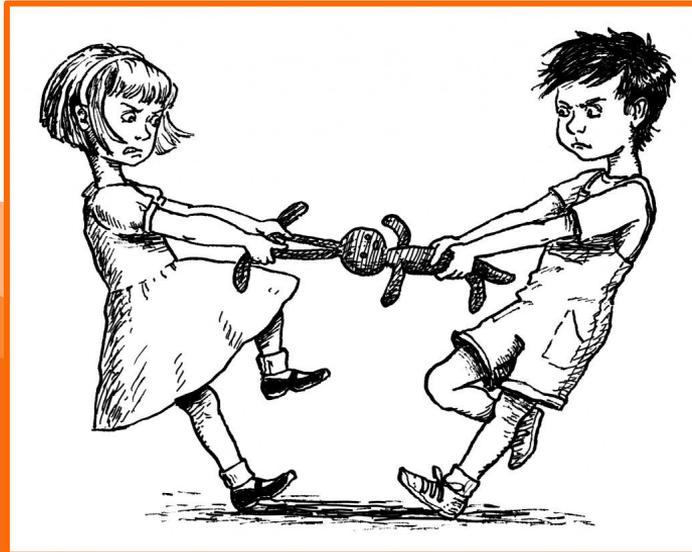


FRIENDSHIP, CONFLICT & BUILDING RESILIENCE



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LORD TENNYSON SCHOOL
MARCH 2020

TONIGHT WE WILL EXPLORE:

CHILD DEVELOPMENT:

- What friendship looks like for children (K-7)
- Social-Emotional “Ages and Stages”
- Definitions & distinctions between friendship, mean behaviour & bullying

PARENTING STRATEGIES & RESPONSES

- Responding to upset children - avoiding the amygdala hijack
- Helping children increase their tolerance of discomfort
- Supporting children to navigate conflict with appropriate age-level skills

BUT FIRST...

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOU!



WHAT DO WE (AS ADULTS) BRING TO THE TABLE?

- our own lens of experience
- our own fears and expectations
- distance from the lived experience of today
- Memories and old feelings that have been constructed over time, and paired down or amped up, but in truth, partial and really, unrelated.

AGES AND STAGES OF FRIENDSHIP

Dynamic mapping of human cortical development



Source: "Dynamic mapping of human cortical development during childhood through early adulthood," Nitin Gogtay et al., Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, May 25, 2004; California Institute of Technology.

6

Pays more attention to friendship and teamwork
Wants to be liked and accepted by peer group

Shows more independence from family

7

Shares knowledge with others

Exhibits capacity to understand others' actions and feelings

Treats peers with respect when playing games together

8

Begins to understand how someone else feels in a given situation and will be more capable of placing themselves in another person's shoes

Exhibits a wide spectrum of pro-social skills including, being generous, supportive, and kind

Desires to adhere strictly to rules and be "fair," which can sometimes lead to conflicts during organized group play

STAGES OF CHILDHOOD SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Communicates needs and wants in socially appropriate ways

Works cooperatively toward shared goals

Consistently recognized the views of other people

10

Enjoys creating secret codes and passwords with their friends

Identifies with individuals of the same gender

Prefers to work in groups and enjoys cooperative activities

11

Forms strong and complex friendships

Shows more interest in friends and less interest in family

Explores identity through hair, clothing, hobbies, and friends

12

Shows concerns about being liked and accepted

Interested in activities involving those of the other gender

Can understand other people's points of view

STAGES OF CHILDHOOD SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED...

CHARACTERISTICS OF A HEALTHY FRIENDSHIP

- Boundaries
- Trust
- Honesty
- Ability to compromise
- Shared interests/passions
- Good communication
- Emotional regulation
- Fighting fair and conflict resolution



MEAN BEHAVIOUR ...

- can be intended or accidental
- happens once or twice, is unplanned and spontaneous, usually resulting from some sort of disagreement or misunderstanding
- causes sadness, frustration or anger to the target
- is resolved quickly, ideally between those involved



The child being mean, will likely feel badly about their behaviour and actions when the other child or an adult points it out, and is usually willing to make amends to repair the friendship.

BULLYING BEHAVIOUR TYPICALLY INVOLVES...

