

Non - violent Resistance Programme

Parental Presence

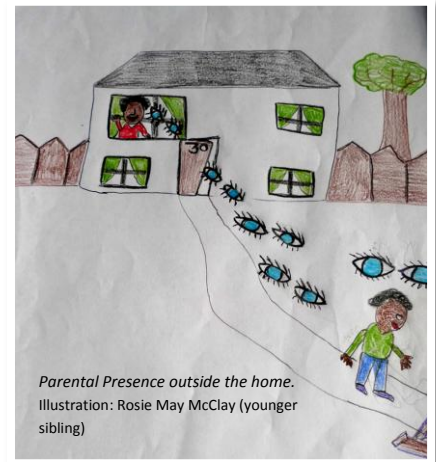
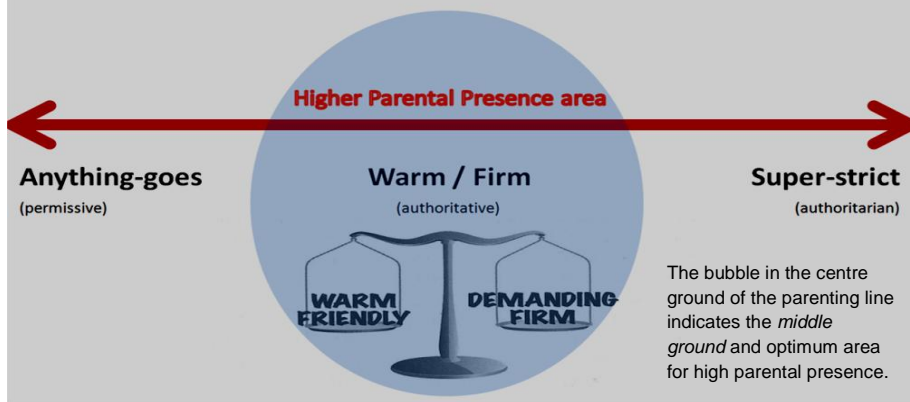
"I'm here! I am your parent and will remain your parent!"
(Haim Omer)

NVR FACTSHEETS

1. INTRODUCTION TO NVR
2. DE-ESCALATION
3. **PARENTAL PRESENCE**
4. BASKETS
5. RECONCILIATION GESTURES
6. ACTIVE RESISTANCE
7. SUPPORTERS & SELF-CARE
8. ANNOUNCEMENTS
9. SIT-INS
10. SIBLINGS

Parental Presence has two parts: - a parent's physical presence and a parent's presence in their child's mind. Parental Presence can also be thought of Parental influence; not parental control (authoritarian) and not parental permissiveness (laissez faire), but in the **centre ground** of the parenting line (parenting styles). This is the difficult stance of managing both warm and firm presence at the same time, whilst avoiding extremes.

The Parent Line



Increased Parental Presence: Routine contact with children is one of the main ways of increasing parental presence. Alongside more frequent contact there may also be a higher risk of conflict. Parent and carers are guided towards the use of *Reconciliation Gestures* to help re-connect with their child and lower the possibility of escalation.

Parental Presence and temperament: Some children are easier to manage than others. For example, children with more easy-going temperaments are usually easier to praise and more enjoyable to be around. Children with more intense, sensitive and strong willed temperaments are usually more prone to non-cooperation or defiance. Trying to control young people through either rewards or consequences usually fails. Increasing a positive parental presence using *Reconciliation Gestures* and *Acts of Resistance* helps to regain control over oneself, and in turn, eventually more cooperation from the child. This usually takes place in an uneven pattern of 'two steps forward, one step back'.

Parental Presence and attachment: In NVR, we talk of the 'anchoring function' of parents and carers. In this model, parents offer sensitive care (as informed by attachment theory) and also authoritative care. A useful analogy is a ship's anchor that prevents a boat from becoming lost or shipwrecked in choppy or stormy weather (See Omer, 2017:19).

What to expect

The concept of Parental Presence can feel confusing to start with. As you become familiar with and start using the NVR tools, your sense of Parental Presence will grow. As you start to re-connect with your child and gradually gain more influence over your parental reactions, you will know that your parental presence has returned.

