Christmas Season December 2020





2

# COMPENSATE FOR IMMATURITY

Children with Special Needs

- Often have delays in the development of the
  - Pre-frontal Cortex and possibly the Hippocampus and Cerebellum
- Causes difficulty with "Executive Functioning",
- o memory, problem solving, planning, impulsivity

### **HOLIDAY SEASON**

- · More excitement
- Change in routine
- Emotions are heightened

### WHAT HAPPENS IN THE BRAIN

- Emotions get activated
- · Prefrontal Cortex get hijacked

RESULT – BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGES INCREASE!

3

5

# COMPENSATE FOR IMMATURITY

### ANTICIPATE & PREVENT

- > When does my child have a difficult time?
- > Where does my child have a difficult time?
- > With whom does my child have a difficult time?

What can the adults do to make it easier for the child to cope with what is expected?

- > Maintain routines as much as possible.
- > After an exciting event, plan some "down time".
- If you can, avoid situations that can cause problems.
- > Have an exit plan.

1

# WORK WITH EMOTIONS

### THE HOLIDAY SEASON INCREASES EMOTIONS

- ➤ Joy
- > Alarm
- Excitement
- > Frustration
- Anticipation
- FrustrationFutility
- Trepidation
- Sadness and tears

The Limbic System (emotional centre in the brain) does not distinguish emotions – just emotional activation

Emotions can FLIP/FLOP easily and often causing much confusion!

BE PREPARED!!

# **WORK WITH EMOTIONS**

# CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR VENTING and RELEASE

Bubble-wrap stomping

- · Egg carton crushing
- Jumping on a trampoline
- Pool-noodle sword fighting
- · Pool-noodle drumming
- · Push and pull

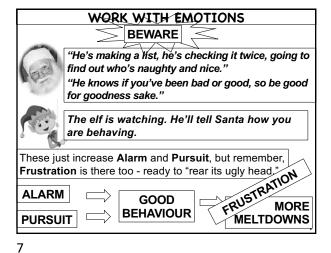
FRUSTRATION



PROVIDE LOTS OF TIME FOR **PLAY!** 

6

Christmas Season December 2020



Words of wisdom from Santa:

"Gifts are given from the heart.

If we want to teach our children generosity and kindness, we should not make them have to earn their gifts."

0 0 0

If someone tells Santa about a child's bad behaviour he says,

"All children really want to be kind and good and you can always try again tomorrow. It's OK to make mistakes."

Rewards do not change a brain. Nor do they cause an immature brain to mature. A child can "act good" to earn something. But most children will spontaneously "be good" if they can. However, emotions and immaturity often make that difficult for them



#### Have FUN with the ELF.

Where is he? How did she get there? Where is he going next? What did she see on the way? Write a message to Santa.

Keep things simple with the ELF Some families do ELF only on weekends.

### HELP CHILDREN FIND THEIR TEARS

### Create opportunities for feeling sadness

- Watch sad movies
- Read sad stories
- Make the time to SIT with tears no matter how "silly" or "insignificant" the reason. There are many "big" reasons to cry at this time but sometimes it starts with the little things, like not getting the "right" present.

How to help yourself "be with" while your child has their sadness and tears

I am helping my child to grieve for all the things s/he CANNOT change so s/he can become RESILIENT.

I am helping my child to grieve for how scary the world is so s/he can find the COURAGE to keep on.

10

9

### PRIORITIZE ATTACHMENT

Treat the need for Attachment like the need for food

- a) provide MORE than what is asked for
- b) provide it GENEROUSLY

SO THAT ATTACHMENT NEEDS ARE FULFILLED

Make attachment UNCONDITIONAL

Children are not meant to have to WORK for attachment. When they are working, they are not growing.

- avoid making relationship dependent on rewards.
- Provide MORE attachment when behaviour is at its worst.

PRIORITIZE ATTACHMENT

If separation is used

- ·to keep other children safe
- ·so that you can find your tempering element
- ·because you are human

# **BRIDGE** what could DIVIDE

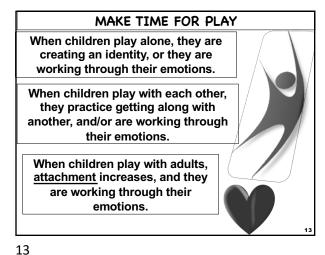
- **REASSURE REPAIR**
- We're OK. We'll find a way to make things better.
- I didn't mean to yell at you. I'll find another way to let you know what I expect.

11

12

Christmas Season December 2020

14





# **FINAL THOUGHTS**

It is only in the context of a safe ATTACHMENT that children can grow and develop.

PROVIDE GENEROUSLY

**FORGIVE EASILY** 

FEEL YOUR SADNESS

HAVE FAITH IN NATURE'S PLAN

15