# **Five Emotional Needs of Children**

Attention

[Children](http://child.therapyhub.com/) know whether they are being seen or listened to, or if an adult is just “faking it.” Showing sincere interest in a child’s feelings, thoughts, and activities, and spending time with them one-on-one, lets them know they are important and valued.

When emotional needs are consistently satisfied, [children are more secure](http://www.therapyhub.com/articles/therapy-tips/attachment-theory-secure-and-insecure-attachments) and can give to others.

Approval

For children to create a [healthy concept of self](http://www.therapyhub.com/articles/therapy-tips/attachment-theory-learning-live-our-emotions), they need positive feedback and rewards for effective behaviour. They thrive hearing positive things about their activities and character. Knowing they are valued helps them develop a sense of worth and confidence in themselves, and to realize their strengths.

Support

Children run into challenges while growing up. Even early on they are navigating the ins and outs of social, intellectual, and emotional dos and don’ts. It gives children courage to know their caregivers will go above and beyond to help them succeed in life.

Security

To flourish, children need to feel safe, and to know they are being held. This includes having age-appropriate expectations for them, and setting limits that are consistently kept. Having routines provide secure feelings, as does observing the adults in their life respecting and communicating with each other.

Comfort

It is important to listen to and acknowledge a child’s feelings, whatever they are. They need to know they can find comfort when they are sad, fearful, or otherwise upset. Sometimes attentive listening is all a child needs to feel safe.

Emotions and feelings are not logical, nor are they supposed to be. They reflect how a child (or adult) views a situation, or the world. Their feelings always make sense when you understand their perceptions.

By accepting a child’s emotions, you teach them what emotions are, and give them permission to feel and share them.