“There is new science on how a child’s brain is wired and how it matures. The ‘upstairs brain,’ which makes decisions and balances emotions, is under construction until the mid-twenties. The right brain and its emotions tend to rule over the logic of the left-brain, especially in young children. No wonder kids can seem—and feel—so out of control.” – Daniel J. Siegel, The Whole Brain Child

Strategies for Developing a Secure Heart in a Child of Any Age:

1. The security of a full emotional tank; aka LOVE
2. The security of expectations and consequences; aka DISCIPLINE
3. The security of having someone to count on; aka FAMILY

The security of a full emotional tank; aka LOVE

“The foundation of a solid relationship with our child is unconditional love. Only that type of love relationship can assure a child’s growth to his full and total potential. Only this foundation of unconditional love can help prevent problems such as feelings of resentment, being unloved, guilt, fear and insecurity.” - Dr. Ross Campbell, How to Really Love Your Child

When we love our children conditionally, it breeds insecurity:

• If we love them only when they please us or make us happy, they will feel anxious and unable to ____________________________.

• If we love them only when they meet our expectations and requirements, they will feel ____________________________.

• If we love them only when they make us look good, they will feel unsafe in relationships and have a hard time ____________________________.

When your child is misbehaving ask yourself:

✓ Is there a physical need?
✓ Is there emotional need?
Deposits in a child’s emotional tank:

1. Eye Contact
2. Physical Contact
3. Focused Attention
4. Consistent Discipline

“Without focused attention, a child experiences increased anxiety because he feels that everything is more important than he is and is consequently, he’s less secure …” - Dr. Ross Campbell, *How to Really Love Your Child*

Focused Attention is giving a child your undivided attention in such a way that they feel without a doubt that they are valuable and completely loved by you.

Children _________ their best, _________ their best and _________ their best when regularly given a regular does of focused attention from at least one parent.

The security of consistent expectations and consequences; aka DISCIPLINE

“Evidence reveals that undisciplined children, at the base, feel unloved.” - Dr. Brenda Hunter, *Where Have All the Mother’s Gone?*

“The first fact we must understand in order to have a well-disciplined child is that making a child feel loved first is the most important part of discipline! And discipline is immeasurably easier when a child feels genuinely loved. If a child doesn’t feel genuinely loved and accepted but are often disciplined, they will have great difficulty identifying with their parent’s values.” – Dr. Ross Campbell, *How to Really Love Your Child*

A Parenting Misconception: We must choose to love OR to discipline our child.

Behavior is a symptom of a heart issue:

- ✔ Selfishness
- ✔ Rebellion
- ✔ Dishonesty
- ✔ Disrespect, etc.

When there is no heart change, there will be no lasting behavior change.
2 Timothy 1:7 “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

The security of having someone to count on; aka FAMILY.
“Kids who live in a home where honor for one another rules the day, grow up to be children with security tucked safely into their hearts.” – Tim Kimmel

“Home is where life makes up its mind. It is there with fellow family members that we hammer out our convictions on the anvil of our relationships. It is there that we cultivate the valuable things in life, like attitudes, memories, beliefs, and most of all, character. Home is God’s built-in training facility.” – Chuck Swindoll.

Helping your child move toward security:

• BE their ___________________________________________

• BELIEVE the ______________________________________

• BE ________________________________________________

Further Study

1. What does God’s Word say about the value of children?

Psalm 127
Mark 10:13-16

2. How important are issues of the heart to parenting?

Dealing with a child’s heart and not their behavior alone is so important! There are 750 verses in the Bible about the heart; consider doing your own personal study on what God says about our hearts. Use your concordance in the back of your Bible. Read and record your thoughts and a personal application for each verse in a journal.

2 Samuel 16:7
Proverbs 4:20-27 (consider memorizing verse 23)
Matthew 6:19-21
Matthew 15:1-11
3. **Reality Discipline means...**

1. Being in healthy authority over your children.
2. Holding your children accountable for their actions.
3. Combining love and limits on a consistent basis.
4. Dealing with every child as the unique individual he or she is.
5. Being tough but always fair.
6. Using action instead of words.
7. Sticking to your guns and following through with enforcing consequences.
8. Following the biblical instruction not to exasperate your children and make them angry and resentful, but to bring them up with loving discipline and godly advice (see Eph. 6:4, The Living Bible).

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4. **Books you may want to consider reading:**

- *How to Really Love Your Child* by Dr. Ross Campbell
- *How to Really Love Your Teen* by Dr. Ross Campbell
- *How to Really Parent Your Child* (focus is on the four basic emotional needs of children) by Dr. Ross Campbell
- *Making Children Mind without Losing Yours* by Dr. Kevin Leman
- *Why Christian Kids Rebel* by Dr. Tim Kimmel