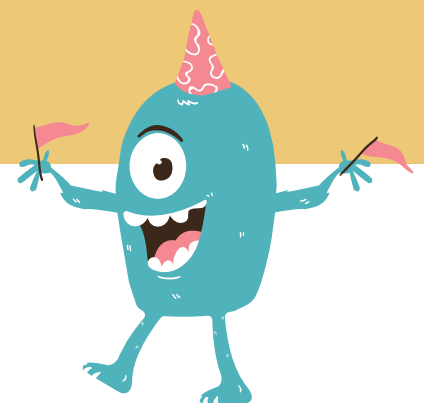


HOW TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR



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HOW TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR

STRENGTHEN THE BEHAVIOURS YOU WANT NOT THE ONES YOU DON'T WANT;



- Use your eye contact, your touch and your speech when you like what's happening. Talk about why you like it. Be very impressed with making an effort even if it isn't successful
- Don't look, touch or speak when you don't
- What matters in a child's life is getting things right, not getting things wrong!

YOU WILL BE TESTED WHEN YOU DO THIS, TO SEE IF YOU MEAN IT;

- The ignored behaviours will blow right up, to try to get you back interested
- Stay firm by refusing to look or speak, but walk out if you feel upset, or use a time out space for the child if it isn't safe
- Time out spaces are the place where you learn to relax, not places where you think about what you did wrong
- Another reaction is that praise or encouragement may be thrown back at you to see if you are interested in that rejection
- Refuse to take notice, and change the subject or walk away to limit this, and to reduce anxiety .



CHILDREN WILL ONLY CHANGE BEHAVIOUR WHEN THEY BELIEVE YOU WON'T CHANGE YOUR MIND. THIS CAN TAKE A LONG TIME DEPENDING HOW LONG AND HOW SEVERE THE BEHAVIOUR HAS BEEN.

YOU WILL NEED TO BE VERY CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT;



- Check that you are making reasonable demands, and providing reasonable information for the child's ability
- Be sure the child listens when you speak
- Say what to do rather than what not to do
- Children need the day and night to be predictable and reliable to feel secure. Use timetables, or 'work strips' that break time down into "do this, then this, then this..etc. Hide ideas about what to do in songs (2nd or 3rd verses) or play, as they are easier to remember that way.

HOW TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR

PLAY WITH YOUR CHILDREN ...



then use their play (inside or outside), reading and music time, to show the things you wish to be learnt (sharing, listening to others, finding a quiet place when you are u upset, being gentle etc). They can't learn these things from screen time, and need practice with real people, being gentle etc).

GIVE LOTS OF ROOM TO THINK ...

by taking away eye contact after you have spoken. Allow the child to look away while you are speaking, but be pleased when you do get eye contact. Let go, without eye contact or comment, any responses that are not right, including rudeness. Never do things for a child that can do themselves.



PARENTS AND CARERS NEED TO KNOW THEIR LIMITS.



They should - take regular breaks (this teaches the children to take regular breaks too); talk to friends and family they get on with; show their children how to handle feelings by controlling their own (eg walking away when upset); and learn to recognise when they have strength to give, and when they don't.

CHILDREN NEED TO LEARN FRIENDSHIP AND RELAXATION SKILLS ...

by regular discussion and practice.

CHILDREN DO BENEFIT FROM REWARDS THAT ARE ABOUT EFFORT RATHER THAN RESULTS ...

and that are unexpected rather than on demand. Cuddles matter more than cash, but the latter can help if controlled.

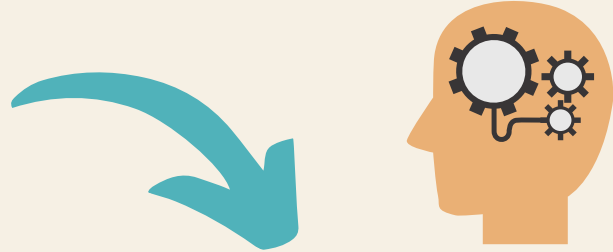


SPECIALISTS CAN HELP WITH AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL NEEDS AND HEALTH WHEN THERE IS A STRUGGLE, BUT YOUNG PEOPLE WILL ONLY CHANGE IF THEY BELIEVE WHAT PARENTS ARE DOING WHEN THEY ARE FIRM AND CONSISTENT.

