

The Child Connection: Simple Parenting Solutions by Dr. Ann Corwin

SUCCESS Media, America's leading source for personal development resources, presents *The Child Connection: Simple Parenting Solutions* by Dr. Ann Corwin

Dr. Ann Corwin:

I'm originally from the Midwest grew up in Michigan with a fairly big family actually I have two sisters and a brother mom and dad grandparents live down the street. My mom and dad had been married for over 60 years. Both sets of grandparents have been married for over 60 years as well. So I come from a very close knit family and a lot of longevity in terms of relationships. I think I learned to value relationships because of sort of watching my parents for example you know in their in their early 80s and they're still madly in love. They spend a lot of time and attention with us as kids. We did a lot of family trips like we'd go up to Northern Michigan and go hiking. Absolutely love the water so anything that you could do either on the water or swimming in the water you would see our family doing that kind of thing. And my grandparents were always involved as well. You know we knew them as a part of our family. I'm the middle child. And so I was sort of the mediator in my family. I love to laugh and I love to talk and I found that almost at a very very young age that I was you know able to do that and that was kind of my role. And and my parents actually championed that. They were like you know she's the one that makes everybody else laugh and you know always never for lacking for something to say that kind of thing.

After I delivered my first child I called my mom into the room. She was there. She wasn't actually at the birth but she was in the hallway and she came in and I looked at her and I said mom you know what. From now on this is the deal on my birthday. I'm going to give you a present. No more presents for me. You're going to get a present now on my birthday because what I realized of course as I went through this labor is But also you know mind boggling experience of birthing a baby was that you know I had this whole new appreciation for my mom and wow she wasn't just my mom. She was someone who worked hard to make sure that I had a life and a lot of different levels and this is where it began. So I had this wonderful connection Hoelzer connection actually with my mom than I ever had before. My kids Luckily are so enthusiastic about my work. They they love the fact that I'm involved with family so I think they're very proud of me. So it's really nice to see sort of the switch in roles that you know I've been proud of my kids throughout the years and now we're sort of switching because they really recognize the work that I do and it's like wow mom that's really cool and you know loving what I'm doing. It's all about process and raising children. And so you know I don't look to myself as having all the answers but I look at you and I in a partnership together. Seek. Out. All the. Hi.

Everybody How are you doing. Good good. This afternoon you ready to talk about children and how amazing they are. OK awesome.

Kids really are absolutely and positively amazing they are our most precious and powerful natural resource. And of course as all good natural resources we know that we need to preserve and protect children not always so easy to preserve and protect children but that should be one of our goals. They're so powerful in fact that they insure our future. They preserve sort of our purpose in life. They're so precious. They're actually a gift we give ourselves aren't they. That's what children are. Children also are a part of our families they're a part of relationship building is matter of fact. The first relationship that a child ever has is with their parent. That's actually what they're learning how to have relationships with their parents. So we're going to talk about today those relationships now. Kids are powerful in a lot of different levels. They actually can bring a tear to our eyes when we're little when we're not even expecting it. Like for example when they rolled over for the first time say their first word ride their bike for the first time had the courage to ask the teacher a question and in class all those kind of first that kids do can actually bring tears to our eyes. That's how powerful they are. They also can make us laugh and make us laugh like you know kind of in your gut. You know you just like laugh. You didn't even expect to laugh but you're laughing because of something that your child did and they didn't even it didn't even mean to do it now even though they can make us laugh it's still that laughter and they also can you know bring tears to our eyes. They also can be a little confusing and sometimes they can be frustrating. And darn right. You know making us mad at they can literally make us be furious. Be thinking oh my gosh these kids are driving me nuts. Maybe some of you have had that feeling off and on with your children and some of the ways they do that. Like for example you take your kids to the grocery store right and you're at the grocery store. They might ask for something and you just quietly say you know honey we're not going to get that today because we have plenty of that at home. And what happens right after that. It is a volcano that hits you didn't know it was erupting but all of a sudden they throw themselves on the ground their arms are flailing and kicking and screaming. You think that you just told them they couldn't go to Disneyland or something. That's not it. They're just having this tantrum of huge proportions. And you don't even know why it happened it's for that you kindly said to her child you know I don't want to do this again.

