

# POSITIVE PARENTING

CARDS

DIGITAL VERSION

40 CONVERSATION STARTERS



St Luke's  
**Innovative**  
Resources

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## Welcome to the Digital Version of *Positive Parenting Cards!*



### Forty delightful digital images for sharing and learning about parenting.

*Positive Parenting Cards* provide a unique way for people to tell their stories of the joys, difficulties and rewards of parenting. These cards do not tell people how to be good parents or blame them for difficulties. Rather, they invite parents to speak about their hopes and dreams for their children and themselves. In this way parents feel supported, acknowledged and encouraged—and they gather parenting skills in the most natural, unthreatening way.

First published as a card set, this best-selling set of forty cards is now available in an interactive, user-friendly, digital version.

You can:

- swipe through *Positive Parenting Cards* one or two at a time
- swipe through a row of thumbnail images at the bottom of the screen
- bookmark/tag images
- add and drag notes anywhere on the image

- write, scribble or draw on the image
- write your own 'sentence starter' or relevant notes on the card
- highlight, draw and write in multiple colours
- take a screen shot and access the image in your photo gallery (you can't print directly from the digital images).

### Who are *Positive Parenting Cards* for?

These delightful, digital cards are perfect for parents, grandparents, carers and anyone looking after children or young people. They are a valuable resource for schools, parent education programs, family work, counselling and out-of-home care. They are also perfect for pre-marriage or co-parenting sessions with chaplains and couples counsellors. They can be used with individuals or groups. They are a great resource for anyone working with families, with 'at risk' parents and in foster care and adoption services. This set of cards will get people talking around the kitchen table, in meetings, in parenting workshops, out-of-home care reviews and in any family skill-building event, no matter how diverse the make-up, style and ethnicity of the families may be.

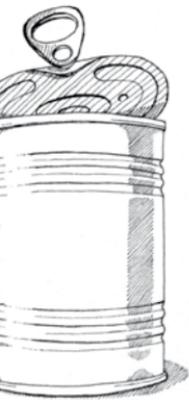


### What are *Positive Parenting Cards* for?

These cards are designed for parenting education and support—wherever it may be found—from schools and social work agencies to health services and community organisations. As every parent knows, parenting can be delightful, difficult, funny, heart-breaking and enormously rewarding. It may be the very best—and the most challenging—undertaking of one's life. When parenting difficulties arise, solutions are much more likely to be found in reflective conversations and storytelling than in judging or 'going around' in the problem. Noticing and telling parents' and children's stories of success is pivotal in building hope, resilience and the skills needed to parent well. That's where these cards come in.

*Positive Parenting Cards* can assist parents to:

- tell stories
- share ideas
- reflect on parenting
- find solutions
- share what is troubling or challenging them
- be frank about their experience without judgement
- build confidence
- decide on skills they want to learn
- feel supported and connected to services and other parents

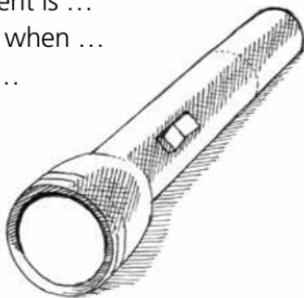


- explore values
- develop empathy, understanding and new awareness
- be inspired to try new things
- set parenting goals for themselves
- reframe their own experiences, and those of their children, in a more hopeful light
- develop greater appreciation of themselves and their children.

### How many images are in the digital set?

There are forty images in the set. Each card features an original, 'retro-style' line drawing of an everyday object that can be found in family homes, such as a toaster, a ball, a shoe, a pet's bowl, a sandwich, a toothbrush or a garden spade. Accompanying the line drawing is a sentence starter to get the conversation rolling, for example:

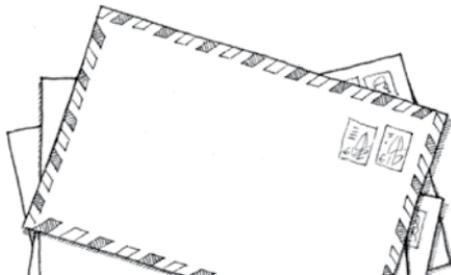
- I was proud of my children when ...
- Something I find difficult as a parent is ...
- As a parent, I was really surprised when ...
- A good thing about my family is ...



## How is this resource 'strengths-based'?

Strengths-based practice holds that everyone has strengths and that our strengths are the best resources to call on in times of difficulty. At its simplest, this approach to parenting education arises out of sincere curiosity about the following:

- It is more useful to understand problems or seek solutions?
- What if the focus is primarily on parents' strengths and best hopes for the future rather than on 'The Problem'?
- What are the most effective ways of generating change and growth?
- How can we best value parents' own expertise?
- What happens when we assume parents have good intentions?
- What if we listened carefully for the strengths embedded in the stories: are full of di



The central belief is that knowing a person's strengths, skills, resources and future hopes is more useful than knowing what someone can't do. The strengths approach does not ignore the problems a parent might be struggling with, but attempts to employ a person's own qualities and assets to identify solutions that work for them. And these strengths often emerge through storytelling.

