

Is it ok for parents to be supportive to children's negative emotions?

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New research suggests that whereas mothers who are more supportive of their children's negative emotions rate their children as being more socially skilled, these same children appear less socially adjusted when rated by teachers. Specifically, mothers' supportive reactions predicted fewer socioemotional skills and more problem behaviors, according to children's third-grade teachers.

These contrasting patterns suggest a potential downside to mothers' supportiveness of [children's negative emotions](#) for third-grade children's social adjustment in school.

"It's not clear if the parents are causing these problems by hovering or providing too much support when less support is needed, if the parents are rightfully providing more support because their children are experiencing these social and emotional problems, or if the children are exhibiting very different emotional and social behaviors at home than they are at school," said Dr. Vanessa Castro, co-author of the *Social Development* study.

The findings suggest that it may be helpful for parents to consider other strategies to guide their children to develop their own skills in emotion regulation and social interaction.

More information: Vanessa L. Castro et al, Changing tides: Mothers' supportive emotion socialization relates negatively to third-grade children's social adjustment in school, *Social Development* (2017). DOI: [10.1111/sode.12251](https://doi.org/10.1111/sode.12251)

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