Or how about your bringing your. Newborn home and your 2 year old you said your 2 year old now this is your new baby brother sister. No. Give them a gentle hug make sure you gently hug them. And what does the 2 year old do. Slam. Body slammed right down on that new baby to give them the big forceful hug and you're like wait a bitch until I've told you a million times.

This is a baby this is your brother. Be kind. Or how about your 3 year old who you're you know neighbors and friends and maybe your family members that say you know what they're three and they're still suckin on that pacifier. They really need to get rid of that pacifier and you know that wanky that they're carrying around is probably going to go to college. I bet you that is going to follow them to college. You know that kind of thing. Or how about your four year old who's struggling so hard to use the toilet and they're not able to do it and you can hear them behind the door sitting on the toilet going I can do it. I'm a good girl. I'm a big girl. I can go to the bathroom on my own. All those kinds of situations that you have with kids.

We're going to talk a little bit about that today and I'm going to help you try to understand why they do stuff like that and what you can do about it. OK. So that's part of what we're going to do is talk about behaviors and understand behaviors. I'm going to teach you. A new parenting intuitive approach and it's called the child connection. Now the child connection is really based on a theory and the theory that the child connection is based on is attachment theory. Now many of you guys have heard of attachment. Most of you heard about you know I know what attachment and most of you when your baby is born someone will tell you this is you should bond with your baby. Make sure you bond with your baby when we have kind of a misunderstanding about bonding and attach and we have a tendency to think that bonding and attachment are the same thing. Actually they're very very different but they're both uniquely connected because they have to do with the Bible of human beings bonding is always kind of think of it like glue like bonding with glue. Bonding is always from the parent to the child which basically means is that you want to have your child's physical needs met not necessarily wants but needs met by the parent. You've got to feed your child you've got to make sure that their body temperature is regulated and make sure that they're touched that kind of thing if they don't have that they will survive. So it's really up to us as parents to bond with the child. The child doesn't have a whole lot of interacting with that bonding experience attachment on the other hand is a reciprocal relationship.

It means that the parent give something to the child and the child give something back. Probably one of the most recognizable times that we first noticed attachment is at the three month mark when the 3 month old is actually smiling back at the parent. Legitimately it's not just gas. You know they're really smiling back at their parent and that's it about three months. And so the parent then smiles back at the child. Now attachment is absolutely and positively crucial. In order for human beings to survive. You have to have relationships with other people or you literally will die.

We know that from research studies unfortunately from children that are in orphanages if you know they're neglected or they're not touched and stroked and looked at when you're feeding them children will stop eating. They literally will not thrive unless they had that connection with someone else while they're being fed. So we know attachment is so crucial for survival. That's why we know it's important to understand it in terms of making connections with your children.

Now the really cool if attachment was just good attachment. You know we give hugs to each other and we make sure we made eye contact that kind of thing.

But attachment is so powerful not only positively but negatively to the most pathological attachment that we have as human beings is child abuse and domestic violence. Those are both in the same category. Those are relationships. They are a communication style. Now it's an ugly one right. We don't want to be communicating by actually hurting somebody else. But we crave time and attention from other human beings so much that we'll do anything to get it because the flipside of not having attachment is guess what. Abandonment. And as human beings we're not isolationist by nature. OK. We need to have that connection. So when you're thinking about working with your children and establishing relationships in your family one of the first things you want to think to yourself is how my attaching to my child. When does that attachment happen. Because that has everything to do with preserving the behaviors that you want to see

happen over and over and over again in your children and the behaviors the unwanted behaviors or behaviors you really like to not see again in case of that sort of the premise of the child connection understanding that now there's three attachment techniques and these three attachment techniques are the ones that help us preserve behaviors that we want over and over and over again.

The first one which is really the most powerful one is eye contact. Eye contact is innate. That means you're born with it you're not like pregnant. And if you talk to your pregnant belly and you say now come make sure you make sure you look at me when you come out. You don't look at me the food source is not going to be there so make sure you do that because then I'm going to know that you need to eat.

Nobody teaches a child to make eye contact but the minute they're born between nine and 11 inches they will look for two eyes a nose in a mouth and that's the way they know how to connect that they can actually connect so that eye contact is gigantic It's huge in terms of making connections. If I walked in here today got that wonderful applause an introduction and I said cause I am so happy to be here.