MODIFYING BEHAVIOUR

ELECTRIC CIRCUITS IN THE BRAIN (MEMORIES) GOVERN EVERYTHING WE SAY OR DO

Many of the brain circuits we use throughout life are already present at birth, and the rest develop by copying things we see and hear.



OUR PERSONALITY IS MAINLY THE RESULT OF OUR FAMILY INHERITANCE ...

but it gets changed by experiences we have from the time we are born. We have no choice about inheritance, but parents and carers have many choices about the way they handle their children.



NEXT, OUR BRAIN CIRCUITS (ANY WORDS, ACTIONS, COORDINATION) ARE AUTOMATICALLY STRENGTHENED ...

by any reaction, whether words, eye contact or touch.

THE WAY WE REACT TO OUR CHILDREN HAS A MAJOR EFFECT ON THE WAY BEHAVIOURS AND LEARNING DEVELOP (REACTIVE) ...

but the tricks we use to teach (proactive) are even more important. How to respond to a young person tends to cause most worry, and so that will be dealt with first. If your initial feelings in this section are "how are we supposed to teach then?", please go on to the proactive part.



BASIC REINFORCEMENT (REACTIVE RESPONSE)

If you show any interest in, or reaction to, a behaviour, action or learning task the brain will automatically strengthen the memory of it, and make it more likely to happen again!

**SO, whether it is behaviours, coordination or learning,
if you like it:**



LOOK THAT WAY



TOUCH



SAY SOMETHING

So you strengthen the behaviours you approve of.

Sometimes your interest will bring a negative response (a test to see whether being positive, or negative, interests you more – see SWITCHING). If you don't like it:

DON'T LOOK

DON'T TOUCH

DON'T SPEAK

This refusal to react weakens the behaviour, though there may be an initial marked increase to see if it is true that you are no longer interested, and to see what you're made of! (see 'STORMING').

IF YOU FEEL UPSET OR ANGRY and there is no danger:

QUIT at once to a place you can relax in (being sure you can't be followed). This makes sure your emotions don't strengthen the child's behaviour; you are showing how to handle emotional stress; and you do have a chance to relax!



IF THERE IS A DANGER: THEN MAKE IT SAFE FIRST.

If possible, remove the danger without a word, eye contact, or sign of concern, THEN QUIT or, if it still isn't safe, put the young person [without words, eye contact or sign of concern] to a place where they can learn to relax.

It is not punishment, but a way to learn how to control moods. It should be comfortable. Allowing trampolining, a swing, or indoor music, play or reading (there are many alternatives) may help to settle, and helps the child to find that thing that settles them best. A pile of bean bags, a pop up tent, or something to crawl into may suit others. In general electronics will not allow the brain to settle because of the strong visual imagery.

RE-ENFORCEMENT TESTING (REACTIVE RESPONSE)

BEHAVIOURS USE EMOTIONAL TERRORISM AS A GAME ...

to check out if you are interested in what's going on, and find what you're made of. This brain game is automatic, and not planned. The behaviours may feel personal, but mostly they are not.

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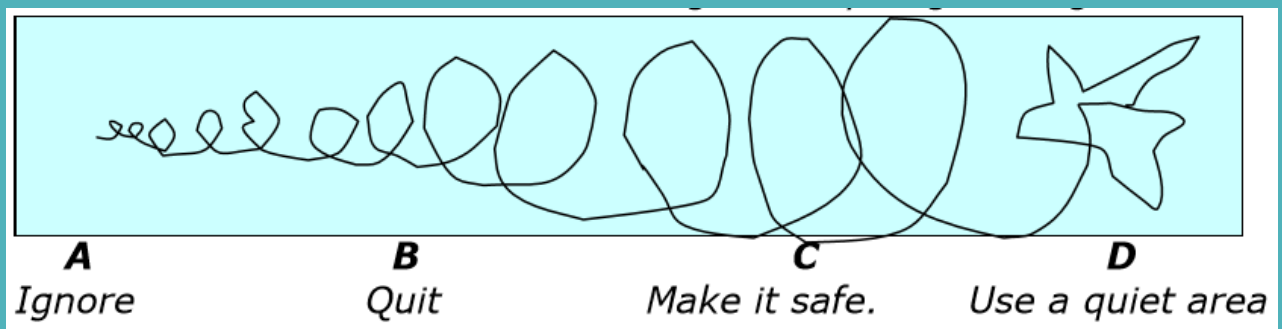
THE FIRST REACTIVE RESPONSE ...

comes when you try to ignore a behaviour that you don't like.

