What is Parenting:

Parenting, the process of raising children and providing them with protection and care in order to ensure their healthy development into adulthood, supporting the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of a child to adulthood and across the lifespan.

Parental Issues:

Parenting issues are any challenges or worries parents have while parenting their kids.

There are numerous special problems in raising a child, teenager, or young adult with emotional, behavioural, or learning disabilities. Parenting techniques that are successful for a child might not bring success with another child whose requirements are different. Negative relationships may spiral out of control over time, frustrating parents and kids alike. Additionally, parents may be unsure of the best ways to assist their kid in achieving their objectives in respect to relationships, employment, education, and independent living. Along with these challenges, parents may also have trouble validating their kids, establishing boundaries with regard to money, bedtimes, and screen time, as well as controlling their own emotions. Other responsibilities like choice of nursery, education, discipline, finances, domestic tasks, daily schedules, work-family balance, and other related issues. In addition, parents could have to settle disputes between themselves and another parent, their kid, or their siblings. One parenting challenge that might be stressful is raising a grumpy and reclusive adolescent. An additional illustration would be a married couple that finds it difficult to find adequate time for both their kids and their relationship.

Parental Toxic Features:

1. They Abuse People Physically and Violently

When they are enraged, toxic parents may use violent methods like kicking, striking, or choking their kids. Children thus frequently experience dread, anxiety, and rage. It's a myth that some parents think using violence to "teach" kids is a good idea. Children who see violence suffer grave emotional and physical effects, and the bond is harmed.

2. They're Abusive Both Emotionally and Verbally Abuse goes beyond physical harm. Parents that are toxic can also be emotionally and verbally abusive. This may entail them calling their kids names, making fun of them in front of others, and use gaslighting and emotional blackmail to manipulate their way of getting what they want—all of which would undermine their self-esteem. Even though this kind of abuse is difficult to detect and lacks tangible proof, it can be just as harmful.

3. They Don't Respect Sexuality

Sexual inappropriateness with the kid is a major and incredibly detrimental indicator of a toxic parent. Sexual abuse might take the form of improper sexual content exposure, molestation, or engaging in sexual behaviours with their children. Parents may have legal repercussions if their actions are shown to be harmful.

4. They Prioritize Their Needs Over Those of Their Kids

Parents that are toxic frequently put their own needs, goals, and aspirations ahead of their kids'. They could attend to their own fundamental needs first and then those of their children. This is especially dangerous for babies and young children who are unable of taking care of themselves, and it is an indication of narcissism in parents.

5. They Have Control

Overly involved parents restrict their children's freedom, independence, and uniqueness by being too involved in their life. Interfering and expecting kids to conform to the parent's ideal of what they "should" be, rather than allowing them the independence to pursue their own interests and objectives, are characteristics of a controlling parent.

6. They're Strict and Demand Total Compliance

It's possible for toxic parents to demand complete obedience from their kids. While it's important for parents to educate their kids to respect authority, it's common for kids to challenge and resist their parents' authority. When their authority is questioned, healthy parents respond by being strong yet caring, whereas toxic parents may become aggressive.

7. They Apply Severe Penalties

When applied properly, discipline may be a beneficial parenting tool. However, toxic parents frequently employ extreme and hazardous types of punishment that are not justified. When a youngster doesn't do their tasks, for instance, a toxic parent could smack them. Emotional and verbal abuse can also be considered harsh punishment (e.g., a parent who belittles a kid who comes home with a low grade).

8. They want you to adore them and are self-absorbed.

Another indication of a narcissistic parent is the demand for excessive adulation. These parents may get irate, resentful, and manipulative if their kids don't compliment and admire them, as they expect them. Typically, these parents don't show their kids the same respect and praise in return.

9. They're envious of Your Additional Partnerships

As you get close to other individuals, your toxic parents could become envious. These other intimate interactions could seem dangerous to them. Sometimes, in an attempt to feel closer to you, they may turn to undesirable strategies like manipulation. In severe circumstances, they can even attempt to break up with you in order to stop feeling threatened.