I am thrilled that you have invited me to talk to you about parenting. I'm going to give you all sorts of great information hopefully stuff you can take right home use it tomorrow. And you know I want to tell you a little bit about that and about myself and I'm having this whole conversation with you. The only thing I'm doing is I'm not making eye contact with you. My voice sounds the same. I seem sincere. I'm leaning into the crowd but if I don't make eye contact some of you will probably say well what's wrong with the ceiling. I have had I have. It.

Other people say to me that they didn't know that the parenting doctor was blind. And if I'm talking to a teenage audience you know what teenagers think don't make eye contact with them they think that I'm embarrassed. And I'm very nervous about being here. That's a teenage brain that's interpreting the way that I'm doing. All I'm doing is not making an eye contact. So it is extremely important in terms of attachment. I contact the next one the next tool is actually touching touching is crucial in keeping attachment or the connection in your family going. Now we want to see healthy touch of course. But what I mean by touching is you make sure that you're you're making a connection or somehow touching your child when they're doing behaviors that you do want them to do. OK. And the last one is actually talking verbalising to a child. We do that pretty good when they're doing something right.

But we also do it pretty well when guess what. You're not listening to me. I've told you listen to me and you're not doing it every single time I ask you to do something you're just not listening. Pay attention. Look at me look at me when I'm trying to tell you to do something then I know that you understand. You know what. Use your words. Come on. Use your words. You're not getting anything. If you're whining you know with that whiny voice you don't get it. You get absolutely nothing for me. All those phrases that some of you may unseats and smiles some of you may recognize that you have been someone that has said that before. Guess what you just did in the middle of a behavior that you're not wild about. You've just connected and attached to your child. That's why the behavior happens over and over and over again and you say to yourself why the heck do they keep doing that. Don't they know that if they just stop doing it

then I wouldn't have to be interrupting them and telling them to stop. Or how about I've told you a million times and I'm not telling you again. But then what do you do. You tell them again and again and again in the middle of the behavior.

So when we're thinking about this child connection in terms of attachment theory or secure attachments remember the way that you do it is look for the behaviors that you want to see happen again and make eye contact touch and talk. And then of course the key to that is when you see behaviors that you're not wild about. You want to be thinking to yourself should I stop. Just give my child peripheral vision. Just stop looking at my child and see if that behavior changes when they're actually doing something to talk about things in particular in a minute. I'll give you some examples of sort of how that works now.

So the essence of what I've just told you about as we're talking about the child connection can be put in I think kind of a simple form and the simple form is thinking about is kind of like a dance you do with your kids you know how you found someone when you're dancing.

You want to look at how your children respond to you. When you do some kind of behavior to them. So it's really as simple as this. You want to make sure that when you see behaviors that you do want to see happen again you move closer. When you see behaviors you're not wild about and you don't want to see those happen again. You always move away. And one of the examples of moving away it's a technique that a lot of people use is called timeout. We'll talk about timeout in a minute and how that works. But let me tell you that I'm going to demonstrate for you how sometimes timeout looks ok.

I told you a million times I don't want you to do that anymore. Now you know what you're just asking for. Do you want to go to timeout. Do you want it. Do you want to go to timeout. No no I don't want to go to I. You want to go to a timeout. And then what I do is I'll walk down here and I'll take her hand and I'll say now you're coming to time out with me right now because you've been a bad girl. You're giving me the time out right now and the whole entire time I'm with her. I'm she I'm holding her hand and I'm talking to her and I'm saying you're going to time out you're going to sit here because you're three and you're going to sit here for three minutes and I want you to think about it.

And I also want you to tell me why why did you do that why did you hit your brother again you keep hitting your brother you know that you're not supposed to do that you love your brother but you're hitting him over and over and over again. What did I just do. In the middle of the behavior I didn't want I did every single connection. I moved closer. I made eye contact. I talked to her and then I touched her. I got lots of it. You've got lots of attention and tons of time and attention. And the last part of that the child connection which is really the most important part to remember is that when you're done.

With these incidences with these behaviors that happen between you and your children remember you always need to move back together because moving back together with your children is what is called unconditional love and what your children learn is no matter how badly I behave. Guess what. You're never leaving me. I'm never going to be abandoned. You're always going to be there with me.

