



Erasmus + VET Strategic Partnership

IENE 8 - Empowering migrant and refugee families with parenting skills

Bite sized Learning Tool no. 2.2.

POSITIVE CONTROL AND SAFETY

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SEPTEMBER 2019



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*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.
This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

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TITLE: 1.4. POSITIVE CONTROL AND SAFETY (FOR PARENTS OF 2-6 YEARS CHILDREN)

This bite-size learning tool will address how positive control and safety issues for preschool children (2-6 years old children) are related to refugee families in transit. It is important to provide some advices on how to set and maintain positive control and provide refugee parents with some keys issues to help them keep their child safe.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To define positive control and safety
2. To discuss the importance of parenting control and child safety
3. To explain how to keep children safe from common risks and hazards
4. To be able to set up and enforce rules and limits
5. To explain how differently positive control and safety may be perceived in different cultures.

POSITIVE CONTROL AND SAFETY

Definitions – The role of parenting

Between the ages of 2 and 6 children tend to lively explore their world. Trying to be more independent, they use to overestimate what is in their control, which makes them vulnerable. Parental support and control play key role in preparing children for independence. Parental control has been defined as *“the amount of supervision parent’s exercise, the decisions parents make about their children’s activities and friends, and the rules parents hold for their children”*(Amato 1990). Control may be considered as an indication of effective parenting or as an aspect of negative, domineering parenting. Positive control is related to teaching and guiding while negative control is power-assertive and characterized by anger, harshness, criticism, and physical intervention. Safety is *“the state of being safe; freedom from the occurrence or risk of injury, danger, or loss, or the condition of being protected from or unlikely to cause danger, risk, or injury”* (<https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/safety>).

What parents can do to help keep their child safe?

It is important parents to have access to the supported tools and strategies related to such issues. These resources provide a wealth of information for common parenting challenges, such as tantrums, behavior problems and risk-taking. There is also available evidence-based information on the various learning lessons that are part of growing up, as for example being respectful and responsible and making good

choices. Parents should be aware that harm to children may be prevented by providing a safe environment, applying prevention measures and supporting children in learning methods of self-protection. A child gaining in confidence and wanting to explore still needs close supervision and guidance. He or she is still at risk for injuries as for example from falls, poisons or burns without being able to understand dangers or remember limits.

Parents have to be able to:

- Set up and consistently enforce rules and limits to help their child learn about dangers. For example do not leave your toddler near or around water (for example, bathtubs, pools, ponds, lakes, whirlpools, or the ocean) without someone watching her.
- Teach some basic safety rules and precautions. For example, teach your child that ovens can cause burns.
- Practice healthy habits. For example, wash your hands often to protect your child against illness and infection.
- Take safety measures around the home. For example, store poisonous products out of your child's reach.
- Find behaviors to teach and model. For example, if you wash your hands before eating, you child will probably also do this (<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/ue5091>).

Positive control and safety when parents are immigrants or refugees

Parental control is affected by culture and family connectedness. Behaviours and beliefs related to parental control may be normative in a culture but no normative in another. For example higher control on children is imposed by parents in eastern countries comparing to western parents (Bornstein (2012)). Health professionals working with immigrant parents should be aware that child-rearing may vary in different cultures.

IENE 8 project resides in the importance of positive control and safety in the context of empowering refugee and migrant parents with parenting skills.

KEY POINTS

1. Between the ages of 2 and 6 children tend to lively explore their world
2. Positive control is related to teaching and guiding
3. Safety is the state of being safe

4. Parents should set up and consistently enforce rules and limits to help their child learn about dangers.
5. Parents have to be able to teach some basic safety rules and precautions.

ACTIVITY

Control is always an aspect of negative parenting	True	False
Safety is the state of being safe	True	False
Parental control is not affected by culture and family connectedness	True	False
Positive control is related to teaching and guiding	True	False
Parents should provide a safe environment to prevent harm	True	False

REFLECTION ON ONE ISSUE FROM THIS BITESIZED TOOL

Use this space to write down your answers to the questions of the above activities.

SELF ASSESSMENT

A 6 years old immigrant boy repeatedly leaves the camp without parental permission. What are the parental skills required in order to ensure the boy's safety?

REFERENCES

- Amato P. Dimensions of the family environment as perceived by children: A multidimensional scaling study. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 1990;52:613–620.
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- Bornstein M. H. (2012). Cultural Approaches to Parenting. *Parenting, science and practice*, 12(2-3), 212–221. doi:10.1080/15295192.2012.683359
- Growth and Development, Ages 2 to 5 Years, available at: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/ta3612>

- Encyclopedia of Children's Health: Safety, available at: <http://www.healthofchildren.com/S/Safety.html>
- CDC, Child Development, Positive Parenting Tips , <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/index.html>
- Oxford Company, Lexico, available at: <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/safety>
- Health link BC, Health and Safety, Ages 2 to 5 Years. <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/ue5091>

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN ACTIVITY SECTION:

A/A	ANSWER
1	False
2	True
3	False
4	True
5	True

ANSWER FOR SELF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY:

Children at this age are very curious, want to explore the world around them and act without thinking. They use to overestimate what is in their control, which makes them vulnerable to various hazards. Parents have to be able to set up and enforce rules and limits to help their children learn about dangers. For example, parents have to explain to their children why they should not play in the street. Additionally, they have to teach them some basic safety rules and precautions, as, for example, how to be safe around strangers.