THE STORM

THE GAME OF STORMING ...

is a natural and automatic response when you ignore a behaviour. How you react will tell the child whether to use it as a regular way to get things.



A. ANNOYING BUT YOU FEEL ALRIGHT. IGNORE.

B. ANNOYING BUT YOU FEEL ANGRY. IF THERE IS NO DANGER, QUIT.

When you 'quit' a behaviour by walking out without looking or speaking, you are showing how to take time out when stressed. You are blocking the attempt to wind you up and it is a chance to relax yourself. You must be sure that you cannot be followed to your quiet area.

C. BEHAVIOUR IS NOT SAFE BUT YOU CAN REMOVE THE RISK.

Remove the risk, but without speaking or eye contact, then quit!

D. BEHAVIOUR IS NOT SAFE. RISK CAN'T BE REMOVED. GO TO REST AREA.

The time out/ chill out/ rest area is the place where the control of emotions is learnt. It should be a calm, quiet area, with things that reduce stress. The area should be used with:

- * NO WARNING
- * NO EXPLANATION OR EYE CONTACT
- * NO SIGN OF EMOTION

RE-ENFORCEMENT TESTING (REACTIVE RESPONSE)

THE STORM

YOU ARE TEACHING YOUR CHILD TO CONTROL STRONG FEELINGS ...

and NOT punishing them for what got in the way of the mood (could have been anything or anybody). It is NOT a problem of lack of knowledge!! Asking the child why they have been naughty, or explaining why the behaviour is bad, strengthens the memory of the failure and makes sure it happens more often!

If you are able to see any early warning signs, and can redirect behaviours, then that is clearly a good approach.



A CHILD WILL ONLY UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO DO IF YOU ARE CONSISTENT ...

in the way you react. If you react one time but not the next, the behaviour will continue, believing that you might react some of the time, or in some special places. A young person soon works out who reacts to which behaviours and when!

WHEN CARERS GET CAUGHT IN THESE STORMS ...

they feel angry and irritated for a long time afterward, and often long after the child has moved onto the next thing. When you resist storms on the other hand, there is a great feeling of strength.

FROM THE CHILD'S POINT OF VIEW, THEIR BRAIN IS
SIMPLY TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU ARE
INTERESTED IN. THERE WILL BE NO GRUDGE,
PROVIDED YOU ARE CLEAR AND CONSISTENT IN
YOUR RESPONSES



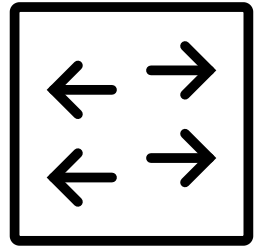
RE-ENFORCEMENT TESTING (REACTIVE RESPONSE)

THE SECOND REACTIVE RESPONSE (GAME) IS A SURPRISING ONE.

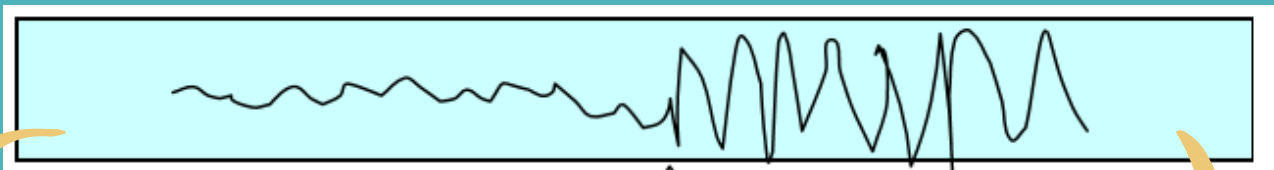
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THE GAME OF SWITCHING ...

is a natural response when you praise success or offer rewards and then find it is rejected/ denied/ 'switched' to the opposite behaviour. It is the same when a child gets things wrong when they know it, or is worried about something they can do.



Reacting to good is essential. Reacting to failure, anxiety or low esteem fuels those ideas in the child's mind, so they get worse.