If you remembered always move back together and kids are much quicker than that than we are right. I mean we were remembering for a pretty long time and they right away hugged me Mommy hug me Daddy it's ok daddy is there a pick me up Daddy. You know they'll do all those kinds of things to do what to reattach to reconnect with you to make sure that I'm going to have that relationship because the drive to have that relationship is literally built in. It's innate. I have to have that connection with other human beings or I will not survive. I'm not going to be able to do that.

So I want you to think about that as we're going through today and kind of talking about different behaviors and incidences of behaviors. Now I think it's important to take a little time here to talk about where attachment happens in a child's brain in particular.

We have very different brains than children. Children are born with a structure in their brain but it's not functioning totally when they're born. You have a part of your brain. That starts functioning like the part of your brain that that really can help you understand your emotions. For example it's functioning at birth because you can feel pleasure and you can feel pain you feel pleasure in the fact that you know what. I just got to eat my tummy is full. Whew. Man this feels great. So you can feel that you don't necessarily know what it means but you can feel it. Now there's a lot of behavior in children that has to do with biology and it has to do with brain development and I think that if we understand that a little bit better it helps us understand our kids. I'm going to take a moment out there to talk about how the brain develops from the back to the front the back part of your brain is the first part of your brain that is developed it's working perfectly when you're born. Absolutely perfectly because it controls respiration heart rate body temperature. Those kinds of things because if it wasn't working totally and functioning completely you are a goner. You're not going to be here unless that part of your brain is working totally.

Now deeper inside your brain or the middle part of your brain is what's called your limbic system and that's your emotional brain. Every single part of your brain has nerve cells. They're called neurons and they talk to each other it's kind of like a really sophisticated telephone system. So these neurons talk to each other and they send signals to different parts of the brain.

Well the most interesting thing about the center of your brain or your emotional brain is that as those neurons talk to each other they have chemicals that push information from one nerve cell to the other they're called neuro transmitters. And as that information is being pushed along. If you look at the center of your brain what you would see is that the chemicals that are pushing that information are along fire faster. Last longer and with more efficiency than any other part of your brain. Think about that the emotional part of your brain has chemicals that are more powerful than almost any other part of your brain. And that's where you process of notions.

So if you've ever wondered why kids are their emotions that's why it's really biologically based. Now the last part of your brain to develop is the front of your brain and the front of your brain is where you do critical thinking that's where you can kind of way and measure you know should I do this should I do that. Kind of like I'm going to get in trouble if I do this. So I don't think I better do that. That part of your brain because it's the last to develop. You don't see a 2 year old

sitting and looking at a friend who really is getting them frustrated and going who's wonder if I should bite his arm or not.

You know you know if I if I do the bite I'm thinking you know my mom's probably going to be upset and she's going to say something to me and my friend will probably cry too and his mom is going to be mad also that I took a little chunk out of his arm and you know I want you know I'm going to get kicked out of preschool I'm probably not going to be able to go back. So you know I don't think so. I don't think I'm going to do that by today even though I'm like really frustrated.

If the critical thinking brain was in charge and functioning really really well that's exactly what you would see. You would see that critical thinking and you actually be able to watch a child make those kinds of decisions not functioning very well yet. And the best way for me to sort of explain this is a commercial on TV. You know you see a commercial on TV where you see commercials on TV. They may be advertising let's say a card and usually a sentimental card right there will be advertising a card. And the women that are in the audience in particular we might see a commercial on TV and you'd say you know you might start crying a little bit or you know especially like maybe it's for Mother's Day we've just had Mother's Day and if you look at a card advertising that if you love your mother you're thinking oh my gosh I've got to remember to get her something really really wonderful.

When you look at that commercial Now if you don't like your mom then what are you going to be feeling guilty. You know I probably should get her something but frankly I don't really want to do that. But you know I probably should. That's your emotional brain that's interpretive. If your critical thinking brain was in charge you'd be looking at that commercial and you'd say three ninety five for a card is ridiculous. I'm not saying 395 for a card. And on top of that it's like I don't want to give any more money to this company that already makes a whole heck of a lot of money I'm not even going to pay attention to that. That's the difference. That's why you see children that to us with our adult brains.