10. They Don't Offer Support

Parents that are toxic often don't encourage their kids' decisions, passions, or achievements. This might be due to a variety of factors, such as envy or a need for control. In any case, youngsters who want their parents to approve of them may find this upsetting.

11. They Go Across Lines

Parents that are toxic cross boundaries. To get closer to their child, they could make a lot of phone calls, stop by unexpectedly, or make friends with other family members. In any case, the children's capacity to maintain a positive connection with their parents is jeopardised by these instances of boundary crossing, which are painful.

12. They Vent Their Feelings on Their Kids

Parents that are toxic may use their kids as a way to vent their feelings. For instance, they could vent their resentment of their spouse on their kids. Children may find this upsetting and puzzling, and it does not teach them positive coping mechanisms for their feelings.

13. It's Easy to Offend Them

Divergent viewpoints might be interpreted as personal assaults by toxic parents. In homes when the parents are toxic, children may not develop healthy intellectual boundaries because they learn to repress their thoughts for fear of the repercussions.4 Children may be taught, for instance, to keep their opinions to themselves while discussing touchy subjects like politics or religion, as they may frighten their parents. Unfortunately, having toxic parents makes it difficult for people to have meaningful conversations and share knowledge.

14. They Talk Too Much About Personal Things

It's possible that toxic parents were never taught when and how to set boundaries while sharing information. They could tell tales that are not suitable for young ears and could harm the listener's emotions or mental health. As an illustration, sharing intimate details about struggles in their marriage may be confusing and frustrating for a child whose parents are getting a divorce.

15. They're very Critical of You: Parents that are toxic may be very critical of your feelings, ideas, or behaviours. In these kinds of family structures, kids may learn to repress their preferences in order to please their parents. Unfortunately, parents may take advantage of these power relations to give their kids unfair judgement, which frequently reinforces feelings of guilt.

16. Rather than taking responsibility for themselves, they place blame on others.

Parents who are toxic may not accept responsibility for the unfavorable effects of their actions and may instead search for outside causes to lay the blame on. Unfortunately, children usually have the least influence and authority in these kinds of family structures. Instead of examining themselves, toxic parents may place the responsibility for unfavorable results on their kids.

17. They Specifically Embarrass You

In an attempt to give their kids a sense of control and power, toxic parents may purposefully disgrace them. It's possible that they picked up this coping mechanism from their own familial networks, which allows them to tolerate emotions of uneasiness. When parents purposefully humiliate their children, it can leave them feeling unjustly ashamed and afraid. A child needs their parent to stand for love and support without reservation.

18. They Are Deceitful

Parents that are toxic might continue to manipulate their children by putting them under emotional duress. Additionally, they could employ strategies like flattery to influence people to support a specific course of action.4 It's possible that manipulative behaviours are appropriate ways for toxic parents to influence others to produce desired results. Children who live in these family systems may fall prey to manipulative people because this is the behavior they learned, and may have to spend time as adults unlearning these types of ineffective interpersonal skills.

19. They Frequently Have Sudden Outbursts

Emotional outbursts from toxic parents might appear out of the blue. Children may experience fear, bewilderment, or rage as a result of these emotional outbursts. Recurring episodes of this type may drive kids to stay away from their parents or to repress their true feelings and thoughts.

Emotionally immature parents might persuade adult children to succumb to "emotional takeovers" for three main reasons:

resentment at oneself for declining

being afraid of a parent's wrath

being afraid of a parent's disapproval or repercussions for imposing boundaries

20. Your Entanglement with Them

Children with toxic parents may grow up with interwoven boundaries. Unhealthy interpersonal dynamics with enmeshed boundaries are characterised by a lack of individuation, in which family members' needs, wants, and desires become one. Sometimes entwined boundaries result in the parentification of kids. They may also cause adult children to believe that it is their duty to protect or rescue their parent from danger (a condition known as enmeshment trauma).