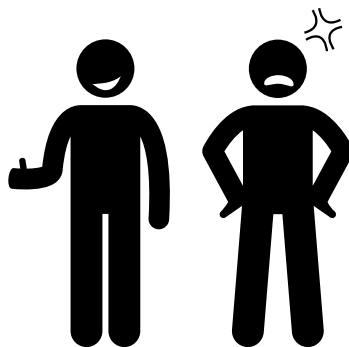


REACTIONS ARE IMPORTANT

NO GO ZONE

THE RIGHT REACTIONS ARE:

DO RESPOND -
CALM AND
COLLECTED



DO NOT RESPOND -
ANXIETY, REFUSAL,
FAILURE

THE TIME THAT IT TAKES A CHILD TO CHANGE A BEHAVIOUR ...

depends on how clear you have been about what you want, how consistently you have been in what you react to and how quickly the child understands and believes you.

The next section will deal with how to be sure you are clear in the way you provide information and ask for things, so that the child will understand first time!

DELIVERING INFORMATION, MAKING COMMANDS (BEING PROACTIVE)



BEING POSITIVE, FIRM, PATIENT AND ENCOURAGING ...

in the first place, increases the chance a child will understand and be able to follow what you are saying or asking. A child needs to be certain about what you want. If you are to be understood or obeyed, a child should believe that you are very interested if they get it right. The following rules increase the chances a child will understand and carry out what you want.

A. REASONABLE

What you are saying should be reasonable for the child's ability and the child's ability to do it at this time. You should be happy that it is realistic for the child to understand the information, or the command. There is nothing wrong with setting the child a challenge, as they will be particularly proud if successful. You should comment **ONLY** on the bit they get right. They will always be willing to try if there is no fear of criticism.

B. UNDERSTOOD

Humans will not hear a command if their brain is already thinking about something else. If there is doubt you will be understood, then you should stop those thoughts so your words can be heard. 'Power commands' are designed to do this. Any or all of the following sensory 'blockers' could be used.

POWER COMMANDS;

- Name the child first
- Approach from the front
- Make eye contact (even if not returned - some children listen better without it!!)
- Use firm shoulder pressure or hand pressure
- Make closer eye contact if still not ready to listen
- Point toward the task.



Then use slow, clear, deliberate, and simple speech. How does the child communicate? Are you using their way, so you can be understood?

NO CHOICES should be used unless they are meant eg 'Do you want to come to tea' when you meant "Come to tea". **ONLY** offer alternatives where you will not mind which one is chosen. Try to offer a 'face saver' by putting in a choice that doesn't matter eg., "Come to tea now. Do you want to sit here or there?"

DELIVERING INFORMATION, MAKING COMMANDS (BEING PROACTIVE)

C. WHAT TO DO.



Always say what to do and never what NOT to do. This way you show trust and increase the chance you will be listened to eg: 'Stay beside me on the footpath where it's safe' rather than 'Don't run off, you could be hit by a car', or 'Share your toys with Freddie' rather than 'Don't be mean', or 'Come and do this thing' rather than 'Leave that alone. How many times have I told you?'

D. STRUCTURES, WHEN.

This is a 'first this, then this, then this' approach, adapted to age.

Break tasks down into pieces that you know the child can manage;

- Breaking the task into small manageable parts with short 'recovery' tasks rather than attempt a large task
- Timers, timetables, calendars, lists and song all add structure to commands so a child knows when tasks should start, which order to follow and when they should stop
- Timers can also be used to start or stop tasks.



All these methods help the brain to find the memory needed for the task.

Building links from the task to the child's interests.

Repetition and role play to immerse the learner, especially one or two days later.

Building humour into the task, especially related to learning points. Make learning fun!

Music is a valuable way to improve memory for sequences (a common example is singing the alphabet in order to learn it). Quiet, regular music in the background improves memory of the task. Have music (usually 40 to 70 beats/ min), which the learner likes, in the background and then replay it when trying to recover the memory for added effect; or deliberately include learning information in songs and poetry (eg Dr. Seuss), though leave the first verse or two intact to act as an introduction to the memory.



Other possible structures are poems, mnemonics ('read out your green book in verse' is the colours of the rainbow) or alliteration.

Some children work better with visual supports eg a sand timer: the task is modelled first; picture card sequences or 'social stories'; put two or more pictures in a row; then post each one in a box as it is done.

These are the methods used in 'brain training' books. Check the App on www.iasku.co.uk for way to use picture cards for communication, for those who have difficulty speaking.

DELIVERING INFORMATION, MAKING COMMANDS (BEING PROACTIVE)

Structure is important in us developing organisation skills and in helping memory, but we also need free play - probably at all ages, but especially when young, where there are no real rules.

This kind of play can both be alone or shared.

Free play might include wrestling, fighting, running, throwing, splashing paint or scribbling on something, or even sitting very still.