It looks like they're not making decisions in their best interests and it looks like that they're making decisions to just what make us mad make us furious. The reality is they don't have the equipment yet. It would be like asking a child to write with their right hand and they didn't have one. If you don't have the equipment it's impossible for you to be doing some of these things so the more we understand the difference between the way we interpret childhood behavior with our adult brains and what what how their brains are functioning is crucial. Now the other thing that's interesting about this emotional brain or the brain that's really in charge with young children in particular is the fact that young children can't tell time they can't tell time till they're like in first grade. Right.

They can't they can't even tell time. So when young children are feeling a feeling I might feel that feeling forever. Frankly I mean I don't know how long the ceiling is going to last. I have I have no idea how long the field is going to last. I also don't know what the feeling is. I don't know what the word I don't know what frustration is. And on top of that I don't know what to do about the emotion. So one of our jobs is parents in particular is to make sure that we put as much credence in emotional education as we do in academic education and emotional education is

identifying for your children what a feeling is what is it called. And more importantly what do I do about that feeling what do I do with the thing that I feel like with academic education.

We do that really really well. I think across the country we do that beautifully. You know sort of like when your kids are little and you're trying to teach him the A B C's and you'll go a b c d. How many of you guys when your kids go a b c f go.

I have told you a million times and I am not telling you again.

D comes after see how many parents do that. Very few What will you do. Will sing the song again and why will you. Because you know that if you sing it again your kids learn best by repetition. Isn't that what you know inherently I know my kids learn best by repetition. Guess what. It's why kids asked you to read them a book over and over and over again. So when you find yourself saying I've told you a million times and I'm not telling you again it's crucial that you say to you or to yourself. I need to tell them again.

I do need to tell them a million times because that's how they learn.

I need to repeat myself. It's important that I repeat myself. So that should be a signal to yourself in your adult brain. Yup I got to do it again. What do we do in school from kindergarten all the way through 12th grade. In school what do we do the first month of school. We repeat it. We do it over and in and not because our kids all have this terrible IQ and we're like well it is certainly can't remember anything from last year. We aren't saying that what we do is we teach them or read teach them right. What they learned the last year because we know the foundation of learning is much better. We need to do that with childhood behaviors. We need to look at it just the same way that we would look at academic education. So emotional education very very crucial in terms of children to look at it sort of sort of like academic education now.

Let's take a couple of minutes and look at some sort of typical behaviors or maybe techniques that you might use with children. One of them is something that I talked about briefly when we started out and that tantrums tantrums or person purposeful. We actually kids have a tantrum to serve a purpose and the reason they do is kids will actually lose control in order to gain control. They have tantrums because they exaggerate their movements and their emotions in order to get sensorimotor understanding of them. That's why they do it. It's sort of like you if you were running in a race and you're jogging along and you're running really really fast and really really hard and your heart is beating and you get to a point where you say you know what I've got to slow down.

I've got to stop because I've reached my limit. You your body actually teaches you that. That's what a tantrum does for a young child that actually teaches them how to control themselves so they lose control in order to gain control. Now a tantrum usually comes when you know we can have a tendency to look at it as if the child is actually mad. They are mad they aren't bad though. A tantrum is not bad. It's a child being mad and showing that emotion of being angry and they're being aggressive about it. And where that comes from is a cycle that I call the mad not bad cycle and it goes something like this when we're confused about something whether you're a child or an adult and someone doesn't clarify your confusion.

What ends up happening is as you start to get scared. If someone doesn't tell me about something I start to get scared and the number one defense mechanism for fear is aggression. So the more aggressive your children are behaving. It means the more scared they are about something at the very least. And at the most they're confused. You need to give them a signal. You need to tell them how to stop and tantrums are all about learning how to control my impulses. Nobody is born with impulse control right. No you don't. It be nice if you got to be around seven years old and it'd be like oh boy I can control myself now you know and nothing comes out of my mouth that you know I don't think about first and you know with us as adults we have pretty good impulse control.

