

PRESS RELEASE

Duke and Duchess of Cambridge use the “emotion coaching” method with their children, pioneered by Somerset GP Dr Sarah Temple

In an article in The Daily Express* on 29th June, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge spoke of how they like to resolve their children’s issues through an open discussion, saying “The children are encouraged to talk about their feelings”. They apply “emotional coaching” to walk their children through their feelings.

“Emotion coaching” is an approach to parenting and to managing behaviour in schools, pioneered in the UK by Somerset GP Dr Sarah Temple and Bath Spa University. Instead of punishing or dismissing the child at stressful times, the emotion coaching approach involves connecting with the child, and helping the child to regulate their emotions and find a way forward from the situation with which they are struggling. Sarah has also developed a trauma informed response to dealing with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which left unaddressed can lead to worse outcomes in physical, mental and emotional health throughout life.

Key to this approach involves teaching children Professor Dan Siegel’s Hand Model of emotional regulation. This explains how when something causes us to “flip our lid”, we may cry, shout, lash out or run away. Our rational, logical thinking is being overwhelmed by our emotions, making it hard to think clearly. Adults can learn to notice what is happening, listen to their child, connect, teach their child how to soothe themselves and look for a way forward.

Six years ago, Sarah was commissioned by Public Health Somerset to develop a psycho-education tool - mindful emotion coaching - to build skills in impulse control and emotional regulation and also address the effects of ACEs. She now runs training courses across the UK, working with staff in schools, health care settings and prison services. She has also set up ‘*Tuning in to Parents*’, which offers free e-learning modules.

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* *Kate Middleton and Prince William’s unique “family rules” for their three young children*
(The Daily Express - Ryan Bromilow - Monday, 29th June)