

Twelve Principles of Understanding the Meaning of Children's Behavior:



1. Young children cry and cling in order to communicate an immediate need for parental proximity and care.
2. Separation distress is an expression of the child's fear of losing the parent.
3. Children want to please their parents, fear their disapproval, and respond well to praise.
4. Young children are afraid of being hurt and of losing parts of their bodies.
5. Young children feel responsible and blame themselves when the parent is upset or angry for whatever reason.
6. Children imitate their parents because they want to be like them.
7. Young children say no to establish autonomy, not to be disrespectful.
8. Young children harbor the conviction that parents know everything and are always right.
9. Young children need clear and consistent limits to their dangerous or culturally inappropriate behaviors in order to feel safe and protected.
10. Memory starts at birth. Babies and young children remember experiences before they can speak about them.
11. Young children need their parents' help in learning to express strong emotions without hurting themselves or others.
12. Conflict between parent and child is inevitable, can be repaired, and serve a valuable developmental function when handled lovingly.