

What Kids Need ...

Some guidelines for helping children grow up healthy and strong:

1. Correction, appropriately expressed, is not destructive, hurtful or shame inducing.
2. One's needs cannot always be met by others, but they can always be appropriately articulated to others.
3. Feelings do not need justification – one always has a right to one's feelings.
4. One does not always have the right to act on one's feelings; all actions have consequences and these need to be thought about.
5. Compromise means giving up as well as getting.
6. Changing one's mind is not necessarily a bad thing; part of growing up is the ability to react based on new information.
7. Making mistakes is often how we learn. There is no shame involved.
8. Being able to 'own' our mistakes, apologise is appropriate and make amends where possible is how we grown. "I'm sorry; tell me what I can do to make it up to you" is a statement of strength, not an admissions of weakness or shame.

If children are fortunate enough to grow up in a home where these eight rules are acted out in the course of daily events, they will probably be healthy, secure adults with positive self-images. They will probably be comfortable with their feelings and have little difficulty with setting reasonable boundaries in their lives.

Credit: interpreted from The Narcissistic Family: Diagnosis and Treatment, by Stephanie Donaldson-Pressman

