**Stop Comparing Your Child with others**

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Stop comparing your child with others. Comparison is a common approach to ascertain the performance of your child. You compare your child’s grades with others and then determine whether your kid’s academic achievements are “normal”, better or excellent. As parents, we often resort to giving examples of other children’s accomplishments as a way of motivating our own children.

For instance, “Look, Archana Masi’s son secured 90% in Maths” or “Your neighborhood friend Pinky stood first in singing competition”. “Learn something from other kids. Stop loitering in the neighborhood and join some classes”. You certainly do not aim to hurt your child, but unknowingly these verbal statements do more harm than good. Comparing your child with others is actually making you and your child stressed and is a useless activity, but the urge is hard to resist.

## Why You Should Stop Comparing Your Child with Others?

Sometimes, the sole motivation of comparing your child to others is to instigate a competitive spirit in the child, so that this feeling can push the child to perform to the best of their capabilities and excel. Competitiveness definitely is a driving force towards performance. But is this working for your child?

No two children are the same. They have different talents and interests, develop at different rates, and have different strengths. Practically speaking, parents can either build or break the confidence and self-esteem of their children. Expressing unhappiness due to poor performance or bragging about their achievements; both are appropriate.

Read below to know about the negative effects of comparison and the alternative approach:

## Negative Effects of Comparing Your Child

Being compared with their peers can have an adverse effect on the child. Following are some of the negative effects of comparing child.

### 1. Stress

The child feels burdened if they are constantly being compared. Your job is not to pressurize them to perform, in turn making them anxious and insomniac. Sit and talk to your child and ask them if there is something bothering them which is affecting their performance. Devise solutions together.

### 2. Lowers Self Esteem

The kid starts believing that others are better than them and that they are incapable of performing well or living to the expectations of the parents. This feeling is very damaging for the personal and academic growth of the child.

### 3. Lowers Self-Worth

Despite their best efforts, if they still get to hear that they need to follow the other child to perform well, this breaks their confidence. The “good for nothing” starts to settle in. This may deteriorate his performance further.

### 4. Shy Away From Social Situations

If your kid is consistently ridiculed or taunted by comparison, then they will start avoiding public interaction with you.

### 5. Builds Carefree Attitude

If the child’s talents or achievements are constantly ignored, then they may not even bother to please you anymore since you clearly favor the other child who has more “appropriate” achievements.

### 6. Suppresses Talents

Your kid spends more time on charcoal paint. And, you prefer them to go for badminton practice. The kid faces a dilemma. If the painting talent is unappreciated, and they halfheartedly go for playing badminton, they may not score very well. Eventually, the painting talent will not have room to grow and will be lost.

### 7. Distances From You

Clearly, if the kid is being held negatively up against his siblings, cousins, friends, or neighbors, it becomes evident to them that something about him is unacceptable to you, and you are unhappy with him. You become the source of hurt for them, and they will try to maintain distance from you. This may make your kid feel insecure and lose trust in you. Which may lead to developmental or behavioral problems as your child matures.

### 8. Fosters Sibling Rivalry

When you compare, rather than praise, the other child over your child, your child may secretly start loathing his own sibling. This may lead them to behave aggressively, pick fights, tease, and even hit each other. You are also passing the message that the better-performing child is favored and loved more. As a result, your kid may start belittling themselves.

## Positive Comparison Approach to Help Your Child

Comparisons, if done in the right manner can give a boost to the child.  Following are some positive comparison approach that you can try.

### 1. Set Benchmark Instead of Comparing

Appreciate the effort, even if they secure slightly more than the previous exam. This builds confidence.

### 2. Encourage to Cope with the Weakness

Ask if your kids need any help. Support them.

### 3. Praise the Strengths

Whatever tasks your child performs well, appreciate it.

### 4. Don’t Set Up Unrealistic Expectations

If your girl wants to become a writer, don’t force her to take up engineering. She may be smart and intelligent, but lacks aptitude and interest, which are detrimental to success in any field.

### 5. Provide Unconditional Support and Love

If your kid could not score well, do not make them feel that they have let you down or embarrassed you. Always support your child. Engage in a pep talk, encourage them to practice more, and always appreciate their efforts in public. Remember that every child is unique. They have different levels of interests, different strengths, and weaknesses.

## Parents and Peer Pressure

Save yourself and your kid from undue pressure for performance. This trait of competing and comparing is more common in parents than in kids. Don’t force your kid to pursue skating classes if they do not like it. They may be more interested in squash. Let them follow their interests, and then they are sure to excel with flying colors.

Your self-esteem as a parent should not be linked to your child’s performance in school or sports. Remember, you are not your child. Realize this every time you push your child towards something that they do not want to do.

Now if your child complains that “you always take his side” or “you always support him, not me”, then do pay heed to their feelings. They may not be voicing their feelings out of the blue, maybe your actions – verbal or non-verbal – are making this evident to them? Be more careful about this.

Remember, neither you can be a perfect mother nor can your child be a perfect kid encompassing excellence in all fields of academics, sports, or relation-wise. Everyone has to face different challenges. The situation differs from home to home and kid to kid. If you think deeply, your two children will differ in their sets of abilities and skills. Just be proud of your children for what they are. Give them your love and strive to build a confident person out of your child.

As Theodore Roosevelt aptly put, “Comparison is the thief of joy”. So do not rob your little one of the joy of childhood. Give them space to grow.