



## Only you

### Things to watch out for parents of an only child

Being a parent of just one child has its own joys and difficulties. A family raising one child may have a totally different experience to a family raising more, with each coming with their own set of challenges and rewards.

With the help of a few wonderfully written books, and websites (titles listed at the end), here are some tips for parents of an only child.



First of all, let your child to be a child and not a little adult. It is often easy to get carried away and treat children as 'little adults' particularly those children who do not have other siblings. It is often all too easy to forget how young our children are and we may often find ourselves unknowingly treating them and interacting with them as though they are 'little adults'. It is important to remind ourselves of their age and base our expectations accordingly. However, it is also important to maintain a balance between this and ensuring that they also have the opportunities to develop as independent individuals as well.



Socialize your child from an early age. Make sure your child has plenty of children to play with and let them do things without you. Try to create strong social circles because friends can become sibling substitutes. Through socializing with other children they will learn essential skills such as how to share and take turns, as well as how to communicate with others to solve problems.

Sometimes let things slip by. If a family has more than one child, it is likely that children can "get away" with something when parents aren't looking. Let that happen in your little family from time to time. It is important for only children to feel like they are not being constantly watched.

And a little quiz to sum up.

What do all these well-known people have in common:

Leonardo da Vinci, Albert Einstein, Mahatma Gandhi, Isaac Newton, Gregory Peck, Nancy Reagan, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Frank Sinatra, Daniel Radcliffe, Al Pacino, Elvis Presley, Hans Christian Andersen, John Lennon, Robert De Niro.

They're all only children!





## Fear and Anxiety in Children *Building Confidence Early*



Just like adults, children and young people feel worried and anxious at times. Many of these worries are a normal part of growing up. It's also common for pre-school children to develop specific fears or phobias which commonly include animals, insects, water, storms and the dark. These fears usually go away gradually on their own, but other ways in which you could help your child overcome their anxieties may include:

Talking to your child about their anxieties or worries. Reassure them.

Children of all ages find regular routines reassuring so try to stick to regular daily routines where possible.

If your child is anxious because of distressing events, such as a bereavement or separation, see if you can find books or films that will help them understand their feelings.

Try not to become anxious yourself or overprotective – rather than doing things for your child or helping them to avoid anxiety provoking situations, encourage your child to find ways to manage them.

Practice simple relaxation techniques with your child, e.g. taking three deep, slow breaths, engaging in art or story telling

Try distraction – for example if they are anxious about going to the nursery, play games on the way there.





## Mirror Mirror

### *How children are a reflection of their parents*

Our children are mirrors, reflecting images of what happens around them. In addition to sharing genetic similarities with parents, they reflect the gestures, language, and interests of the adults in their lives. You'll notice your child holding a crayon just like Dad holds his pen, or using a phrase Grandma says often. The behavior and habits children are exposed to at an early age can directly impact their early brain development, and so could potentially become behaviors and habits they carry into adulthood. It's not easy to admit that our children's every action is anything but a direct result of something we've said, done, or taught. Nor is it easy to allow them the freedom to make some of their own choices.

This can include how much time and effort they put into studying for a spelling test, how they choose to express thanks, or what they choose to wear. There will be times when they get it wrong. But it's important to remember that those failings aren't actually failings, but part of the process of learning, growing, and becoming one's own self.



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Dear Parents and Carers,

Please take a few minutes to share your feedback on the Early childhood Chronicle and any topics you would like included via [eced@iuk.org](mailto:eced@iuk.org)

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