### **What should I consider before using digital *Positive Parenting Cards?***

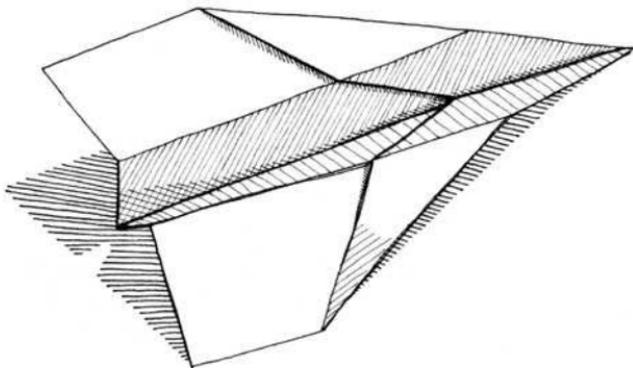
Almost invariably, sharing stories will energise and positively transform conversations with individuals, groups or teams. It is amazing to witness the atmosphere shift as people begin to share their own experiences, and feel heard by others. They are then more likely to listen to the experiences and ideas of others. There are no right and wrong ways to complete the sentence starters. The power of this resource comes from opening up a safe space for storytelling and sharing.

It is important to keep in mind that are de-

talking about things  
ren and parenting  
le and emotional.



While no training is needed to use *Positive Parenting Cards*, it is important to consider such things as the timing, the setting, literacy levels, cultural relevance and privacy before you begin using this resource with others. Please consider how you will ensure that people are safe and respected, and can be supported if strong emotions arise. It is important that nobody feels 'pressured' to participate or to speak about aspects of themselves or their families if they do not wish to.



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## How do I use the digital *Positive Parenting Cards*?

There are countless fun and creative ways to use the digital *Positive Parenting Cards*. But each one of those activities begins with either a deliberate or random selection method of choosing images. The facilitator then follows with a range of questions to get the conversation and reflection rolling.

### Deliberate Selection

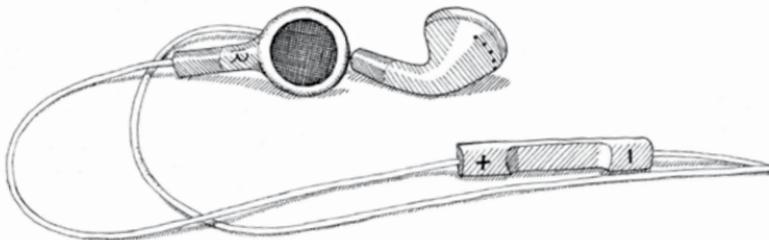
- Invite the participant to scroll through the images one at a time to become familiar with the whole set. If you are working with a group, the facilitator can project the images onto a screen and scroll through so everyone can see.
- Invite participant(s) to pick an image that jumps out at them for any reason. Perhaps it is the picture that catches their attention, or perhaps it is the sentence starter written on the image, or perhaps it is because this card is particularly important or relevant to them at this time in their parenting.



## Random Selection

An alternate way of getting activities started is to select images randomly, for example:

- Ask the person to randomly select a number from 1—40 (there are forty cards). The facilitator or participant can then swipe through the images, counting each image as they go. Stop at the image that corresponds with their random number.
- If working with a group, ask each person to pick a random number and then swipe through and stop as above.
- Or you can ask an individual to close their eyes (or turn their back) and randomly say, 'Stop!' as the facilitator swipes through the images.
- Or use a timer that has been set to a chosen interval—5 seconds, 10 seconds, etc. Stop on the image that is on screen when the timer dings.



### Some Questions for Reflection and Conversation

Whether you use a deliberate or random selection method, you can then you can build the conversation with activities such as:

- The parent or the facilitator begins by reading the sentence starter aloud. (Please take care; it may be inappropriate to ask the parent to read aloud due to literacy, language, speech or anxiety issues—especially if they are part of a group.)
- Then ask the parent, ‘How would you complete the sentence starter?’ If you are working in a group, each person in the group can finish the sentence in their own way, and participants can discuss their various answers together.

If the card was chosen deliberately, facilitators can also ask:

- Why did you choose this card? What attracted you to it?

If the card was randomly chosen, facilitators can ask:

- Would you have deliberately chosen it in relation to your experience of being a parent?



