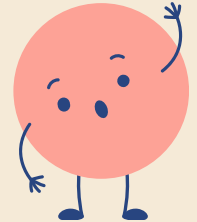


Sense of Agency

Here's what we know about sense of agency:

- A sense of agency is your child's growing understanding that they can make choices and decisions—that their thoughts, actions, and opinions matter.
- Having a sense of agency supports a child's developing identity ("who am I?") and helps them understand their role in relationships, the community, and the world.
- Young children have very little control over most parts of their daily lives. Providing safe, age-appropriate opportunities to choose, ask questions, problem-solve, and try things for themselves helps build confidence, decision-making skills, and emotional wellbeing.
- A sense of agency supports lifelong confidence and independence. A strong sense of agency helps children develop self-confidence, decision-making skills, problem-solving abilities, resilience, and a healthy sense of identity as they grow.
- It also helps children begin to believe in their ability to do things for themselves.



Trusting Relationships & Connection

Trusting relationships help children develop a sense of agency by showing them that their thoughts, feelings, and actions matter.

Celebrate your child's unique personality. Children express who they are in many different ways. For example, some children may prefer music or dance, while others enjoy sports or quieter activities.

Provide opportunities for your child to make decisions. Everyday moments offer chances for children to make choices, ask questions, and problem-solve. For example, choosing between a red shirt or a blue shirt.

Support growing independence in safe ways. Encourage your child to try doing things for themselves. For example, practicing getting dressed or feeding themselves with your guidance and support.



Play

Play supports a child's sense of agency by giving them chances to make choices, try things out, and explore what matters to them.

Children build confidence and skills by trying things for themselves in ways that match their readiness, abilities, and interests.

For example, a baby reaching, grasping, and exploring objects is developing coordination and problem-solving skills, or a toddler practicing pouring water outside is building independence and control.

Support System

Get connected to people, programs, and services that can help.

Connect with informal supports such as family, friends, neighbours, and other parents or caregivers in the community.



A bilingual Eastern Ontario service that connects children, youth, and families to the right mental health and related supports, when they need them.

613-260-2360 or 1-877-377-7775

Website: 1Call1Click.ca



Scan for support