



For any therapeutic parenting strategy to work, some kind of connection and attunement must be present within the relationship. However, connection can be challenging as it can be rejected - and often is by children who have had early experiences of inconsistent or unsafe relationships. Therefore we might start with developing a connection in a way that feels tolerable to both child and adult. Developing or repairing a connection can start at a distance and move in over time as attunement and trust grows.

Connection From A Distance

Show them you are holding them in mind even when they are not with you

- A note in their bag: this could be a loving thought about them, a drawing, a poem, a silly joke - or a mixture. Give them blank note cards so they can give you a note too.
- Surprise them for no reason with their favourite biscuit/cake/snack in their lunch box.
- Text/WhatsApp message: simply let them know that you're thinking of them - or even just send a silly picture.
- Play a 3 word story game over text: Create a story together 3 words at a time. Take turns adding 3 words at a time to create a silly story.
- Have a special ring tone on your phone and let them know it belongs to them.
- Buy them a photo keyring to put on/in their bag - let them know it's because you want them to know you are always thinking of them.
- Reverse a baby monitor and put it in their room so they can hear/see you as they go to sleep.
- Spray your scent on to the sleeve of their uniform or let them use your moisturiser before school.
- Draw a symbol on their hand and yours, every time you press it it sends a virtual hug/kiss/love to the other person.

Tolerable Nurture

Connecting with a child who perhaps has been rejecting/violent towards you can be daunting.

Tolerable nurture offers re-connection in a manageable way and shows them you are holding them in mind - even if you are in a different room!

- Sitting next to them to watch a film/TV.
- Playing on their games system with them.
- Touching their hand/shoulder/back briefly when they are eating dinner.
- Putting recent photos up of you together in every room.
- Visible/explicit memory box of the things they have made, copies of nice texts that they have sent you etc, kept in this special place.
- Spontaneous home disco/karaoke.
- Go swimming and dive for weights together.
- Sing happy, loving songs from another room and change a key word to include their name.
- Co-create a bucket list of manageable mini dates you want to do together and surprise or schedule this in at various moments.
- £5 gift challenge. Each of you has £5 and 1 hour to find a gift for each other, it ends with hot chocolate and gift giving.
- Mutual face painting/make up/nail painting.