

BEHAVIOUR CHANGES

Should you notice a change in behaviour over a disappointment, particularly one you know little about, make time to allow your child to talk more about what has happened and how they are feeling. If your child can't or won't talk about it, please raise this with your local counsellor.

Counsellors are trained to understand children's feelings and how to communicate with children. We are there to help you!

It is important not to ignore or minimise the impact of disappointing events in a child's life. When you do, you simply can confirm what many children may think too often about adults in their life – 'They just don't understand.'

Josephine Byrnes-Luna

Registered Professional Counsellor | Supervisor
Nationally Accredited Mediator (NMAS)

Personal Professional Relationships
Childhood Development and Parenting
Collaborative Law – Family Law – Parenting Plans
Careers – Planning – Advice – Transition – Students
Workplace Mediation
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EAP and Mediation Contract
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Counselling & Mediation Services

HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH DISAPPOINTMENT

JOSEPHINE BYRNES-LUNA

Acknowledgements:

Australian and American Institutes of Counselling

This can be quite a common issue faced by parents and even educators and is usually associated with loss of some form.

Childhood disappointments come in many shapes and sizes and can include things like:

- Having one of their good friends leave their school / move away
- Not being asked or chosen for a game at school
- Losing in a competition
- Losing a pet
- Missing something special due to illness
- A best friend not talking to them anymore
- Not be chosen for the school playand many more

WHAT TO DO

LISTEN TO THEIR STORY

No matter what the situation this is the best way to begin by helping a child cope with a disappointment

TALK 'WITH' YOUR CHILD

Give the child the opportunity to tell you what has happened in their words, and actively listen to them

SHARE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE DISAPPOINTMENT

This is after you have given your child the opportunity to tell you what has happened in their words and always use 'statements of understanding'



**IT IS VERY
IMPORTANT TO
REMEMBER THAT THE
VALUES AND
EXPERIENCES ARE
THAT OF THE CHILD,
AND NOT THE ADULT.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

DON'T TRIVIALISE THE EVENT

The situation may seem minor to an adult, but a child has limited life experience compared to an adult, and therefore the disappointment is not minor for the child. In fact in most cases it will be a major event for the child that may also seem insurmountable at the time and for a period following the disappointment.

DON'T TALK 'TO' YOUR CHILD

Always remember to talk 'with' your child.

DON'T INTERROGATE YOUR CHILD

Provide your child the opportunity to tell you what has happened in their words and in their time.

AVOID EXPLANATIONS OF YOUR OWN LIFE EXPERIENCES

This is a time for your child to tell of their experience of the event and not the parent/adult's time to talk about any of their life experiences.

DON'T TRY TO TOP THE CHILD'S DISAPPOINTMENT

Always actively listen to the child and don't talk of stories of your own frustrations.

TRY AND AVOID SOOTHING THE DISAPPOINTMENT WITH A MORE PLEASANT EXPERIENCE OR REWARD

This can include things like giving the child an ice-cream, biscuits, sweets etc. Whilst this may work in the short term, it can also set up patterns that can be hard to break as the child gets older, and so is best avoided. This can include things like giving the child an ice-cream, biscuits, sweets etc. Whilst this may work in the short term, it can also set up patterns that can be hard to break as the child gets older, and so is best avoided.