


EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Rinda Blom

- I want to play, play play
- I am spontaneous
- I am naive
- I am curious and want to discover the world
- I am dependant and have a bundle of needs
- I am unique
- I am full of love and lots of other emotions

WHO IS THE CHILD?



The way we were treated as small children
is the way we treat ourselves for the rest of
our life

Alice Miller

**The importance of the
first six years**

- Honour me for who I really am
- Unconditional love
- Undivided attention
- To have a parent, not to be one
- Predictability and structure/boundaries
- Permission to experience emotions
- Open communication and positive reflection
- Parents as role-models of good values that can be internalised
- Protection

Children's needs in this century

- Any child's worst nightmare is living his parent's unlived life
- Children want to be validated for who God has created them
- It is not about what parents do to children, but about what they do not take away from them that is important
- The single most dramatic difference between healthy and toxic family systems is the amount of freedom that exists for family members to express themselves as individuals"
- To be different, is to be bad."

**Honour me for who I
really am**

Undivided attention

- “A child must first be loved before he can love”
- Children act like mirrors, they reflect back what they receive
- Parents must act as mirrors, not judges
- Without the mirroring eyes of a non-judgmental parent a child has no way of knowing who he is.”

Unconditional love

- What is a parentified child?
- Child not allowed to grow up or to develop own identity
- “Murder of the child’s soul” – child kill himself to make his parent happy

**TO HAVE A PARENT, NOT
TO BE ONE**

- Boundaries and limitations
- Structure and predictability
- Rituals and routine
- Consistency

Predictability and structure

- Home as a safe haven where the child can be him/herself
- Emotional intelligence skills

**Permission to experience
and express emotions**

- Rigidity, control, perfectionism versus love, respect, responsibility for choices.
- Power versus love
- Selfishness versus generosity
- Pro-social behaviour versus egoism
- To say “I’m sorry” versus “It is never my fault”
- To forgive versus to keep grudges for ever

Parents as proper role-models of values that can be internalised

- Against bullies
- Against crime
- Against wrong and negative peer pressure
- Against verbal, emotional, physical and sexual abuse

Protection

“Home is a rightfully place of belonging, safety and comfort, it is the place where your most precious treasures are kept.”

Robert Johnson

**What children need most:
a family and a home**