And what happens with us with impulse control is we have cues to know how to stop and how to go. I think one of the best ways to explain what goes through kids heads and how we have to have these signals for kids is a stoplight. Why do we have stoplights as adults. How come you guys at night when we can't come to an intersection and I'll just see this you know person got to you got to the intersection first and I just waved through you know she stopped there before I did and I just waved her through. Total chaos when the lights out right. Because we don't know how to wave each other through. We need to have a clue what happens when you guys see a red light. What happens when you see a light turning red. You have what's called self-talk immediately.

You don't have to have someone sitting next to you and say if you don't stop you're going to get a ticket kill somebody kill myself. Get away with it. You know maybe you have to go to drivings that your self-talk right just immediately you know exactly what to do when you see that Stockley. Now you might be mad right because I'm going to be late to work frankly because I had to stop at this light.

So you're not very pleased with the fact that you actually had to stop but you do know what you have to do when you see that kids are no different than we are. They have to know how to control their impulses. How do I stop myself. So you want to remember that when you're looking at a child who is acting mad and out of control it's a child that actually needs you to help them learn how to stop. And I'll tell you right now how you do that if you're at home and your child has a tantrum for example. First thing you want to do is what with the child connection. I want to remember to do what. This is a behavior I don't want to see again. I need to move away.

And the way you move away is not as they're throwing themselves down on the ground saying OK go ahead have your tantrum when you're done I'll come back and check on you. Go ahead. Yell scream I'm not going to pay any attention to you whatsoever. That's not moving away because I just talked to my child and I looked at my child the minute that child starts to lose control what am I going to do. Peripheral vision. If your child is coming towards you or after you which they have a tendency right they're going to come and grab onto your leg. It's like they're screaming you're like oh yeah great. Well peripheral vision what the heck. And that's not going to do anything they're grabbing onto my leg.

You always want to remember to turn them around facing away from you with their back to your chest. OK. You want to make sure if they're a young child you pick them up underneath the armpits and hold them away from you like a hot potato while you're not looking at them and you're not talking to them. OK. You want to make sure that that happens and then you're going

to take them somewhere where they're isolated from you they need to be moved away so that they're not around you.

I always recommend families with young children make sure that you go if you go out and about and you've got children at this age that are still learning how to control their impulses. Make sure that you have a stroller or your car is parked close to the park. Get as close as you possibly can because you may have to pick them up from behind put them in that stroller take them over to the car roll the windows down on the car and put them in their seat and let them calm down. Now the key though to teaching impulse control in terms of tantrums is what you do after and during the tantrum you do not want to move closer to them. But you've got to make sure that you give them their comfort measures. Tennessee parents will say to me you know what. Not. There's no way I'm giving them their blanky when they're having a tantrum because that just be rewarding them. They get to have what they want when they've lost control. No no no. Just the opposite is true when they have lost control and they have to be away from you. They need to have a reminder that I can control myself. I will be OK because objects fingers pacifiers thumbs blankies. All of those things are what help a child understand how to feel good about themselves when you're not around. They elicit emotions but we have a tendency to say.

That children either addict certain chronological age are not supposed to have their blankies fingers pacifiers and thumbs. And it say three three years. You know when your 3 year old your birthday's next week you're going to be three and the blinking fairies coming and the blinking fairies can come and take your binky away and it'll be all gone because you're a big girl you're three. You don't need that anymore. That would be like me saying to all of you guys in this audience you know what you're old enough I'm sure you have pictures around your house of your sister your brother your good friends you know what they look like. You know what the event was that the picture was taken. I want you to take the pictures out of your house. You don't need those pictures anymore or how many of you go on a road trip and you take your pillow.

In the car on the road trip. Right. Why do you do that. Because I want to comfort myself. I want something familiar. I want to be able to elicit emotion so that I feel good about myself but yet with children at a certain chronological age well we tell them tools we've got to take that away. So the key to remember remember about these comfort measures is do not take away your children's comfort measures.

Just teach them the appropriate time and place to have that if they're learning how to talk. Don't pin a pacifier to their shirt because they're not going to be able to do language acquisition when they have a pacifier in their mouth. You do not want to do that because you want to help them learn how to talk. That's one of the reasons they're having the tantrum by the way because I don't know how to dog very well and so I just use my body to talk. The other key to understanding this is what you do after the tantrum is over your child's been separated from you and the child comes back. What you want to do is you want to say to them.

