

# You Only Get One Shot at Raising Emotionally Strong Kids—Here's How to Nail It

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*"Not every emotion is an emergency—children need to get through uncomfortable emotions to build resiliency."*

## Tough feelings

The best thing you can do for your kid is to give them space. Think of the brain as two parts: the left side, which is logical and calm, and the right side, which is all about emotions. When emotions take over, the logical side shuts down completely. So, it's always **feelings over facts**—no exceptions.

When a kid is upset, trying to reason with them or cheer them up might actually make things worse. Instead, keep things neutral. Say things like, "I hear you," "I'm here for you," or "Is there anything you need from me right now?" These responses show support without trying to fix or downplay their feelings.

## The earphone and hoodie effect

Sometimes, as parents, it's our responsibility to step in, even if our kids might not want us to. In these moments, we have to prioritise their well-being and make sure they know we're there for them, no matter what. That's why it's a good idea to **keep it one-on-one** and avoid two parents talking to the kid at once.

Here's the thing: if one parent starts a conversation, and the other jumps in with corrections or different opinions, it turns into a back-and-forth that leaves the kid feeling overwhelmed. I call it the "earphone and hoodie syndrome"—the more you pile on, the more they just want to shut down and disappear. So, it's not about when to step in but how to prevent overwhelming them in the first place.

And overwhelm can look different for each child—sometimes it's explosive, other times quiet, or even sneaky like lying or procrastination. So, instead of saying things like "You need to" or "You should," try asking, "What do you think about this?" This approach sets boundaries without giving them an out. Focus on one step at a time rather than overwhelming them with the big picture.