As you stay calmer, using the 'cold iron' approach, you (gradually) begin to feel more confident in testing situations, and more 'present' in your child's world. Over time, you should also see changes in the child / young person, often subtle at first, that indicates your parental presence has returned. For example, times when cooperation has taken place, albeit in an uneven way, where there was previously little or none before.

Levels of Parental Presence

Out of sight, out of mind	Lower parental presence
Out of sight, held in mind	Higher parental presence
In sight, out of mind	Lower parental presence
In sight, held in mind	Higher parental presence

<p>Why is regular contact so important for increased parental presence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily contacts builds connections (provided the parent works with de-escalation and reconciliation gestures). • Daily interactions often help to gain more knowledge about the child as well as strengthening the parent's presence in the child's mind. • Over time, parents are likely to have more influence over a connected child, rather than a disconnected child (connection before correction). 	<p>Some conditions for losing parental presence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escalation between parent and child. • Isolation, fear and parental shame. • parents not working together • parents and school not working together • Feeling overly guilty about past or current issues. • Too much compassion for child's feelings to the extent that a firmer stance can be compromised. • Ongoing pattern of holding firm followed by giving in, holding firm, giving in and so on. 	<p>Signs of lowered Parental Presence</p> <p>Parental Presence does not mean being around the young person all of the time. It means that your child is aware of you as a parent at home, in school, and when they are with their peers. It also means that you are aware of your child's activities, including their screen use and screen time.</p> <p>Some examples of low parental presence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>You do not know who your child's friends are or what they up to.</i> • <i>Your child does not feel they need to let you know when they will be home at night.</i> • <i>You have no control over how loud your child plays their music in the house.</i> • <i>Your child blanks you whenever you try to speak to them.</i> • <i>You feel exhausted, low or without support from other adults in dealing with your child.</i> <p>Source: Peter Jakob, Partnership Projects.</p>
<p>Links to other NVR ideas</p> <p>De-escalation. High escalation = low parental presence. Low escalation is a prerequisite for increased parental presence.</p> <p>Baskets help to 'sift' issues into priorities. This helps to clear the mind and not feel so overwhelmed by problems. This then leads to an increased parental presence as we use NVR tools to manage situations in non-escalatory ways using the principles of connection before correction.</p> <p>Reconciliation Gestures are ways of connecting to our children and they are excellent at increasing our parental presence. With regular connection using the four types of RG's – quality time, reflective listening, connecting comments and connecting actions - children are more likely to hold our values in mind. (See factsheet 5).</p> <p>Self Care is not optional, but vital, to help prevent parental burnout. Dealing with difficult issues can take its toll, and if you have more energy, then your parental presence will be higher as you will be able to think more clearly.</p> <p>Supporters may help to make more transparent the child's challenging behaviours that have often been shrouded in secrecy. The aim is to support parental presence to manage risk situations with helpful texts or messages from relatives which can be part of 'campaigns of concern'. A further important aspect is support to help improve parent – teacher communication.</p> <p>Active Resistance This is the firmer stance of NVR. Routine daily contacts with children may increase parental presence and broaden vigilant care. Acts of Resistance are a vital component of NVR and help address issues (for example, using short, succinct comments given at neutral times. See Factsheet 6).</p> <p>Announcements These written statements help both the child and the parent to reflect on issues. Each carefully pre-planned written statement is designed to increase the presence of the parent in the child's mind.</p> <p>Sit-ins Parental Presence is shown robustly during traditional sit-ins, and also just as robustly during quieter connecting sit-ins that shows active parental presence persistently shown over time. These may also lead to <i>recovering conversations</i> (see factsheet 9).</p>		
<p>Siblings: All NVR tools should also be used regularly with siblings. Connections with other children can often be compromised when a particular child needs a high level of vigilant care.</p> <p>Professional Presence: In work situations, we may think of <i>Professional Presence</i>. How much influence can we exert over our work environment using NVR concepts? Although our positioning is usually a subordinate one, we may still have some influence adapting the NVR toolkit and sometimes employing a stance of 'positive delinquency' (See Brown, 2020, in press).</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Violent Resistance. Haim Omer, 2004. • Parental Vigilant Care. Haim Omer (Ed) 2017. • Non-violent Resistance (NVR). Guidelines for parents of children or adolescents with violent or destructive behaviours. Chapters 3 and 14. Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust, 2007. • Towards positions of Positive Delinquency. Brown. P (forthcoming, 2020). 		

