



# Happy Homes Doc!

## Hurt In Children

Even the best parents are not able to keep the world from presenting their child with hurtful experiences. Nor can they keep themselves from ever hurting their child's feelings.

Parents can, however, help their children avoid the heavy negative impact of hurt by teaching them how to recognize, process and release hurt.

### Recognizing Hurt in a Child

Carrying around hurt over time, as with any strong emotion, will tend to multiply its negative aspects and inhibit your child from experiencing a full life. When hurt, your child might

- "Curl up" physically
- Hang his/her head
- Hold his/her stomach
- Cry loudly
- Gaze at the floor
- Become teary-eyed

### A child who has experienced repeated hurt might:

- Withdraw
- Become callous
- Act angry
- Be lonely
- Become irritable
- Have low self-esteem
- Be non-assertive
- Develop a superior attitude or become aloof
- Be hyper-vigilant in anticipation of being hurt
- Be deliberately hurtful to others
- Exhibit an impaired ability to trust self or others

### What Hurt Does

- Hurt causes pain and discomfort, destroys feelings of love, and shreds our self-image, self-esteem and self-confidence.

### **What Hurt Does (continued)**

- Hurt shows us where we are allowing ourselves to be victimized and where we are not utilizing our personal power.
- Hurt teaches us the importance of setting firm personal limits.
- Hurt shreds a child's self-image.
- Hurt stimulates anger that is held inside so the hurt is not exposed. The held-in anger tears apart the self-esteem.
- Hurt leads to a feeling of being "victimized" instead of feeling empowered and undermines a child's self-confidence.

### **What Your Hurt Child Needs From You**

- "Sticks and stones may break our bones, but words " CAN AND DO hurt us. Avoid the temptation to help your child deny the hurt.
- Provide a safe and supportive atmosphere for working with feelings.
- Be patient. Allow the healing from hurt to take as long as it takes-without judgment. Unlike anger, which surfaces and passes through us quickly, hurt takes time to heal.
- Give your child your presence. Your child may feel rejected as a result of the hurt. You don't have to talk or "fix" the hurt to reassure your child.
- Help your child conquer hurt feelings by teaching him/her how to face the hurt and move through it. Just the act of looking squarely at what has happened and what has been hurtful frees your child from some of the pain.
- While processing emotions, people feel very vulnerable. If a child shares his/her feelings a few times and feels endangered by doing so, he/she will be reluctant to continue sharing. Be careful not to criticize your child's emotional reactions.
- Give your child your presence. Your child may feel rejected as a result of the hurt. You don't have to talk or "fix" the hurt to reassure your child.
- Respect your child's confidences.
- Encourage your child to express his/her feelings openly. Hurt compounds when parents do not believe, respect or deal effectively with the hurt their child is experiencing

To learn more about the important parenting skill of EMOTION COACHING contact us at

**Ward & Associates Psychological Services, PLLC**  
**1414 W. Franklin Street**  
**Boise, ID 83702**

**Phone: (208) 343-0647**

**Fax: (208) 395-1948**

**E-mail: [DrWard@happyhomesdoc.com](mailto:DrWard@happyhomesdoc.com)**