



FOREST COTTAGE CENTRE INC.

Healthy Parent Checklist

There are a number of things that make a good parent – especially for those living with severe behaviour children. Take a look at the points below and see how you are doing right now – *check only the points that are true for you the majority or all of the time*. If something does not apply to you, either give yourself a point for that one or subtract the question from the total score.

Section 1 - Joy

- I have fun with all of my children.
- I have more positive interactions with my child than negative.
- I rarely feel like screaming.
- I smile frequently.
- I enjoy being a parent.
- I take time for my hobbies.
- My animals are well cared for and protected.
- I surround myself with things I love.
- I listen to music I enjoy.
- I have something to look forward to every day.
- I take regular vacations.
- I live a peaceful life.
- I take time to watch TV programs and movies I find enjoyable.
- I take time to be silly.
- I collect jokes and cartoons that make me laugh.
- I express my creativity.
- I enjoy my work.
- I do not work overtime.
- I look forward to coming home.

_____ Total (Out of 19)

Section 2 - Parenting Skills

- I use a variety of positive parenting techniques.
- I know the stages of normal child development.
- I have many ways to motivate my child.
- I have many approaches to deal with my child's behaviour.
- I attend parenting classes and specialized training to deal with my child's unique issues.
- I know how to support my child to make good decisions.
- I give my child choices that I am comfortable with (win/win).
- I am patient with my child.
- I share control with my child.
- I have clear expectations of my child.
- I consistently respond with appropriate consequences for misbehaviour.
- I rarely raise my voice.
- I have a parenting philosophy that works with my child.
- I am growing in my personal life.
- I state my expectations clearly to professionals assisting my child.
- I let go of parenting strategies that do not work and find new ones.
- I teach my child cause and effect thinking.
- I allow natural consequences to teach my child.
- I accept that I cannot be perfect.
- I have realistic expectations for my child's abilities.

_____ Total (Out of 20)

Section 3 – Emotional Connection

- I take time with each of my children individually.
- I consider my child's point of view.
- I do not maintain grudges against my child.
- I answer my child's questions.
- I show love to my child in a variety of ways.
- I do not take my child's behaviour personally.

- I frequently remind my child of his/her good qualities.
- My child is well cared for.
- I encourage my child to have mentors outside of the family.
- Our family feels connected to each other – not divided.

_____ Total (Out of 10)

Section 4 - Adult Support

- I have several people I can turn to for advice in dealing with my child.
- I talk to someone when I feel angry or frustrated.
- I have a life coach.
- I ask for help from the doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, counsellor, principal or teacher, when needed.
- My partner shares my parenting philosophy.
- I help other parents when they need it.
- I have people to talk to who truly understand what my child's behaviour.
- I am aware of the resources available in my community.
- I have a weekly date with my partner and/or a friend.
- I have a reliable babysitter or respite worker.

_____ Total (Out of 10)

Section 5 - Personal Development

- I feel confident in my abilities as a parent.
- I can view problems from other points of view.
- I model good life choices to my child.
- I can keep my emotions in control in the midst of difficult situations.
- I take time to be myself every day.
- I have freedom to change my mind, particularly regarding my parenting decisions.
- I spend time with my best friend.
- I protect my personal belongings from children who are potentially dangerous to them.
- My personal papers are well-organized.

- My car is maintained and in good condition.
 - My home is neat and clean.
 - My clothes are clean, pressed, and make me look great.
 - I brush my hair every day.
 - I floss and brush my teeth at least twice daily.
 - My bed is made daily.
 - I am aware of all physical and emotional problems/conditions I have and I am fully taking care of them.
 - I do not suffer.
 - I am consistently early or on time for appointments.
 - People feel comfortable in my home.
 - I call a time-out when I need it.
 - I write in a journal often.
- _____ Total (Out of 21)

Section 6 - Health & Safety

- I feel safe in my own home.
- I take care of my personal needs (see doctor, dentist, etc. regularly).
- I exercise regularly.
- I practice Extreme Self-Care.
- I get enough sleep.
- I eat well and regularly.
- I take time to eliminate the little things that are draining me.
- I drink water daily.
- I have a way to make everyone in my home safe.
- My smoke detectors are working and checked regularly.
- My weight is in my ideal range.
- I have regular break from challenging children.
- I do not injure myself or bump into things.
- I do not allow one child to control or cause chaos for the whole family.
- I have regular massages.
- I do not startle easily.

- I would call the police if I felt unsafe with my child.
- I have a crisis plan in place for emergency situations with my severe behaviour child.
- I carry a cell phone.
- Each family member has a safe place to call their own (i.e. rooms with locks).

_____ Total (Out of 20)

_____ **Overall Total (Out of 100)**

Now what? You probably already have a sense of what are you doing right and what needs improvement. Look back at your checklist and notice the area in which you had the least checks – this is probably where you need some support in order to be the best parent you can be.

You may also find that overall you are doing great with most of your children but not so great with one (particularly a child with severe behaviour problems). Work with a coach to find strategies that will work for you!

Checklist Developed by Tanya Helton, M.Sc.
Life Coach for Parents of Challenging Children
Phone: 1-877-261-6361
Email: Tanya@ForestCottageCentre.com