

# Behavioural Difficulties in Children and Young People – A Workshop for Parents



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# Session Overview

This workshop will explore challenging behaviours in children and young people. We will cover:

- What defines behavioral difficulties
- How young people with behavioural difficulties present
- Common challenges
- Practical strategies to support



# Session Aims

To provide parents and carers with knowledge and practical strategies to support children and young people who are experiencing behavioural difficulties.



What would you like to get out  
of today's session?



# Take Care of



# Yourself

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# Please Remember



- Confidentiality
- Empathy and respect
- Nonjudgmental

YOU'RE FINDING IT  
HARD BECAUSE IT  
IS HARD, NOT  
BECAUSE YOU'RE  
A BAD PARENT.

A message to all parents:

It's okay.

Remember to breathe.

Let go of the guilt.

You're doing a great job!

We're all imperfect  
parents and that's ok.  
Tiny humans need  
connection not  
perfection.

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L.R. Knost

# What do we mean by challenging behaviour?



(Goldschmied & Holyoake, 2024)



No child is trying to be a  
problem,



they are trying to solve a  
problem!

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Positive

- Play
- Praise,
- Talk
- Smile
- Listen
- Positive touch
- Attends



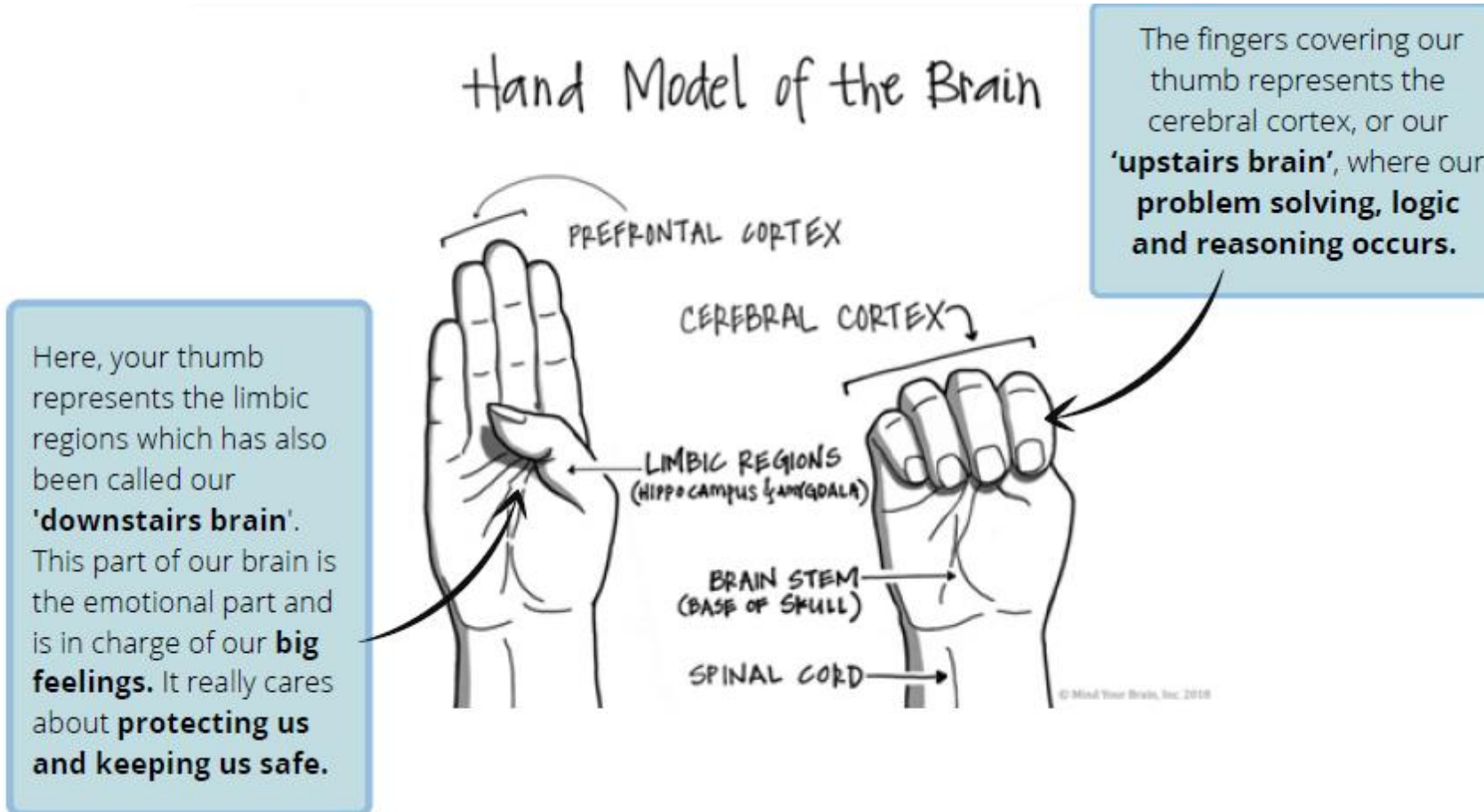
Negative

- Shout
- Telling off
- Smack
- Criticise
- Swear
- Negative verbal input  
(name calling/complaining).

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# Upstairs and Downstairs Brain (Siegel, 2010)



Throw something or lash out (**fight**)



Run away (**flight**)



Become unresponsive to questions or demands (**freeze**)

