

# 5

## Critical Emotional Needs of Children



### Importance

A child needs to feel **important**.

Feeling **important** refers to a child's need to feel:

"I have value!" "I am useful!" "I am somebody!"

Adults can help children feel **important** by:

- Encouraging children to do things they are able to do themselves.  
(dressing, menu planning, simple chores)
- Encouraging their curiosity and desire for adventure and learning new skills.
- Asking their opinions and listening to their answers.
- Paying attention to what they are saying, thinking and feeling.

Adults can take away a child's feeling of **importance** by:

- Over protectiveness— limiting too much
- Excessive permissiveness—giving in to demands and wants and not establishing clear rules and consequences.
  - Talking, lecturing and ordering
  - Giving very little undivided attention
- Not allowing children to solve problems on their own.

When we help children to feel **important** we prevent them from finding harmful and unhealthy ways to get attention to feel "I am somebody"!

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