How to get by with a challenging parent

1. Remain composed. It might be terrifying and frustrating when your horrible parent starts scolding you. A firm stance won't be helpful. Rather, become ready by rehearsing how to remain composed and in control under pressure. We advise practicing meditation or deliberate, calm breathing. When someone is yelling at you, these will help you take deep, relaxing breaths and let go of any tension. Try subtly substituting something more reasonable and encouraging for your parent's critical remarks if you are receiving severe criticism.
2. Acknowledge your current circumstances. You frequently feel like you are walking on eggshells because you never know what kind of mood your horrible parent could be in. While some days may be OK, others may be terrible, filled with yelling and unjustified accusations. Putting your life narrative together might help you make sense of the situation. You may even be able to figure out why your parent acts the way they do.
3. Refrain from taking offence. Returning fire will just exacerbate the situation. It will make the row worse, make it last longer, make you feel worse, and nothing will change. Rather, figure out easy methods to make things easier. Make a cup of tea, speak softly, and avoid making direct eye contact.  If, at any stage in your life, you feel tempted to challenge your unkind parent or seek revenge, remember that you can’t win and the chance of achieving anything positive is minute. Nor do you want to behave like them. Let the past fade, don’t hold on to grudges, keep your distance and instead concentrate on becoming a better person yourself.
4. Cast a hopeful gaze towards the future. With or without the approval of your horrible parents, you can become the person you want to be in every aspect of your life. Take things gently; it's normal to be wary of someone you don't trust. Avoid dating someone who resembles your awful father or who serves as a means of escape. It's also possible that you were worried about becoming your own harsh parent when you had kids. It is improbable if you show your infant affection, support, and encouragement from the beginning. Don't forget that kids are real people with their own lives.
5. Believe in yourself. Don’t believe that you are the bad person your parent claims you are. Make a list of your qualities and abilities and aim to be the best you can in everything that you do, at work and with your friends. If you tend to be self-critical, tell yourself that everyone makes mistakes and the important thing is to learn from them and do better next time.If you find yourself criticising yourself a lot, remind yourself that everyone makes errors and that what matters is that you learn from them and do better the next time.
6. Speak with a trustworthy person. Having a challenging parent may make life quite lonely. It's possible that your pals get along well enough with their parents, and you don't have siblings to confide in. Speaking about your circumstances may make you feel disloyal and as though you are somehow to fault for their actions. Don't be afraid to try friends before confiding in them. Alternatively, depending on your age, you may try discussing things with your spouse, an older relative you can trust, or a sympathetic instructor, cautiously at first.
7. Take care of yourself. When you don't look for yourself, most things in life appear worse. You'll feel better and stronger if you exercise, eat well, and get enough sleep at night. Treat yourself to a simple pleasure every now and again, like taking a long bath, cuddling up with a nice book, or going out with a friend.

QUALIFIED PARENTING?

Most parents receive a plethora of parenting advice as soon as they announce their pregnancy or adoption. New parents may learn about newborn safety and health from pediatricians. Numerous and frequently contradictory parenting tips may be found in media sources. Divergent views may exist among family members over what is best for a kid.

A new parent might feel overloaded with advice and knowledge about parenting. They could not know what is in their child's best interests. For guidance, they could consult a pediatrician, therapist, or other expert. It is generally acknowledged by experts in child psychology and development that there is no one "best" parenting style. Try experimenting with several parenting philosophies to see what best suits your family.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development states parents are generally responsible for:

1. Keeping children safe
2. Listening to children and spending time with them
3. Providing affection, order, and consistency
4. Setting and enforcing limits for children
5. Monitoring friendships children make
6. Seeking help for any medical or behavioral concerns

THE FOUR PARENTING STYLES

Many experts recognize four parenting styles:

1. Authoritative. This is considered the most effective form of parenting for most children. Authoritative parents have high expectations and goals for their kids. These are tempered with an understanding of their kids' limits. These parents are willing to communicate flexibly. This can make parent-child communication easier.
2. Neglectful. Neglectful parenting can mean a lack of time spent with the child. Neglectful parents may be unfamiliar with their kids' teachers and friends. They may not care for their kids' basic needs. This type of parenting is rarely practiced on purpose. It’s important to recognize if you or someone you know has this parenting style. This type of parenting can be damaging to kids long-term.
3. Permissive. Permissive parents are nurturing, loving, and supportive. But they can take this too far. Permissive parents may avoid conflict at any cost. They rarely enforce their own rules. Doing this can be harmful for children, as they thrive on routine.
4. Authoritarian. Authoritarian is not the same as authoritative parenting. Authoritarian parents are strict and demanding with their children. Their parenting style is not often flexible. They generally rely on punishment to maintain obedience. There is rarely room for open communication between parents and kids.