Provided there are no real safety concerns, these activities should also be allowed to run without interference. If safety is needed, then the activity should be redirected as quietly as possible, but without suggesting the next activity.



THERE ARE NO INSTRUCTIONS ...

(or solutions for being bored), but it is a place where you can use imagination with anything around you (eg a stick, mud, wooden block offcuts, grass, paper, anything!) to invent a game, preferably with someone else, and take it wherever it wants to go!

These activities might include adults, friends, siblings or neighbours, provided no-one tries to put unnecessary rules in place.

It has been shown that such activities are very important in developing social skills, creativity and learning. Because you can't be wrong, it encourages people to 'have a go', reduces anxiety and is a good opportunity to learn to regulate emotions.



Electronics cannot provide a substitute because they are rule-driven, often not shared and do not provide good opportunity to see how to win or lose gracefully from others.

DELIVERING INFORMATION, MAKING COMMANDS (BEING PROACTIVE)

E. BRAIN PROCESSING TIME/ ROOM TO THINK 'BLAH'.

This is the gap between issuing a command and the child responding correctly. Your words first go through different ideas in the child's brain, some of which come out loud, and some of which don't.

This 'noise' of thinking (often described as 'cheek') as the idea travels, should be ignored to allow the thought to keep travelling to the 'right' place.

One of the signs of maturity (and sober people) is keeping those first 'wrong' thoughts silent!



If the command is repeated during this thinking, then the brain starts all the thoughts all over again. You have delayed the time to the right answer, and, reinforced the child stopping their thinking at the wrong place!!

It will always be easier for a child to follow your words if you give them 'room to think' by removing eye contact, turning away and appearing to be disinterested.

If the task is **successfully** or partially completed, there should be praise about that success, but no comment about any bits not done.



If the information or task is **not followed**, where the child is able to do it, then the child should not be 'rescued'. This teaches responsibility

Eg: If a child is able, is asked, has clearly understood, but then refuses to come to a meal, then the attitude would be 'That's perfectly alright. The next meal will be ...'. Refuse to discuss the matter and do not allow 'make up' food or milk. Discussing a failure will reinforce it. 'RESCUING' a child from something they CAN do will block them from learning that task, so it is better for the child to do it poorly themselves than for someone to do it for them. Where there is more than one child, then it is fair to look at and fuss only over those who are doing it correctly (without looking at, or talking to the real target).

DELIVERING INFORMATION, MAKING COMMANDS (BEING PROACTIVE)

F. ENGAGEMENT.

When you start teaching things, it may be difficult to 'engage' a young person's interest in your task. The real 'secret' is to go to their task, on their terms. You need to allow the young person plenty of space to think about you and not be concerned by you to start with. Any or all of the following tricks may be useful. For some young persons who are happy in their own world and who resist the presence of others in it, patience is required!



READ THE BODYLANGUAGE ...

to see how the young person deals with their activity. Consider their sensory choices (rubbing their neck, wringing their hands, pacing, tapping); ambient light; ambient noise; the noises the young person is making; the body position they take up while in their interest and the nature of their play or interest.

APPROACH IN A NON THREATENING WAY.

Do not make eye contact, do not face the child directly and have simple plain clothing without 'bling'. Approach at the same body level.



IMITATE THE CHILD'S MOVEMENTS, NOISES OR PLAY ...

but more quietly and more simply. If accepted, then you can begin to mix your play with theirs. If this is accepted, then try to change the rhythm of the activity, or to be a bit 'silly' (which builds in flexibility and gives the child pleasure in 'correcting' you). Humour is also a very powerful reinforcement for memory. If this is ok and the young person is now looking at you, or enjoying the activity, you can NOW make eye contact (briefly at first). You can NOW try to use the play to teach something (eg counting, colours, relationships, mood management). If the child loses interest, move on with them to their new play!

THE SAME RULES APPLY TO OLDER CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS ...

adapted to the changed 'play' interests. Allow the young person to lead the conversation throughout the session, though there is no need to react to, or copy, inappropriate words or actions.

The idea is to hide your teaching task in an area of the child's interest, or to include objects of the child's interest in your task. You might use their dinosaurs or dolls to show how to share, or find a quiet place when upset, for example.



REWARDS

Rewards are a strong way to reinforce success. They should be offered **immediately after** the event at first, but then may be able to be delayed as the task becomes established and patience is learnt. A reward is something pleasurable (praise, a touch, cuddle, game in the park, desired object or even money) that is offered, **without warning**, after a success. It should only be offered if the carer feels that it has required an effort on the part of the child.