Whether deliberately or randomly chosen, facilitators can ask:

- What does this card mean to you?
- Can you share a story about how this relates to your experience of parenting?
- Have you thought about the topic on the card before?
- On a scale of 1-10 how important is this topic to you in your parenting?
- Is the topic on this card something you find easy or challenging as a parent?
- Does this card have any significance or special relevance for your parenting at the moment?
- Is this something you would like to incorporate into your parenting more?
  - Of all the people you know, who is really good at doing this in their parenting?
  - Is there anything they do that you could try doing as well?
  - If you would like to do more of this in your parenting, what is one simple thing you could do today or tomorrow?
  - How will you notice the effect of doing that? For example, some people like to keep a journal and others prefer to watch carefully what happens when they try something new in their parenting.



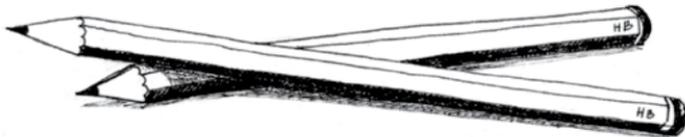
If facilitators wish, they can then invite the parent(s) to select another image, either randomly or deliberately. Once again, read the sentence starter and invite them to complete it in their own way.

- Does this new image connect in any way to the first one?
- Do they seem complementary, contradictory or completely unrelated to you?
- Are there other images in the set that you think go well with the two you have just looked at?

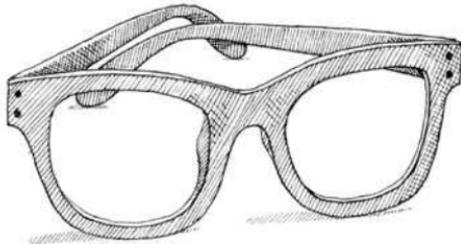
### Opening Up to Hopeful Change

When problems dominate, we can feel very stuck. We can't imagine that change is possible for us. Putting ourselves in another's shoes, or thinking back on how we ourselves have changed as a parent can be a valuable way to create possibilities for further change.

- Ask participants to complete the sentence as they imagine their own father/mother/guardian might have.
- Ask participants to think of a parent they particularly love and imagine



- Invite participants to choose a card and finish the sentence by imagining the different stages their parenting role may have gone through. How would they have completed the sentence:
  1. during pregnancy?
  2. as the parent of a baby or toddler?
  3. as the parent of a young child?
  4. as the parent of an adolescent?
  5. as the parent of an adult?
- Invite participants to imagine how they would like to be able to complete the sentence at some time in the future.
- What would be happening in their family to be able to complete the sentence like this?



## Delving Deeper into Parenting

A counselling conversation might centre on a single digital card that the parent identifies as the most useful one for them. Alternatively, several images might be selected at random and the parent invited to finish the sentence starter before moving on to the next card. The counsellor or therapist might then ask:

- Which of the sentence starters did you most enjoy discussing?
- Which ones reminded you of your strengths and hopes as a parent?
- Did any of the sentence starters make you feel uncomfortable? Can you say why?
- Putting all your sentences and stories together, what do you know that you do well as a parent?

do more of?

ught you do in the coming week?



### Between Sessions: *Positive Parenting Card of the Week*

Individual parents or people from a group can be invited to choose one card to focus on between now and the next session (or for any timeframe). Facilitators can take a screen shot of the card, save it to their gallery, then email it to the relevant participant. Or participants can simply write down the sentence starter. Focussing on just one sentence starter (for example, 'I was proud of my children when ...'), people are invited to complete the sentence in a different way each day.

- How did the way you completed the same sentence differ each day/week?
- What qualities/achievements/strengths/actions did you find to be proud of in your children or in yourself as a parent?
- Were any of these surprising or new?
- Was it harder to notice something you are proud of in your children or yourself on one day than on another? Why do you think that is?
- If all the members of a group have taken the same sentence starter to complete each day before the next session, this can be an interesting starting point for the next group session. How do their sentences differ? How are they similar? What can they learn from each other about noticing strengths and achievements?



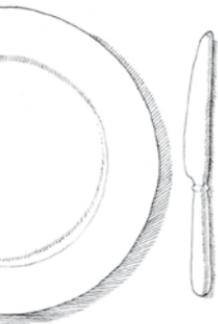
### When Times are Tough: Other Activities for Parents

Sometimes, families are so overwhelmed by issues that they lose touch with their strengths—and forget that strengths provide possible solutions to difficulties. *Positive Parenting Cards* can be used to:

- offer reminders that every parent has strengths and that it helps if we can identify and name our strengths
- create conversations about using our strengths to address particular problems
- highlight the importance of sharing and celebrating our strengths.

