focused – on managing themselves to the best of their capacity, or managing the young person?

Share your observations about the pattern of interaction and how much the parent is directing energy into changing themselves or the young person. Ask the parent if this rings true or whether they see it differently.

Focus in on what the parent is doing in the areas that they have control of, and any things they are doing in areas that they have little control over (such as getting the child/adolescent to co-operate, to be happy, to not be anxious, to do their homework, or getting the other parent to change).

- Parent may share advice only when the young person has worked to think through their own ideas.
- The parent shares their thinking rather than tells the child what they should do. They might share how they manage similar situations as a way of providing guidance rather than thinking for their child.



Write the two headings in columns and add a few examples that might go in each column.

| CONNECTING WITH | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Problems | Strengths |
| | |

How much of my connecting to help my child could reinforce their helplessness?

.....

.....

.....

How much of my connecting to help my child encourages their own problem solving?

.....

.....

.....

Introduce: Big-picture change compared to short-term change

What have they observed about their focus on a short-term fix or long-term growth in resilience?

How much of my effort is pushing for quick change? Relieving the stress of the moment?

.....

.....

.....

How much of my effort is to remind myself that change is slow and to tolerate it? How much do I keep in view the longer-term goal of promoting more independence?

.....

.....

.....

Investigate: Maintaining the hope building effort

Review what has changed, what has been learned, or is useful? What is the parent most interested to keep observing and working on?



Write on the white board the key ideas from the whole program (Write the summary words).

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| change child dependence | change self independence |
| not in my control | in my control |
| you message | I message |
| connect to problems | connect to strengths |
| quick fix | big picture |

Coach Supervision Guide

- Self-reflection forms after each session.
- Come prepared to share an example interaction with a parent
- What were the pulls for the coach?
- What challenges were expressed by the parent?
- How did I respond?
- What was constructive? What was not constructive in this interchange?

Appendix 8

Optional Pre & Post Program Surveys