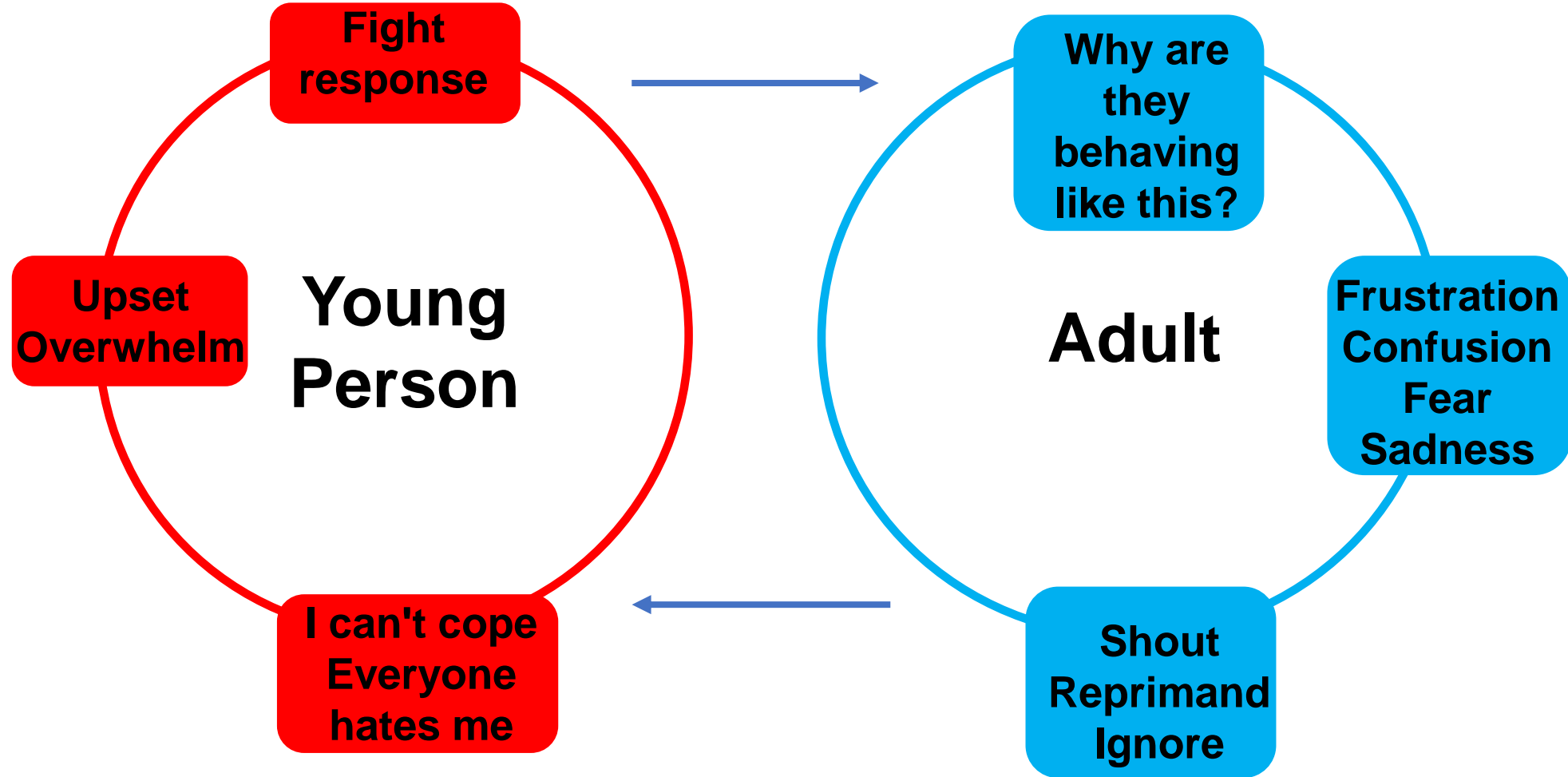


# Behaviour Iceberg

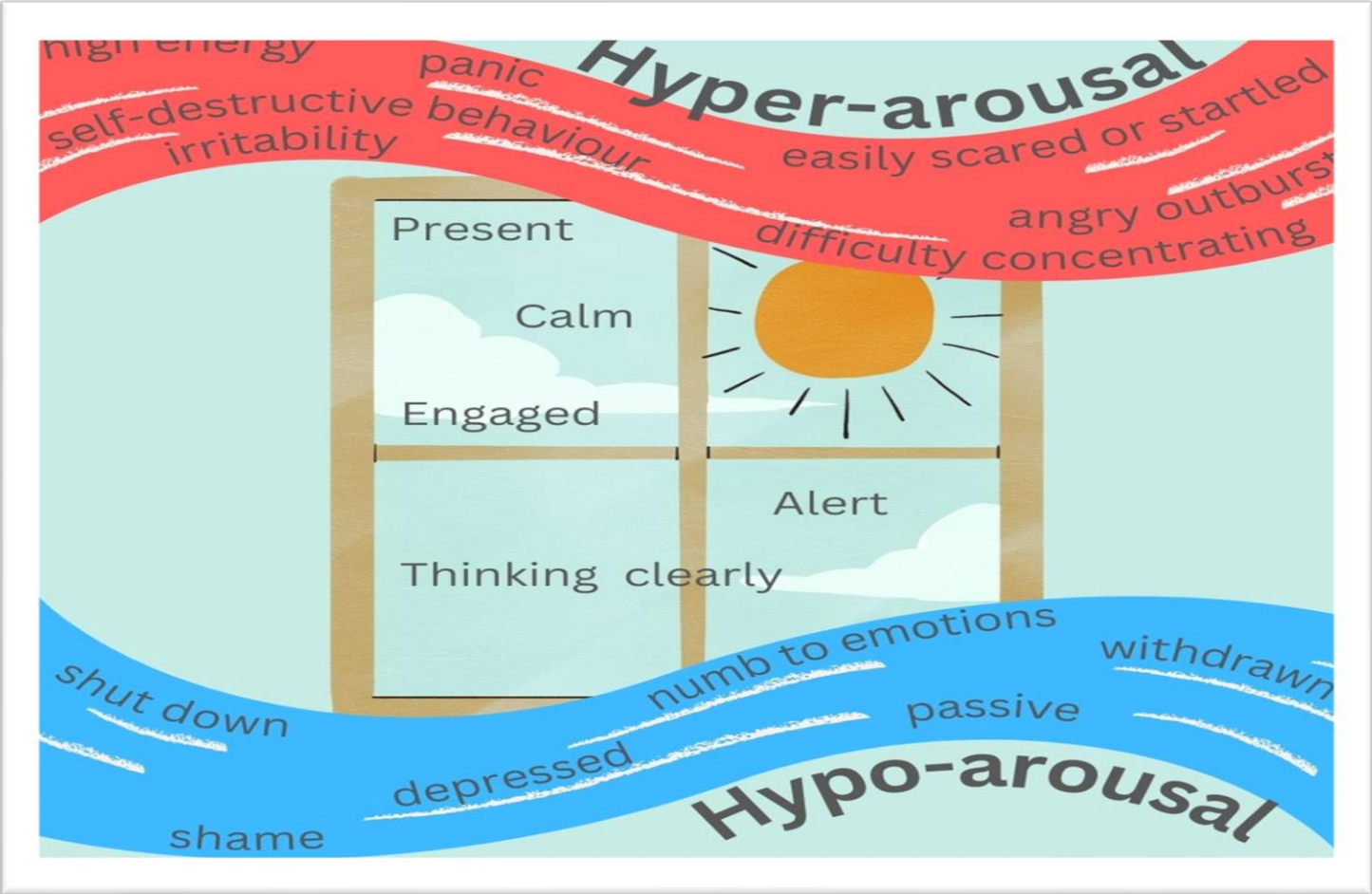


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