**Parenting Therapy**

Parenting therapy is a type of specialty treatment that helps parents deal with challenging parenting situations. Parenting therapy also assists parents in recognising, addressing, and managing their own experiences—past or present—that can be influencing how they interact with their kid. Parenting counselling may occasionally also assist parents in improving their communication skills in order to preserve a consistent and organised parenting style.

Parenting therapy gives parents a safe space to talk about difficult parenting situations and learn how to handle them more skillfully in the future. In general, the goal of parenting therapy is to provide parents the skills, information, direction, and encouragement they need to raise their kids as best they can.

Parents can obtain parenting therapy services by seeking help on their own or by referral from their doctor, psychologist, or a member of their child’s school. During the initial appointment, a NJ Family Psychiatry & Therapy counselor will conduct an interview to determine the primary issue and concerns, develop a thorough understanding of the issue, and to evaluate the parent’s emotional state and behavior. Once the initial interview is complete, the counselor can make recommendations for therapy as needed.

Depending on the issue at hand, several different therapeutic programs may be recommended. These programs can include co-parenting counseling, couples counseling, divorce adjustment therapy, anger management, or substance abuse rehabilitation and counseling. In some cases, multiple approaches may be required.

Generally, parenting therapy will begin with only the parents and will focus on the main issue identified in the initial interview. Sometimes parenting support groups may also be recommended. Once the parents begin to make progress, the children may be asked to participate.

Parenting therapy can offer many benefits for both parents and their children. For parents, parenting therapy offers:

* Valuable education on how to respond to their children.
* Support during tough parenting periods.
* A safe place to process emotions.
* Awareness of community resources.
* Strategies to better address family functioning.

For children, parenting therapy can offer:

* Practice with emotion regulation.
* A safe place to express and process emotions.
* An alternative way to communicate.
* Support from their parents and counselor.
* Education on how to verbalize feelings.
* Feeling more involved in family functioning.

While parenting therapy does offer many benefits, it is also important to note that there are times where it may be quite challenging. At times, parenting therapy may require that parents relive painful memories in order to properly process their emotions and move forward. This may cause some individuals to feel anxiety or depression during this process.

In addition, others may feel frustration when parenting therapy does not yield immediate results. Because of this, they may not take therapy seriously or may disregard the counselor’s recommendations. For parenting therapy to work well, both parents must be committed and involved, and must understand that parenting therapy is a process that may require temporary unpleasantness.

Fortunately, specialized parenting help is available for parents of young children through young adults. CBC offers two main approaches to treat parenting issues: Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) and behavioral parent training.

PCIT is a highly effective and well-researched treatment for parents of children ages 2 to 8 with challenging behavior. During sessions, parents and children are seen together, and parents receive live coaching in using specialized skills to change their child's behavior in the moment. Coaching focuses on strengthening the parent-child relationship, reducing misbehaviors, and increasing positive and prosocial behaviors.

For parents of children who are older, or for whom PCIT is not the best fit, behavioral parent training teaches parents skills to cope with and modify their child’s behavior. This treatment modality is based in learning theory, which emphasizes the antecedents and consequences of a problem behavior. Parents learn how to make effective commands and how to use the principles of reinforcement to increase the likelihood of desired behaviors. They also learn how to regulate their own emotions while parenting. For parents of young adults, behavioral parenting strategies are also effective. In addition, CBC offers a group for parents of young adults that focuses on teaching Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) skills and providing a supportive environment.