

# Happy Kids



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*What does a baby, a three year old and a fifteen year old have in common?*

Each is an age of **bonding**, which is a vital developmental task of childhood.

### **A baby bonds with her mother (and father)**

Forming bonds with one person, usually a mother, is one of the tasks of infancy. Bonding is by-product of care-giving for most mothers. The intensity of nurturing and caring for a baby brings special closeness that is hard to replicate.

A parent's responsiveness to a child's signals impacts on her development. A strong bond with a parent fosters a baby's sense of security and becomes the model for future relationships. A father's bond with a child is also important at this age, but often happens according to a different timetable than a mother's. Bonding occurs through one-to-one interactions and requires an environment that is supportive and encouraging for parents.

### **A three year old bonds with his family**

Around the age of three children start to form relationships with their siblings, and their broader family in their own right. That's not to say, that previously they didn't have relationships with their grandparents, aunts, uncles or brothers and sisters. But at this age children start to form stronger attachments to other family members, and begin to find their own place within their family structure.



It's important to include children in family activities so they can feel a part of the family, and are able to form connections with various family members. These relationships are the templates for your child's future connections to other groups.

### **A fifteen year old bonds with her community**

Fifteen year olds are ready to bond with the adult world around them. It's no coincidence that many parents face enormous challenges containing this group, as they are getting ready to spread their wings. *Without adults to bond with, young people will form strong bonds with each other.*

So spend time with your fifteen year old, and look for opportunities for your young person to spend time with other adults, whether it's through a part-time job, sport or other leisure activities. Instigate rituals, such as giving a fifteen year old a house key, that recognise their expanding maturity. *Young people at this age tend to be less self-absorbed than in previous years and are ready to connect to their community.*

Forming connections with others makes us human, and is the source of sustained happiness over time. Your child has an in-built timetable that helps him form the necessary connections to others as he is ready.

Understanding the developmental tasks of each stage helps you make sense of, at times, nonsensical behaviour,

as well as take the actions necessary to help your child meet his or her developmental needs.

*To learn more about your child's developmental stage and it's special requirements visit my online parenting manual that is also known as Parentingideas Club. There are 1,000's of strategies & ideas waiting to be used. Take your **FREE Trial now.***

## Teach your kids to Shrug



We just received a fresh, new batch of these books after the first edition sold out. They are available again in the bookstore. **Get your signed copy [here](#)**

## Got a thirteen year old in your life... or know someone who has?

There are ten top tips for raising tantalising 13 year olds? Check them out on my blog.



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Michael Grose Presentations Pty Ltd Parentingideas PO Box 167 Balnarring Vic 3926 Australia  
**Free call:** 1800 004 484 **Phone:**+61 3 5983 1798 **Fax:** +61 3 59831722

**Email:** [office@parentingideas.com.au](mailto:office@parentingideas.com.au) **Website:** [www.parentingideas.com.au](http://www.parentingideas.com.au)

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