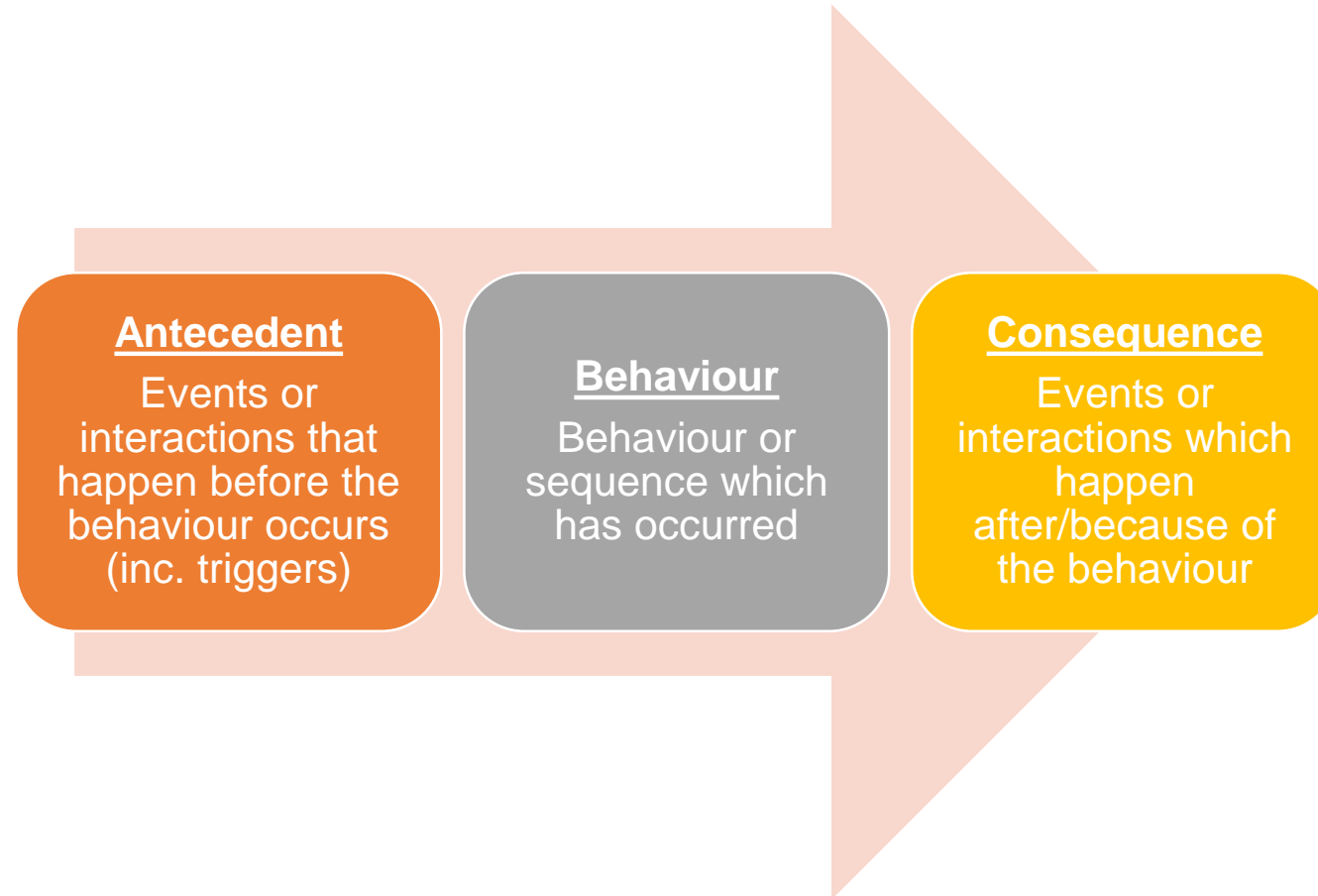
# The Window of Tolerance (Siegel, 1999)



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# The ABC of Behaviour



# Evidence Based Strategies

## 1:1 time

Use toys/activities that are not competitive and do not have a 'right or wrong' way to use them.

