TOP QUALITIES
Some of the qualities that are important for us to understand in terms of our parenting and guiding children's behaviour involve recognising that children need:

- an independent sense of right and wrong so they act considerately and thoughtfully because they know that is the right way to act (and not just to be rewarded or to avoid punishment)
- to learn to regulate their emotions and cope with conflicts and setbacks in life
- support in terms of cooperating with others and working in groups
- a sense of self-efficacy where they believe they can make a difference in their world and have some autonomy and choice.

Both highlight the importance of recognising and responding to children's needs.

How to nurture empathy

Be a supportive parent by encouraging emotional growth so children learn to be considerate and thoughtful

SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

Dr Ali Black
Univ of Sunshine Coast

STRONG and responsive parent/child relationships support children in every way.

They support our children's learning, sense of security and behaviour. Parents are important role models for children.

When we interact with children with respect and care we are modelling these skills and behaviours for children and meeting their emotional needs through caring and nurturing interactions.

Our beliefs about children, their behaviour and how they learn have a significant influence on the parenting choices we make.

Sometimes we might think that children are engaging in "attention-seeking behaviours" or are being "manipulative", but programs such as the Circle of Security encourage us to think differently and ask different questions such as "how can I improve my relationship with my child?" and "what is my child's behaviour telling me?". Programs like these show us that a child's behaviour is driven by a need for emotional connection. This link takes you to a helpful video which reminds us of our parenting role in supporting children's learning about how to connect with others: http://circleofsecurity.net/news/cos/connectedness-videos/. Children are more likely to behave well when they are feeling secure in their emotional connectedness and safe in our love.

Unconditional love is very important for us all. We all need to have our basic and emotional needs met. Having our needs met and being loved are our fundamental human rights. None of us has finished our personal growth. Having secure relationships with others and knowing that others care for us is really important to our sense of belonging and our self-esteem.

Key authors and speakers such as Louise Porter (see www.louise-porter.com.au) and Ross Green (see www.livesinthebalance.org) offer support for parenting and guiding children to be considerate and thoughtful.

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT: Children are more likely to behave well when they are feeling secure in their emotional connectedness and safe in our love.

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