

WHAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS FOR GOOD MENTAL HEALTH*

To grow healthy and strong, children should have good food, plenty of sleep, exercise and fresh air. Children have emotional needs too. To have perfect health - to be both healthy and happy - children require:

LOVE - Every child needs to feel...that his parents love, want, and enjoy him...that he matters very much to someone...that there are people near him who care what happens to him.

ACCEPTANCE - Every child needs to believe...that his parents like him for himself, just the way he is...that they like him all the time, and not only when he acts according to their ideas of the way a child should act...that they always accept him, even though often they may not approve of the things he does...that they will let him grow and develop in his own way.

SECURITY - Every child needs to know...that his home is a good safe place he can feel sure about...that his parents will always be on hand, especially in times of crisis when he needs them most...that he belongs to a family or group; that there is a place where he fits in.

PROTECTION - Every child needs to feel...that his parents will keep him safe from harm...that they will help him when he must face strange, unknown and frightening situations.

INDEPENDENCE - Every child needs to know...that his parents want him to grow up and that they encourage him to try new things for himself and by himself.

FAITH - Every child needs to have a...set of moral standards to live by...belief in the human values - kindness, courage, honesty, generosity and justice.

GUIDANCE - Every child needs to have...friendly help in learning how to behave toward persons and things...grown-ups around him who show him by example how to get along with others.

CONTROL - Every child needs to know...that there are limits to what he is permitted to do and that his parents will hold him to these limits...that though it is all right to feel jealous or angry, he will not be allowed to hurt himself or others when he has these feelings.

Children whose basic needs are satisfied have a better chance to grow up in good mental health and to become mentally healthy adults - people who are good parents, good mates, good workers, good neighbors, good citizens.