Have tokens in your pocket that might give an extra 15 minutes of play, or be collected to earn towards a more valuable target.



The reward system is not negotiable, or up for discussion eg. when a child demands it for something the carer does not feel warrants it. It should never be offered beforehand (a bribe) when the child is failing, as it reinforces the failure.

It is useful to offer rewards for different things from day to day, so there is a general feeling that a success in any area might bring responses. Pocket money can work the same way by having a minimum amount that is always given, with bonuses added for different things that have happened during the week ending up with the amount that you intended to give anyway!

The best reward will always be the time a carer can give in response to a success. The reasons for success are always worth pointing out, and this acts as a strong reinforcement. Occasionally, reasonably, delaying a reward helps a child to develop patience.

DETENTIONS

Detentions or threats of them generally act to reinforce the error. It is common to see children with neurodevelopmental disorders deteriorate badly when they are used. If a child needs to do more work on a subject it is much better to style it as a positive event (even a favour!), where you are offering catch up support, in a supportive rather than critical environment.



LOG BOOK



IT IS USEFUL TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN A LOG BOOK OF ANY SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES IN DAY TO DAY MANAGEMENT.

Although any one method may fade after a while, it is often able to be used again in the future. The log book is also useful if it contains any relevant and up to date assessments and any appointments that need to be kept.

A COMMUNICATION BOOK SHOULD CONTAIN ONLY SUCCESSFUL BEHAVIOURS, LEARNING TASKS OR PHYSICAL TASKS ...

whether at home or at school. This lets home reinforce any school success and school reinforce any home success. Children are usually well aware of what's in communication books and are influenced by their contents. Negative recording books can do a great deal of harm.



THE FAMILY SHOULD MAKE A 'WOW' BOOK FOR HOME, WHERE YOU WRITE ONE OR TWO SUCCESSES OF THE DAY.

SERIOUS REPUTATION DISORDER

The serious reputation disorder occurs when something wrong is reported. People then look for it, which means that they will usually find it, react to it, reinforce it and so it becomes self fulfilling, so the child starts to believe it as well.



Undermining it means: deliberately reporting good behaviours, refusing to acknowledge bad behaviours (including 'switches' ... though you must still act for safety), using strong and fair reward systems, continue to make clear precise demands that are reasonable, and finally, acting against ALL parties in a fight equally no matter who seems to have set it up or who has reacted to it (to prevent 'playing off').

SELF CARE - COTTON WOOL

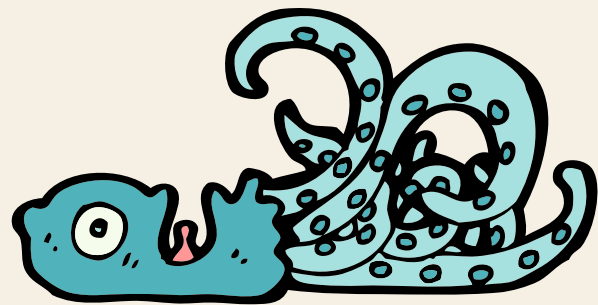
'Cotton Wool' is the protective layer you wake up with each morning that either allows you to resist stresses if thick, but might cause "The Alien" to break out, if thin!

The mood of the parent, friend, relation or teacher transmits quickly and directly to young people.



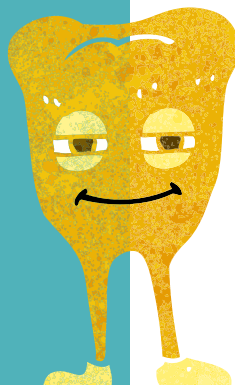
It is our duty to understand ourselves and our limits, so the time we spend with young people is a positive time.

Everyone needs breaks, and taking them when we are stressed shows our children the right way to cope.



At the end of a school day, children might be stressed from learning or friendships, just as adults can be at the end of a work or home day. We all need some space to de-stress at the end of school or work so we can cope.

Useful settling activities are physical ones like swimming, trampolining, riding the bike, digging a garden, dancing to music etc, rather than doing more 'mind' work.



For children, outside play activities are where relationships, sharing, turn taking, reading body language etc are learnt, which cannot be learnt from computers/ play stations/ televisions or DVD'S.