Give the child undivided attention.

Allow the child to choose the activity.

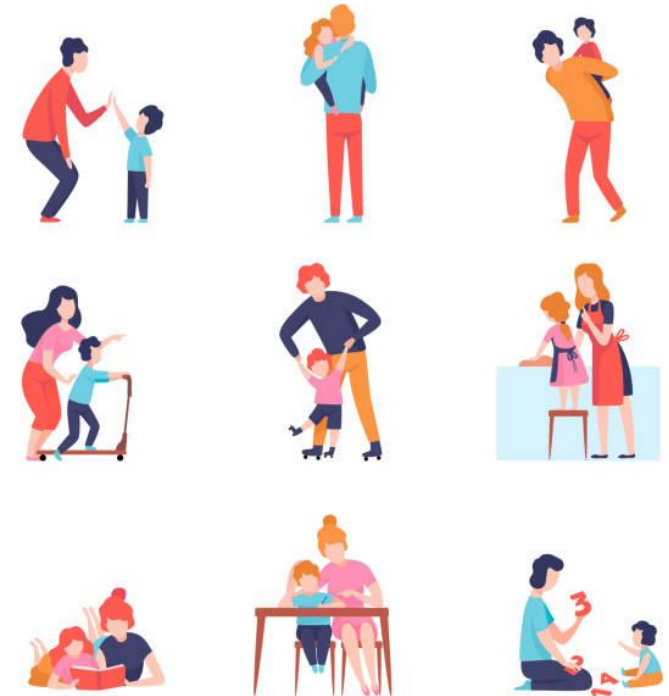
Follow the child's lead.

Show interest/ amazement/empathy.

Match their pace

Listen and repeat back

Be polite and ask to play



# Evidence Based Strategies

Tells the child which behaviours to repeat to gain positive attention.

Increases self-esteem

Make your praise specific

Give praise as close to the good behaviour as you can

Have you remembered to  
praise your child today?



**5 Praises a day**



# Evidence based Strategies

## Rewards:

### How can I identify behaviours to reward?

- Identify challenging behaviour - what would the alternative behaviour look like
- How can we support them to get back to their green zone? Can we reward a regulation support behaviours?

### What will the rewards be?

- Get the child's buy-in, involve them in choosing rewards, what motivates them?

### Achievable

- At least one quick win, to keep the child engaged

### Specific

- Child needs to know exactly which behaviour you're looking for

### Non-punitive

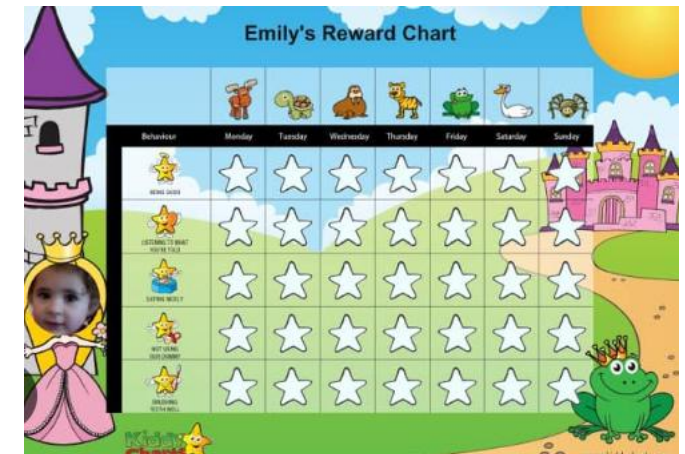
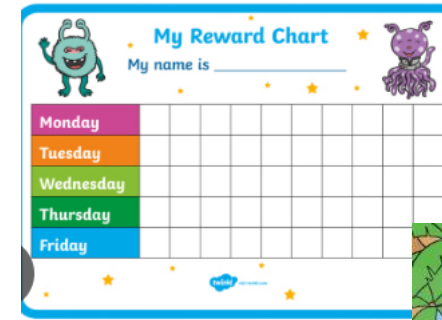
- Earned rewards are not taken away



# Evidence based Strategies

## Reward charts:

- engaging specific to child's interests,
- lists specific behaviour to reward,
- can pair reward with behaviour,
- How many times does it need to be seen in order to get reward?
- How can you make it easy for yourself to observe the behaviour?
- Share with other staff members – consistency is key
- No reward unless behaviour is seen '~~I promise I'll do it later...~~'



# Evidence Based Strategies

## Clear Commands and Rules

- Teach the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Encourage children to make choices about their behaviour
- Learn from mistakes
- Consistent limits help a child feel calm and safe



# DEAR



**Describe:** When you throw things and shout when your angry, it makes it hard to help you.



**Express:** I can feel sad because I want to help you, but I can't understand you.



**Assert:** I need you to use your words when you are angry or to go to your safe space to calm down a bit.



**Reinforce:** If you talk to me without shouting, I can then help, and we sort it out which would make us both feel better.



