



GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR





Introduction

Children need adults to teach, guide, and support them as they grow and learn. Our Forest Play Teachers play an important role in guiding children's behavior in positive, supportive, and age-appropriate ways. The most appropriate ways to guide behavior may differ from child to child and will depend on the child's age and developmental abilities and needs. Positive and supportive guidance helps children as they learn self-regulation and find appropriate ways to express their wants, needs, views and feelings.

Guiding children's behaviour is an ongoing process and a wonderful journey of discovery!

We believe in partnering with families in this journey and to encourage the use of a similar language and approach at home

This booklet provides recommended practices for behaviour guidance; prevention and intervention strategies and techniques that are based on age-appropriate child development. This booklet also supports the Educational Childcare Act and the Educational Childcare Regulation in Quebec.

Guidance provides children with appropriate and positive models of behaviour and helps them to develop respect, self-regulation, self-confidence and sensitivity as they learn and grow. Guidance is needed while appropriate behaviour is happening, as well as before, during, and after inappropriate behaviour is displayed.

There might be times when a parent is called as a resource for additional support and love.



Who We Are

Play. Explore. Learn. Nature's classroom awaits!

Hudson Forest Play is a non-profit community-based organization established to share our passion for nature-based pedagogy, play and wonder. Our emergent curriculum aims to create meaningful hands-on learning experiences with the belief that every plant, tree and creature hold a lesson to be learned. These are the some of our children's first experiences with social play and relationships outside of the family. Safety is our first priority.

Our Mission

To enhance well-being by spending time outside where children play, explore and learn every day! We began with a simple Vision: To empower children by connecting them with nature.

The Research

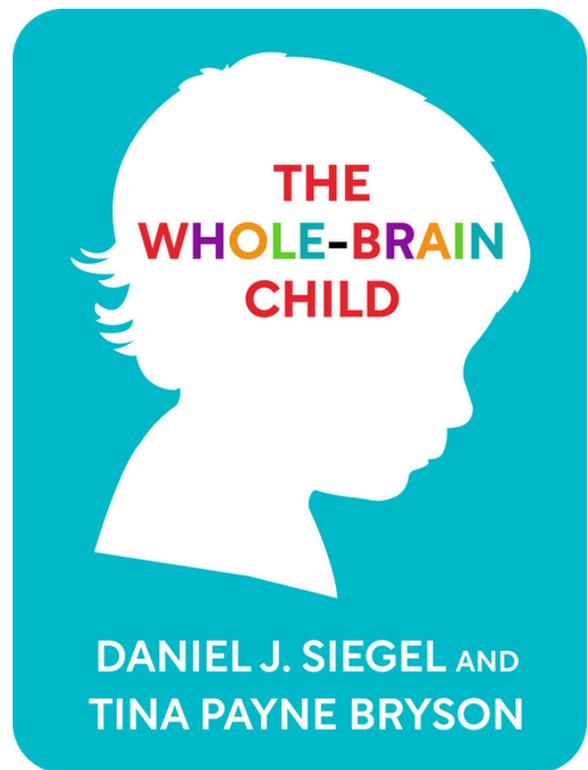
Daniel J. Siegel, neuropsychiatrist and author of *The Whole-Brain Child* comes together with parenting expert Tina Payne Bryson to explain the new science of how a child's brain is wired and how it matures, particularly young children. The right brain and its emotions tend to rule over the logic of the left brain. We have summarized the research into 8 guiding steps that stem to support our approach to behaviour management.



Eight Guiding Steps

01 Discipline is Essential

We believe that loving children, and giving them what they need, includes setting clear and consistent boundaries and holding high expectations for them—all of which helps them achieve success in relationships and other areas of their lives. Provide a gentle yet firm understanding of the role of the child and the teacher.



02 A Loving & Respectful Relationship

Discipline should never include threats or humiliation, cause physical pain, scare children, or make them feel that the adult is the enemy. Discipline should feel safe and loving to everyone involved. It should show respect for ourselves and others by creating a safe environment for children to freely express their emotions. See, hear and bring value to a child's emotions, ideas and voices.

03 The Goal of Discipline is to Teach

We use discipline moments to build skills so kids can handle themselves better now and make better decisions in the future. There are usually better ways to teach than giving immediate consequences. Instead of punishment, we encourage cooperation by helping them think about their actions, and by being creative and playful with choices to help guide their thinking. We set limits by having a conversation to help develop awareness and skills that lead to better behaviour both today and tomorrow.

04 Be Attentive

When children misbehave, it's usually the result of not handling big feelings well and not yet having the skills to make good choices. Being attentive to their emotional experience *behind a behavior* is just as important as the behavior itself. In fact, science shows that addressing kids' emotional needs is actually the most effective approach to changing behavior over time, as well as developing their brains in ways that allow them to handle themselves better as they grow up.

05 Be Present, Still and Quiet

We need to show them we are there for them, and that we'll be there for them at their absolute worst. This is how we build trust and a feeling of overall safety. Sitting beside patiently and practicing stillness and our own self-regulation both models our calm actions and prepares us to move forward. Ensuring they are safe as well as ourself and others is best. If needed, lift or move the child away from others.

06 Be Patient

If children are upset or out of control, that's the worst time to try to teach them. Those big emotions are evidence that our children need us. So our first job is to help them calm down, so they can regain control and handle themselves well. See the next page for self-regulating strategies.

07 Connect

Before we redirect their behavior, we connect and comfort. Just like we soothe them when they are physically hurt, we do the same when they're emotionally upset. We do this by validating their feelings, and by giving them lots of nurturing empathy. Before we teach, we connect.

08 Redirect

Once they've felt that connection with us, children will be more ready to learn, so we can then effectively redirect them and talk with them about their behaviour. What do we hope to accomplish when we redirect and set limits? We want our kids to gain insight into themselves, empathy for others, and the ability to make things right when they make mistakes.



12 SELF-REGULATION STRATEGIES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN



Alert and Engaged



heartmindonline.org



Secure and Calm

1. Take a Time-In



Spend 5 minutes in a calm, quiet space with the child. Connection is a key component of self-regulation.

7. Smell the Flowers



The scent of lavender can reduce anxiety. Mindfully smell fresh or dried lavender flowers with the child, focusing on how the smell makes them feel.

2. Listening Break



Auditory stimulation such as a meditation, soothing music, or an audio book can help re-focus children's attention.

8. Move Like Animals



Invite the child to move like an animal that they would like to feel like, such as a carefree bird or proud lion. Somatically, this can help them shift their state.

3. Rainbow Breath



Inhale and raise your arms above your head, painting a rainbow with your fingers! Exhale and return arms to your sides. Deep breathing regulates the vagus nerve.

9. Smiling Contest



See how long you can smile for together! Turning a frown upside down can really make you feel happier!

4. Sing Vowel Sounds



Singing long, open vowel sounds such as "ahh" and "ohh" can balance sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.

10. Tense and Release



Invite the child to clench their fists as tight as they can, then exhale to release. Repeat with various body parts to lower cortisol levels and heart rate.

5. Face Painting



Pretend to "paint" the child's face in imaginary hues with the tip of your finger to provide sensory input.

11. Freeze Dance



Play upbeat music and instruct the child to freeze every time the music stops. Linking movement to their senses helps children regulate their bodies and minds.

6. Cool Down



Offer the child a cool glass of water or a popsicle, or run their wrists under cold water to help their nervous system reset.

12. Reflect Together



Fostering a self-reflective environment can help children learn to make better self-regulation choices in the future.