GIVING CHILDREN YOUR TIME WHEN YOU FEEL GOOD
ALWAYS PAYS OFF.

SELF REGULATION - PROACTIVE RESPONSE

SELF REGULATION REFERS TO THE ABILITY TO DEAL WITH YOUR OWN FEELINGS.

This is not always easy, but can be taught. There are two phases to it. The stress or frustration children feel most often arises through mistakes in communication, though frustration can also arise for a number of other reasons. The pages you have already read are all about trying to reduce stress (frustration) in communication.

MANY CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM A SYSTEM THAT HELPS BOTH THEIR CARERS AND THEMSELVES TO UNDERSTAND HOW STRESSED THEY ARE AT ANY TIME AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.



The 'Incredible 5 point Scale' [www.5pointscale.com] has been a particularly useful tool in helping young people to understand and describe how they feel as stress builds up, how to explain it and how to plan what to do about it. There are a number of free apps which can be used to train 'mindfulness' eg 'Smiling Mind' or 'Mind the Bump', but any method has to be practiced often but for a short time.

RELAXATION STRATEGIES

[RATHER THAN ANGER MANAGEMENT WHICH VALUES THE WRONG EMOTION]



The control of feelings is a quality of 'mature' behaviours and needs to be progressively learnt through childhood. It is used in the two phases of internal methods, or the use of escape routes. Internal methods have been in common use for thousands of years.

a. Controlled breathing is the art of progressively slowing breathing, relaxing as you breathe out eg "in 1,2, out 1,2" five times, then count to 3 and so on.

b. Progressive muscle relaxation is the art of progressing up the body from toes to scalp, tightening then relaxing muscle groups.

c. Imaging is the ability to recreate an image or story realistically in the brain by 'seeing', 'hearing', 'smelling', 'tasting', 'feeling' and 'performing', in the mind, the images.

Escape routes are pre-planned places of safety, where a child can go if the internal methods are not enough to calm. Children should have access these rest areas without question, or be able to use escape cards without question. Provided these absences are not referred to in any way, they will be minimised.

FRIENDSHIP SKILLS

[RATHER THAN ANTI-BULLYING WHICH GIVES PEOPLE THE WRONG ATTENTION]

This is where the ability to relax is often challenged! There are 5 essential qualities to teach that are NOT surprising:

a. SHARE
(not give)

b. TAKE TURNS

c. THANK OTHERS for company or help

d. Tell others NICE THINGS about them (that are true!) - develop into the art of courtesy

e. When others are unpleasant - deep breath, smile, and **AGREE or THANK**, in order to remove any emotion from the encounter



These skills are generally best taught by using engagement techniques (eg demonstrating with toys, power-rangers, dolls, superheroes, dinosaurs etc), interests (football stars etc) or role play that leave the young person with a visual memory of how to do it.

Both relaxation and friendship skills should be taught for a BRIEF time EACH evening, rather than for long, but rare, times. They should ONLY be taught to people in a good mood, with praise and encouragement for any or all who are co-operating.



GENERAL DEVELOPMENT POINTS

TOUCHPOINTS (AS DESCRIBED BY BRAZELTON).

Development does not progress smoothly. It goes in fits and starts, with a sudden developmental burst followed by a period of 'consolidation' where nothing much seems to be happening. At 'burst' times, other milestones may regress temporarily as the old tasks work out how to interact with the new skill (a good sign, not a bad one!).

As a child (and indeed anyone of any age) in a rest phase moves to the next 'burst', there is often increasing frustration as the target becomes tantalisingly closer. 'Rescuing' a child at this stage will delay their progress, as you are depriving them of the experiences necessary to overcome the hurdle (the frustration is the driving force to take the next step).



This is a time to provide the minimal amount of assistance necessary to complete the task eg modelling without helping.

TELEVISION, PLAY STATIONS, DVDS, COMPUTERS, SMART PHONES

RECOMMENDATIONS. IDEAL:

- None at less than 2 years of age !!
- Maximum 2 hrs a day >2 years of age
- None in the bedroom
- Outdoors after school instead

- Not for the hour before bed (prevents sleep hormone being released)
- Read nightly to children instead (strong effect on learning language)