- a power imbalance between children (ie. age, size, perceived social status, economic disparity)
- intention to cause harm or humiliation with the goal that the target feels “less than”
- repetition, and over time the behaviours often intensify as the bully enjoys the powerful feeling



CONFLICT: A NECESSARY CONDITION OF CHILDHOOD

Conflict is defined as disagreement between two or more parties when ideas or needs/wants do not match.

It can be an uncomfortable process for young children, causing one, both, or all children involved to feel uneasy, sad, fearful, or a range of other strong emotions.

Conflict is a natural occurrence in families, classrooms, on the playground and in social situations.

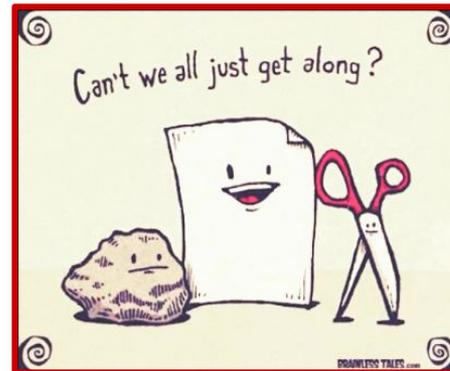


CONFLICT AT HOME, SCHOOL AND IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS

From JK through Grade 7, it is typical for children to experience conflict over:

- toys/equipment
- sibling rivalry
- friendships
- winning/losing
- personal space
- power
- sense of fairness
- rules (bedtime, digital devices, eating)

Through conflict, children learn how to strengthen their own skills and self-awareness, and how to be in healthy relationships with each other



TEMPERAMENT

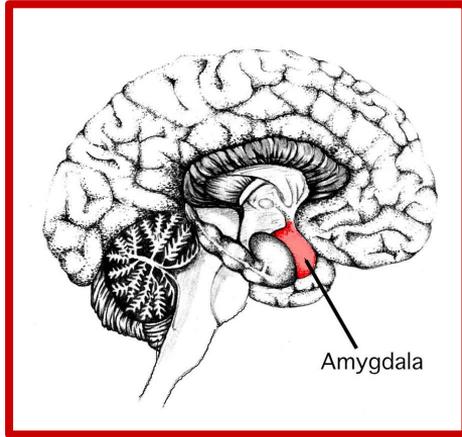
“the combination of mental, physical and emotional traits of a person, natural predisposition”

- Impacts the way we react and relate to others
- Observe your child - traits will emerge
- Become aware of your own temperament and share stories with your child(ren)
- Allow your child to develop the friendships that he or she needs, rather than who you would prefer



The more we understand what we do and why we do it, the more we can find ‘our place’, and where we want to belong.

AVOID THE AMYGDALA HIJACK AND STAY PRESENT WITH YOUR CHILD



Survival Reactions

- Fight
- Flight
- Freeze



Regulated Responses

- Logical and thoughtful
- Organized
- Informed

Reason:

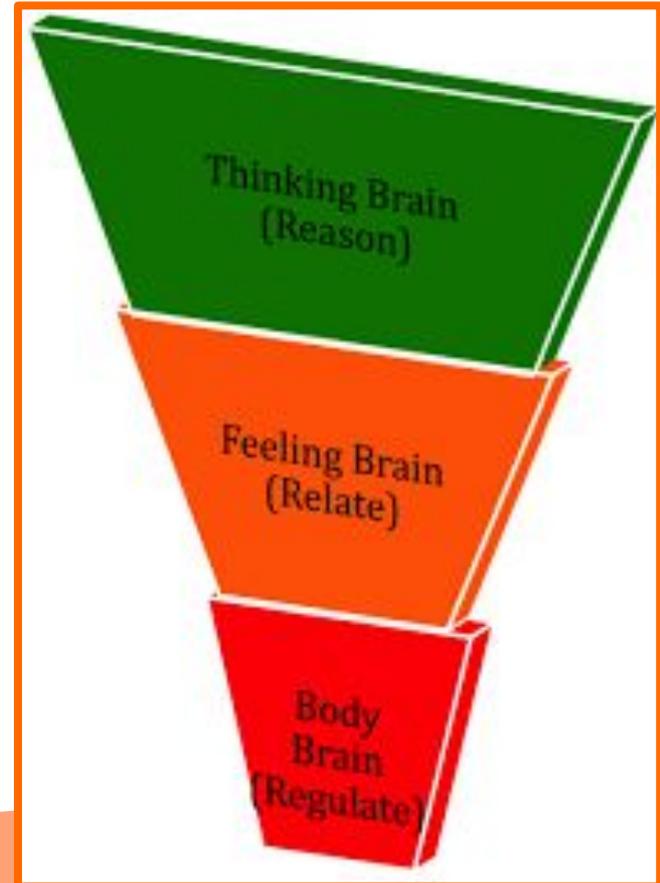
- Avoid offering a solution
- Ask “what do YOU think might help this situation?”
- Ask “how can I best help you?”
- Explore many options
- Refrain from rushing into an action plan

