

Connection to family and kin

We all need to feel connected. When we're dealing with the daily demands on us parents, being able to rely on family and friends is a great support. Connection to family and kin also provides a sense of belonging for the whole family and builds bonds between generations. That's how our stories and knowledge are passed down.

Positive family interactions are the building blocks for children's healthy development. These interactions promote our gundoos' language, cultural identity, and social skills. Spending time with family and kin also means we get shared wisdom, encouragement and support as parents.

Grief, trauma, and the COVID lockdowns have put pressure on family connectedness. That's why it's more important than ever to make extra effort to stay connected with the people we care about.

Here are some tips shared by Cherbourg families to nurture our connections to family and kin, and support our cultural roles in raising strong children.

The good thing about being in a small community is that our family is here to check up on each other, talk, and brighten up the day when we need it. So we have a sense of family wrapping around us.

During times of grief, we can lighten the load by sharing our experiences and feelings, sharing responsibilities like cooking meals, and even just being around each other.

And it's good to be able to call on family and friends when we need some time out from parenting for a little 'me time' and self-care when we're feeling stressed.

For many Elders, spending time with their grandchildren is a big part of their social interaction. It's a chance to tell stories, share memories, and see the children develop.

So, try to encourage and support that contact with the gundoos so relationships stay strong, the children learn a lot, and our Elders stay connected and young at heart!

Set things up well to ensure that social connections are successful and enjoyable for everyone. Make sure your gundoos know what to expect when spending time with family and talk about any rules or limits, like no technology at the table. Ask them to think about what they would like to share or talk about.

Is there anything you'd like to do to connect with family this week?

If you're feeling disconnected from your loved ones, it's okay to seek support from services. Re-establishing family relationships can have a positive impact on our own and our children's wellbeing. Look for parenting programs and other support at local services.

Remember, staying connected with family and friends is good for everyone's happiness and wellbeing.