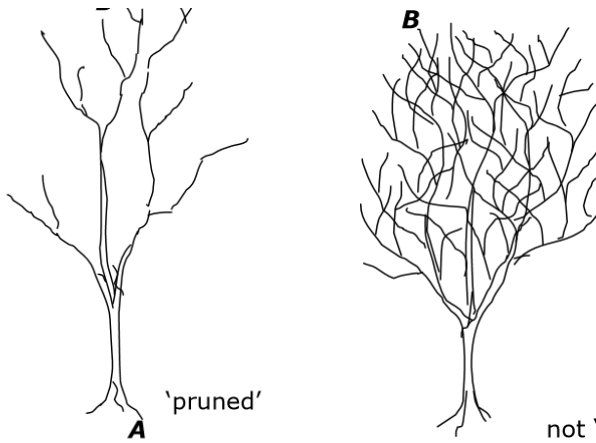


BECAUSE:

- Risks failure to develop social abilities (normal children's play needed)
- Risks obesity, early heart disease

- Interferes with sleep and adversely affects behaviour and learning
- Unsupervised violent or pornographic materials have marked effects on behaviour

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT / MIRROR NEURONES



Neural Pruning

Lack of it may affect all or part of the neuronal networks. An injury or block to a pathway will produce a similar effect.

If pruning has not occurred, a child will be 'lost' as soon as a command is made and will therefore be inclined to show frustration or anxiety or anger within themselves, or because they can see others who seem to know where to go.

They may appear hyperactive or inattentive as they seek for clues to how and where to go. They will need clear signposts (lists, card sequences etc) to navigate to the end point. They may talk to themselves out loud to work the ideas through (not always complimentary).

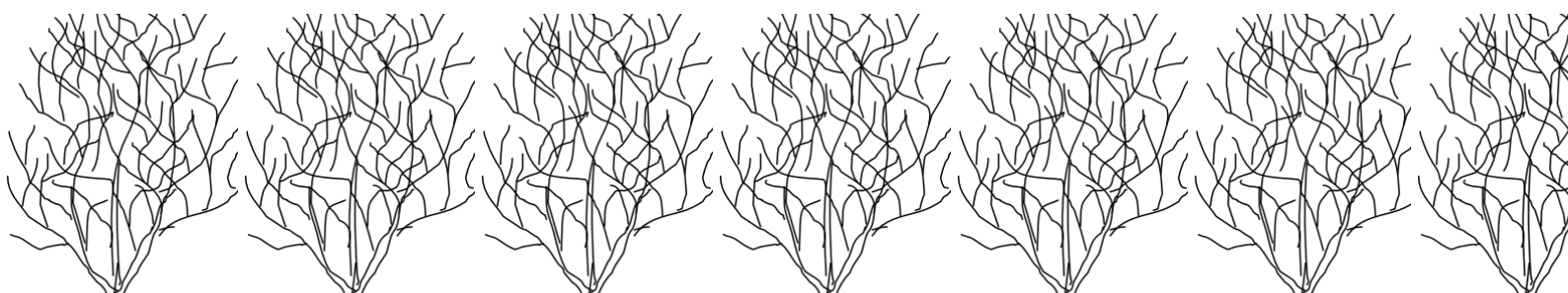
Once they have learnt a way through, it may be the only way they are confident in. Repeating instructions while a child is navigating the sequence will cause them to return to the START and thus only delay reaching the target.



MIRROR NEURONES are a whole network of circuits in the brain that help us to mentally role play and understand the things other people are doing and thinking.

They may not be properly formed in children who are diagnosed as having autism, in any one of its forms, meaning that it is very difficult to learn from observing what other people are doing.

These neurones normally develop over the first 18 months of life, so many children appear to be going along reasonably initially, until the lack of this facility begins to kick in.



SECURITY

What does it take to feel secure?



Trusting the responses of the people around you?

Knowing people are willing to come to you and take part in your play/ interests?

Knowing people around you are looking for your good points?

Trusting people to spread the good stories about you?

Knowing they are able to look past your errors and forgive you?

Knowing they will be patient and give you room to think when you are stressed?

Knowing they will not spread stories and innuendo about untrue or unpleasant things?

Knowing what is going to happen from day to day? Or even hour to hour? Knowing clearly what people expect of you?

Knowing people will acknowledge when you try, even if it doesn't always work out?

Knowing where the limitations/ boundaries are? And that they are fair and consistent?

Knowing your own strengths and limitations?

Knowing people will listen and try to understand your point of view?

Having a "cotton wool" layer around you, that you look after, that prevents irritations reaching you?

Having easy escape routes you can use without criticism, when you are out of sorts?

Taking regular breaks to stay calm?

