

## Why is it important to ask my baby if he's in the mood for a massage?

When we honor our baby's communication that says 'yes', 'no', or 'I don't know', we are, in essence, saying "You're important, I care about you, and your feelings matter to me." This is the beginning of building a sense of "I", "I am" or "I exist". We reflect our children's existence through recognizing them as members of the family. Actively being invited and included as a member of the family provides the child a sense of belonging, a sense of agency and a sense of community. This is so important as he is developing his sense of self, self esteem and self worth. Through these healthy connections, the child can then reach out to others with the respect and compassion that was modeled for him. Who a child becomes is a direct reflection of the influencing environment. A question like "Is this a good time for a massage?" is an example of the subtle yet profound ways our daily actions and interactions help shape the people our children grow up to be.