# Some things to remember...

Strike while the iron's cold

Rule of one

"Auto-pilot statements"

Offer a way out

Quite tone / non-threatening body-language



# Consistency is Key

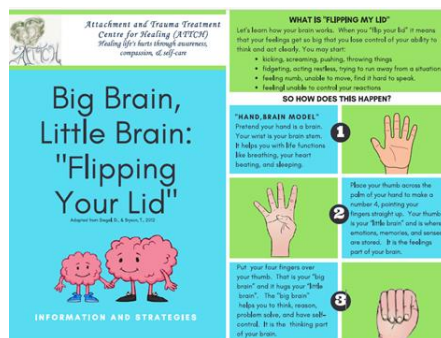
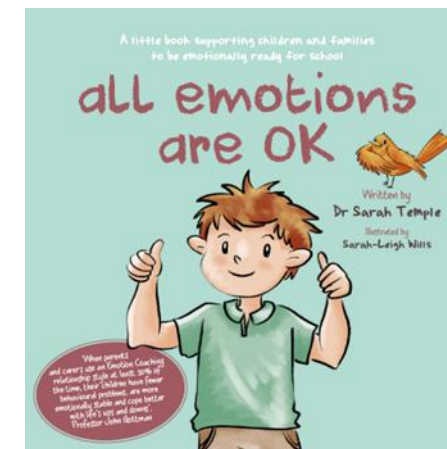
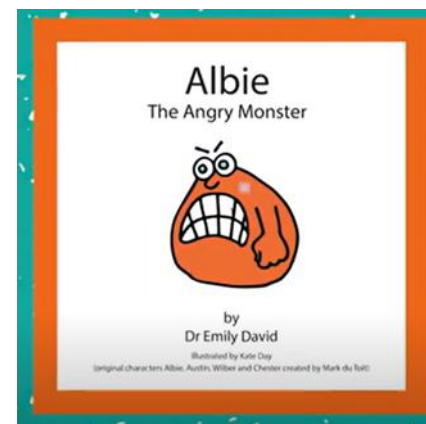
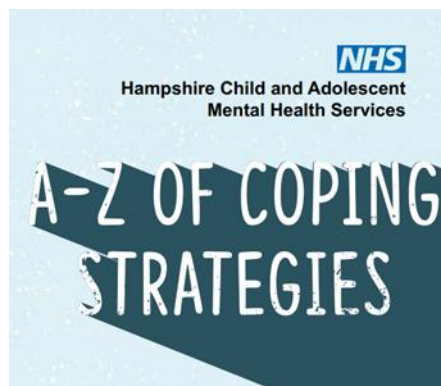
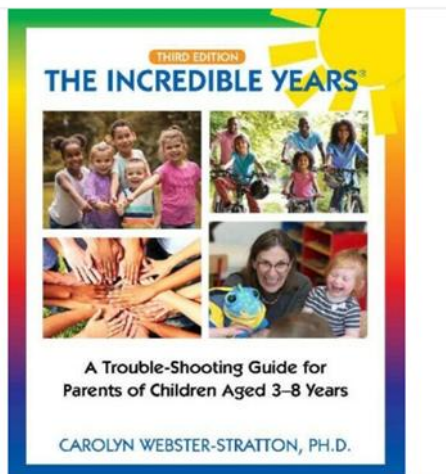


Say what you mean  
and mean what you say.

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# Helpful Resources



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[www.familylives.org.uk/](http://www.familylives.org.uk/) or Call 0808 800 2222



Hampshire Child and Adolescent  
Mental Health Service

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/video/managing-challenging-behaviour/>

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# *If you need further help...*

You can speak to your school's Mental Health Lead for advice and support.

Or if needed a potential referral to the Mental Health Support Team.

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Please ask any  
questions you have.  
There is no such  
thing as a silly  
question...