Swipe through the digital cards and ask the parent:

- Which cards speak about strengths you have as a parent?
- If there is another parent or caring adult (such as a grandparent) present in the child's life, what different parenting strengths do each of you bring?
- Have you told each other lately what strengths you see in each other?
- What strengths have you used in the past to get through difficult times as a parent?
- What strengths do you have right now that you can call on even more?

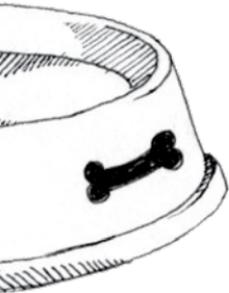


- If you were to put these strengths into action, what would you be doing differently?
- What other strengths could your family use at present?
- How might you go about searching for these strengths?

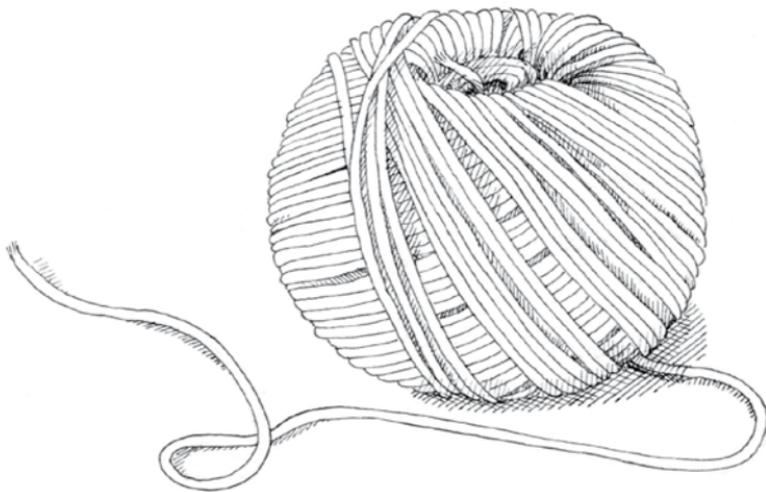
### Borrowing Parenting Strengths from Others

We all have times when we need to draw on the strengths of others to help us with our parenting—our partners, families, friends, neighbours, colleagues and specialist professionals—to complement our own array of strengths. Ask the person to swipe through the cards with the following questions in mind (Remember, you can tag particular images, write comments on them, take a screen shot and save them for 'records'):

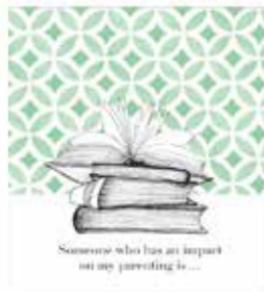
- What particular strengths, skills and resources would be most helpful right now in your parenting?
- Can you think of a person who might have some of these strengths, skills and resources? (You can write the name of the person directly onto the image, if you wish)
- How might you go about seeking their help?
- How could you 'borrow' these strengths and make them your own?
- You may not feel like you have these strengths right now but what if you decided to act as if you did have them as a parent?



- Do you think you would feel different?
- Do you think others might notice a difference?
- If you imagined having a new parenting strength right now, which one would you choose?
- If you simply started acting as if you had it, what would you start doing as a parent?



## The Array of Cards





Something my parents did that I would like to do more of is ...





One thing I hope my children remember me for is...



As a parent, I wonder...



Something I never seem to get around to as a parent is...

One thing I would like to change about my parenting is...



The values my parents passed on to me are...

I'd really like to know...



As a parent, I was really surprised when...



We really laugh together when...





A good thing  
about my family is



A parent I admire is...



I was proud  
of my  
parents when...



The values  
I would like to  
pass on to my  
children are...



My hopes for  
my children are...



What I miss  
most of  
as a parent is...



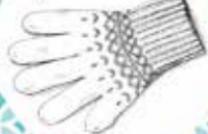
Someone who inspires me is...



One thing I would like to do  
more of as a parent is...



As a parent, I really enjoy...







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# POSITIVE PARENTING CARDS

NOW AVAILABLE DIGITALLY!



Forty delightful images  
for naming, building and  
celebrating strengths.



These delightful, approachable cards give parents, grandparents, foster parents and carers an opportunity to explore the joys, sorrows, challenges and gifts of parenting. These forty cards are built on the assumption that everyone is motivated to be the best parent they can be. Even if families are sometimes overtaken by difficulty, there are times when every parent can celebrate their successes, and those of their children. Noticing and telling the stories of these successes is pivotal in building hope, resilience and the skills needed to parent well.

**Each of the cards features a simple sentence starter like:**

- I was proud of my children when ...
- A good thing about my family is ...
- As a parent I was really surprised when ...

*Positive Parenting Cards* invite all parents to explore their beliefs, values, hopes and dreams for their children.

Swipe through the forty digital *Positive Parenting Cards*—write on them, draw on them, highlight and tag them, take screen shots and save them in your gallery.



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