

MAARIF FAMILY

The Turkish Maarif Foundation's publication for families



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How to Give Correct Feedback to Children?

Children's learning processes do not only take place in the school environment. Children are curious about what they see around them, they question the things they observe and want to seek answers. Parents, who are one of the important stakeholders of education, should not leave the learning processes of their school-age children to the school solely. Children also ask their parents what they are curious about, and sometimes the questions may be never-ending. At this point, giving children the right feedback plays an important role in building their self-confidence, developing their sense of curiosity and contributing to their academic success. From the moment children begin to talk, they start to question the objects around them. Sometimes they ask the same question several times and expect their parents to answer each time. Instead of getting tired of this situation and saying, "you have asked this question before and I already gave you the answer", it is important that you answer their questions without being fed up with them. This is because the children are trying to understand the answer to the question asked in order to recognize and contextualize the objects they have just met. Therefore, they try to find the right context by asking the same question over and over again.

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It is important to listen and respond to children's questions in order to develop their sense of curiosity rather than undermine it, but what should these answers be? Giving and receiving feedback has an important place in the "information exchange" to improve the quality of a work and solve potential problems. Effective feedback not only affects children's academic success but also improves their self-esteem, self-confidence and sense of curiosity.

As children grow up, their questions change as well. By relating the answers they have received to other questions, they may have the knowledge to find their own answers after a while. However, the answer to the question of how much they know may be hidden in the feedback they receive.

- It is important to give sensible and logical answers to the questions your child asks you. When a child is confronted with a logical answer, he or she experiences a mental relief from the knowledge gained.
- When answering your children's questions, do not ignore them. Children who realize that their questions are not valued may generalize this and lose their self-confidence due to the feeling that they are not valued.
- When your child asks you a question in a social environment, do not use oppressive expressions such as "let's not disturb people, ask your question later." Putting pressure can damage the relationship between you and your child.
- As your children explore their surroundings, they may ask many questions that make no sense to you. These are the questions they ask in order to understand the world. It is useful to support them in developing their sense of curiosity, which is one of the most important motivations for learning.



- When you encounter questions that you do not know the answer to, you can do research together with your child. In this way, you will have a new learning experience and you can support your child to do research with the right method.
- Children who are worried that their parents will get angry if they ask questions may hesitate to ask questions. Children who have been mocked, silenced, made feel worthless, belittled and ignored when they have asked questions in the past may give up asking questions. This can affect their self-confidence and interrupt their sense of curiosity and exploration. For this reason, it is useful to answer questions without hurting your child.
- You may worry about your child making noise or disturbing people. However, children may not be able to pay attention to their surroundings like adults. Especially in early childhood, as their sense of self develops, they have a self-centered attitude. For this reason, it may not be possible to expect them to manage their attitudes in society. Considering this situation of your children, it is useful to take care not to break their self-confidence.

- In order for children to ask questions, they need to feel comfortable and establish a bond of trust with the parent. Children's belief that they can get answers and be well guided when they ask questions will enable them to follow their curiosity.

A child asking questions is open to learning. Children's search for answers to their questions will contribute significantly to their academic and social life as it will improve their learning and curiosity.

Developing the Child's Curiosity

What? Why is that? How? When? Who? These are general questions that we use for things we want to know and experience, which we have been trying to answer since we first started using language. Every discovery process begins with a question and gains a solution with the answers we want to find. To explore, we first need to ask questions, and to ask questions, we need to be curious. Just like adults, children seek answers to many questions to explore the world they were born into. These questions may include wondering how the cake they make with their mother rises, or why the sun sets at night and rises during the day. Children's curiosity about life offers the opportunity to reflect on new information and experiences. Curiosity, which is closely related to learning, is the tendency to understand and analyze.

Curiosity is more intense in early childhood. Young children may be tempted to ask about everything they see or witness, but as they grow older, their sense of curiosity gradually diminishes. This is because children begin to learn to create context by adding new information on top of the previous information they have gained. For this reason, children's efforts to obtain information by asking questions should be encouraged. This will positively affect the child's cognitive development and language development.



There are types of curiosity such as intellectual curiosity, which is curiosity about scientific knowledge, as well as specific curiosity (curiosity about cars, birds, trees, etc.) and interpersonal curiosity, meaning curiosity about people. Although children cannot yet make this distinction, they too have a sense of curiosity about various subjects.

Studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between curiosity and academic success. It has been found that children who are more curious are more successful especially in reading and mathematics. The reason for this is that the sense of curiosity is closely related to the sense of reward that occurs as a result of searching and finding information. The reward the child receives as a consequence of the curiosity is knowledge. In other words, the knowledge obtained as a result of his/her curiosity is perceived as a reward by the brain. In addition, curiosity, which is also associated with psychological well-being, according to researchers, stimulates positive emotions such as being dynamic, active and enthusiastic.

The reason why some people are more curious than others may be due to factors such as openness to experience and the search for innovation. It is important for children to be curious in terms of acquiring knowledge, establishing cause and effect relationships, reasoning, communicating and developing self-expression skills. Because the subjects they are curious about remain in their minds more and learning is realized permanently.