Lot of times it works. You actually use whisper because whispering lowers our anxiety. They're having a tough day with your kids whispering is a wonderful technique. And as the child is done with your tantrum you look at him make eye contact touch him and say great stopping. You just calm yourself down. Your arms are moving. Your legs are moving. Way to go.

When a great job stopping the other two ways to teach impulse control before tantrums happen. Art through music and reading music is one of the best ways to teach impulse control in children. The reason it is because you have you process music with both sides of the brain. And as children are using both sides of their brain to process the music their body actually stops. Any of you that have worked with small children or have small children and what you do is you put music on and what happens though their body stops they stop whatever they're doing.

That's your cue. As a parent to go. Great stopping. I do a toddler group with parents and children in the same group together and we observe the kids and then we talk about techniques and ways that we can change behavior and the child connection how we move away how you move together that kind of thing. One of the things we do is always sing songs in a band and I invite the families to have their child sitting on their lap or next to them while they're singing the song. As soon as the song is over you turn make eye contact touch and talk to your child and say to your child great stopping reading a book. Usually when you read a book to a child they're sitting next to you and they're not moving they're not talking. None of their body parts are moving. Close the book for a split second turn. Eye contact. Touching and talking. You say to the child great stopping. Great stopping. You're not moving right now.

Nothing's coming out of your mouth.

We have a tendency to tell our children to stop in the middle of when they're losing control. They stress hormones have taken over literally in their brain is bathed in stress hormones. They cannot learn a lesson in the middle of a behavior. It has to happen before and after.

So that's crucial. Same thing with sharing. Sharing is another great example. Kids are tugging at a toy they're pulling a toy from one person to the other hand. And what do we do. Share now you know it's nice to share you like your friend let him have it for five minutes and then you can have it for five minutes. You've got to share what happens as you just said the word share you moved closer so you taught the child to associate the word share.

When they're not that's why I say to families don't tell your child to share. Show them how to share. So when they're handing you something say the word share when you take them to the park and they just went up that slide and they're going down the slide. What you want to do as they're going down the slide is say great sharing because everybody at that park is able to touch every thing. And that's cue for them to know oh that's what sharing is. I get it. Just like stopping. What do we do when kids are in the mall and they're running away from us. Right. They're running away like this. And what are we doing. We're here. Stop stop. So as they're running we're associating the word with stop instead of using stop when they actually are stopping or even the thing that gets the goats the most is that they're running away. They do this. They run away like this. And then they look over their shoulder and they do this. And then they keep running some more and then they look back and they manage Oh yeah they know exactly what they're doing. They're smiling and back at me. No they're smiling at you because sometimes when you play chase it's really funny. Sometimes I do stuff too. Sometimes I do stuff and I don't even know what I did. I don't even know what's so funny. But my parents my grandma is in hysterics what I just did wondering this might be one of those times as I'm cruising along here.

So remember. When we're talking about these concepts and these behaviors too to think about how you're attaching to your kids in the middle of that.

I like to tell the story of sharing sort of an adult perspective about myself and my sister. I have two sisters and a brother and I'm very close to my sisters and I have I've been married for 29 years still like the guy. So that's a good thing. And I have a blue wedding ring now. My sister came up to me and she said I'm going to a party Saturday night. I got a blue dress. It's awesome is this great looking blue dress. And it's the same color as your wedding ring. I was wondering could I wear your wedding ring to the party with the dress. Now how many of you guys would say if you don't let her wear your wedding ring you are so selfish.

Nobody probably in this room would say that. And what if I looked at my sister. I said no it's mine. That's mine. That's exactly what kids are doing at that stage of development. They're trying to figure out what they own. In order to know how to learn to share ownership is the key to learning sharing all your children should have something that they have that nobody else gets to touch. Absolutely. Nobody gets to touch it except for them. And that's how I know what belongs to me. OK.

Now how about kids that have a tendency to fight with each other. I'm sure that's probably not true of anybody in this in this audience that you've had any siblings that that have some rivalry together. We have a tendency what we see in fighting you go over to him you know say you know what who started it. I told you you know I do not want you to be doing this again. I'm telling you every single day. Don't fight. Now you've done it again. You know I'm going to take some privileges away that kind of things.

