

Emotion or Mood

“Emotions spread faster than any disease. A smile or a panic will spread through a group of people far quicker than any virus could.” **Seth Godin**

Godin was referring to the workplace when he wrote this sentence, but he may as well have been talking about families.

Family tone is usually impacted by the emotions and mood of parents.

- **Anger** creates tension especially when it simmers just below the surface. Kids go into their shells when anger is near, because they feel unsafe. Fear accompanies parent anger.
- **Grumpiness** makes kids switch off parents. It's also contagious, spreading around a family like wild-fire.
- **Scepticism** leads to cynicism and a hardening of the empathy arteries. Scepticism is sneezed, spreading germs everywhere.
- **Gratitude** spreads quickly, lifting everyone who receives it. Family tone quickly lightens when gratitude is expressed.
- **Calm** falls on a family like blanket instantly increasing family security and contentment. It too spreads but quietly.
- **Enthusiasm** lifts the spirit, making everything seem possible. Most children are naturally attracted to enthusiasm, as it offers hope and inspiration.

Emotions or mood?

Emotions are short, more intense bursts of feeling. Moods are emotions that linger longer but are less intense. Nothing wrong with negative emotions. In fact, feeling sad is just as normal and healthy as feeling happy.

Some negative emotions become toxic if they aren't curbed or contained, impacting heavily on the long-term family tone. They become the family's default mood.

Feeling challenged or reassured?

Children's emotions also impact heavily on the mood in families, but one of your basic tasks as a parent is to do your best to lift yourself above the emotions of children and spread a healthy mood.

It's not easy, but it's important that you do.

Michael Grose

The simplest way

to get your kids loving Fruit & Veg.

Eating plenty of fruit and veg can help keep your children healthy, but sometimes it's hard to get them to eat enough. Children often copy their parents, so our first tip is to make sure you eat enough too!



Other tips are:

- **Put your kids in charge.** Let them choose and wash fruit and veg for their lunch box; if they're able to, let them peel, cut or grate it.
- **Keep it interesting.** Cut fruit and veg into a variety of small shapes so it's easier and fun to eat.
- **Make ready-to-eat snacks.** Keep cut fruit and veg in the fridge for the kids to grab and eat with hummus or yoghurt.

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