To encourage children's curiosity:

- If the things your child is curious about and wants to explore are dangerous, talk to him/her about the harm they can cause to themselves and others. It is important that the child feels safe during this conversation.
- Be patient with the questions your child asks. It is important that you do not avoid the questions your child asks, but give effective feedback.
- Organize nature trips for your child to explore. Seek answers to their curiosities together.
- Do not hinder your children who want to experiment to explore, for fear that the house will fall apart or get dirty. Learning through experience not only facilitates learning, but also ensures that they do not forget what they have learned.

- Be part of your children's curiosity. Children are affected by the environment they are in.
- Having a curious and researching environment in the family will positively affect them and encourage them to make research.
- Healthy communication is important in all stages of a child's development. Having an environment that provides unconditional love and trust in your relationship with your children will positively affect not only their curiosity but also their entire development.
- It is helpful to choose words that your child can understand when talking with him/her. When responding to him/her, respond in a way that he/she can understand and prevent his/her self-identity from being negatively affected.
- Start your activities with your children with interesting questions that will make them curious.
- Reward your child's curiosity. Rewarding your child, who also takes responsibility by doing the research he/she is curious about, at the end of his/her research will give him/her self-confidence.
- Encourage your child to investigate things they are curious about.



Online Games

Online games are offered to users with designs that can attract the interest of people of all ages. In today's world where we have close relationships with the digital screen, online games with their intriguing and pleasing stimuli appear with different types of designed content all over the world. Games that can be played online or offline via computers, phones, tablets or game consoles can be designed for many different purposes. Although some of these games aim to support children's development, we cannot expect the exact same aim from every digital game.

Having a significant market, digital games can increase the variety of games in order to increase their users and make them spend more time in front of the screen, causing the person to develop an attachment that will not keep them away from playing games.

Although some of the games that children are interested in support their development, there are also many negative reasons why they play digital games at a level that hinders their development. Parents sometimes allow their children to spend time in front of the screen while doing their own work. However, it is useful for them to know what their children are interested in during this screen time. Because children can develop an attachment that can interrupt their social, emotional and academic development, and they can be exposed to cyberbullying in online games.

The concept of game, by its very nature, stimulate the reward urge in people. For this reason, people of all ages can play games for hours on end with the pleasure of being the winner of the game. Among the reasons for people's interest in playing games in the researches conducted are distancing from real life problems, feeling good by distancing themselves from negative emotions, being able to get rid of real-world identities and features and create a new identity,



to develop skills such as concentration, thinking and creativity, spending time in the game when they cannot find anything more fun in real life, competing to be the winner of the game, socializing and meeting new people, defeating others in the game, and experiencing a sense of competence. Online games, which are played more often during the periods when children have free time, such as vacations, are often a platform for children to cope with unpleasant situations.

Although online games are interactive platforms, it is important to recognize that they are not a substitute for social interaction in real life. Children may neglect the opportunity to gain many social skills by preferring to play more games instead of face-to-face, quality and interactive sociability in real life. In addition to all these, they may experience certain physiological problems by staying away from physical activities during the time spent in front of the screen. This inactivity can lead to weight gain, poor posture, and diabetic problems. Moreover, the risk of being exposed to cyberbullying in their relationships with strangers in digital environments should not be underestimated.

Here's what you can do with your children to prevent online games from becoming a harmful habit for them:

- You should be attentive to your children and watchful of their lives.
- It is useful to set clear rules for your children regarding the use of internet. You can create these rules together with your children. It is important that family members also follow these rules, since children observe those around them and take them as role models.
- Establishing sincere and healthy relationships with your children will protect them from several negative habits.
- Be aware of the content of the games that children play. It is useful to check whether the content and duration of the game is suitable for the child.
- It is essential for children's development that they are not introduced to virtual games before the age of 6 and social media before the age of 14.
- Support your children to take up hobbies in real life. Having hobbies where they can express themselves will distract them from the reasons that lead them to the game.
- Doing sports will allow children to release the energy accumulated in their bodies in a healthy way.
- You can do sports with your children in certain routines or you can support your child to develop himself/herself in a certain sports branch.
- Keep track of your children's screen time. If your children are playing games, having them play beside you will make it easier to control them.
- Games are crucial for children's development. By playing games with your children in real life, you can make them feel the reward urge they want to achieve digitally in a friendly family environment.
- Pay attention to your children's sleep and nutrition routine. Sleep and nutrition, which are important for development, should not become unbalanced because of digital games.
- When you want to take your children away from the screen, they may behave negatively towards you. In the face of this behavior, you should take care not to give them the device again. It is useful to talk to your child in a caring and reassuring manner.
- Be as tech-savvy as your children. That way, you will be able to realize and recognize the dangers your children may face.



- Remember that the rules applying in real life also apply online. You can talk to your children about this issue and remind them that the rules of real life should also be followed in the digital environment.
- It is useful to warn your child about friend requests or tempting offers in online games. Just as in real life, every tempting offer should be approached with suspicion, it is also important to pay attention to this issue in online environments as well.
- Discuss with your child that they should not share their personal information, photos and family information with anyone and that otherwise they may jeopardize their safety.
- It is useful to have conversations with your children on technology every now and then. According to many parents, trusting the knowledge of children who are better at using technology has a significant impact on building self-confidence and maintaining contact with you.

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