Relate:

- Be together without distraction
- Listen with empathy
- Avoid too many questions, let the story unfold
- Validate emotions

Regulate:

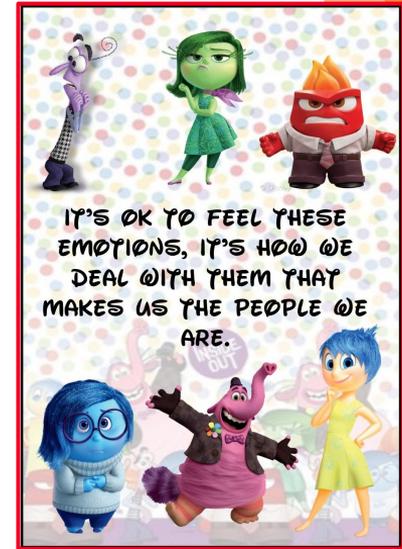
- breathing
- safe space
- water, snack, rest
- hug





DEVELOPING AND BUILDING CHILD RESILIENCE

- self-regulation and self-control
- empower child to find a suitable solution or offer various choices to choose from
- offer consistent and predictable practices to develop an understanding that actions produce consequences
- challenge negative thinking pattern with previous experience and evidence
- celebrate their successes



POSITIVE PLAY TIME

SOCIALIZING BEGINS AT HOME

- Individual readiness
- Child takes the lead (when and with whom)
- Invitations can be turned down
- Birthday parties
 - intentional activities building closeness
- Play dates
 - appropriate activities
 - appropriate supervision
 - connect with parents
- Sleepovers
 - age and activities - is there a purpose?
 - appropriate supervision
 - connect with parents



PARENTING SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES

- **Model ways of handling difficult situations**
- Show empathy to your child's feelings
- **Provide opportunities and experiences**
- Front load information to your child
- **Provide a secure bond with your child**
- Share (age-appropriate) personal stories about times that social situations were tough



SOCIAL ANXIETY

Different triggers including speaking in front of others, reading out loud, fear about being evaluated by others, fear of offending others, fear of embarrassment, and fear conversing with unfamiliar individuals.

- Teach relaxation strategies
- Teach cognitive reframing (reframing thoughts)
- Teach problem-solving skills (practice, role-playing beforehand)
- Friendship Skills
 - Greetings
 - Sliding in and out of groups
 - Conversation starters
 - Listening and responding
 - Asking follow up questions/making follow up statements

SHYNESS

- Avoid labeling your child
- Don't push them to be who they aren't
- Help your child build their confidence
- Talk with their teacher - what do they notice?
- Ask the teacher to give your child some responsibility in the classroom
- Celebrate them for who they are
- Don't interview your child for the negative (ie. did you sit alone at lunch again?)

AGGRESSION

Aggression is often a signal that your child's needs are not being met somewhere. This behaviour will impact social relationships. It is very important to not ignore this. It is unlikely "a phase" that they will grow out of.

- Conversational skills
- Empathy, perspective-taking, and empathic concern
- Emotional self-control
- A willingness to compromise and offer help
- A willingness to share, take turns, and follow rules

Questions

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April 20, 2020

Screen Time, Apps & Digital Drama: Setting & Sticking to Relationship-Friendly Boundaries around Phones, Devices and the Internet

We live in an age where preoccupation with gadgets, devices and all things technological is proving, at times, to be a distraction and interruption to family lives. Nicola Doughty will deliver an interactive workshop where parents can come together to discuss psychological development, family values and establishing (and sticking) to boundaries with their children to create strong family bonds with effective communication. This interactive session will allow parents to explore strategies to open up honest conversations and establish themselves in the knowledgeable lead position providing safe boundaries that incorporate the emotional and social needs of their children.

Top 20