We do all that. Moving closer. Now these two are playing really well together. They're doing a great job. And what do I say to myself. I have a tendency to say to myself you know what I'm not interrupting them or you can I'm not going anywhere near them because they're doing exactly what I want them to do. You have to move closer when you see the behaviors you want one of the techniques that I teach is if you see your kids playing the way you want them to play together you can come from behind. Is it OK if I touch you you can come from behind. And all I have to do is take the side of my finger like this and walk by and stroke her cheek. That's it. That's what's called the proximity of producing behavior. I just showed her that when she plays ok with her sis guess what. That's time and attention from my parent and I didn't interrupt the play at all. If you're paying your bills or reading a magazine which is the first article you've been able to read in about two years go and sit behind your children with your back leaning against your child. That will signal your child by association that they're doing something that gets your time and attention. Notice

I didn't say buy him a toy at Target. OK. It's not your. It's not the place or the thing that you give your children it's actually your face your face is the most powerful relationship builder with your children that you can possibly do. There isn't anything more powerful than that relationship or that connection that you make with your kids. Remember to do that now we've talked a little bit about tantrums and a little bit about sharing. And there's all sorts of different behaviors that happen that kids have that we're not wild about. The key again to remember is move closer when you see what you want move away when you see behaviors that you're not wild about. And

always always always reconnect when they're done with behaviors so that your children understand that you're there for them.

Now this may sound a little bit counter-intuitive to you because we also have a tendency when our kids are doing things that we don't want to use we want to listen to us because as adults we feel listened to. If you make eye contact with me I'm making sure that you are paying attention right. Some do another little demonstration for you that may sound familiar to sort of show you what we're talking about here today. Is it OK if I knew she would get in and demonstration My hands are a little bit close on their warm up here. But how many of you may have used this technique or seen this technique before she just did something that really. I mean I'm sure she did it on purpose and I will tell you that I'm going to make sure she never does it again. So what am I going to do. I'm going to go up and I'm going to put my hands on either side of her cheeks and I'm going to look at her and say look at me look at me when I'm talking to you. I want you to stop that right now. Thank you. Give her. So.

What did I just do. She just did a behavior that I'm not wild about. I touched her. I looked at her. I made eye contact and all of a sudden here I am again I'm at a spot where I don't want to be. And the behavior happens again and again. So be careful as you're looking at what you're doing with your children and you're connecting at a time when you're seeing these behaviors happen over and over and over again.

Now as we're talking about these behaviors let's look at it in terms of you know some of the techniques that we use like Time-Out or maybe giving kids three chances three chances are pretty normal. It's like you know I'm going to count to three and then I want you to stop. Now let's talk for a second about the connection between what kids learn in the early years of life and how that translates into a teenager. OK. If you're teaching your children that by the third time they're going to get in trouble guess what you're setting yourself up for a 16 year old who comes home drunk.

First Friday night as well. You know ily. Two more Friday nights. You're going to be grounded. You know cause you know third time is a charm. People ask me all the time. Should I make my child do it the first time. If you want to give him an accurate. Q So they're not confused. Yeah you probably should tone. The first time I said well I want to be fair to my child. I want to make sure that I'm fair and I want to be reasonable and logical with my child. Well guess what. Number one before the age of about 3 they don't even have reason and logic. You know you can't say to a 2 year old you know why did you do that or stop doing that. How you tell that a child can actually use reason and logic is if they are. Asking why. And they're doing interactive play that's how you know in interactive play is Dad chase me you catch me I'm the bad guy you're the good guy then you know your child is able to use some of that reason and logic before that time.

Very very difficult. To be able to have a child understand reasonably and logically. OK now I'm going to wrap it up here with. A story and it's a poem too that I thought we could kind of read together. Worked for a number of years with postpartum families right after you have a baby. And one of the challenges I think for families is the challenge of staying home with a child after you've been working in the corporate world sort of that working mom or working dad and then

all of a sudden I'm home with my child and I had a lot of families that were struggling with that trying to understand how to have more patience and tolerance with my kids because I'm home with them now and they don't follow directions as well as maybe when I was at work.

I don't feel like I could get as much accomplished. And so this mom was struggling with that big time. And so what she did is she went out on her own and she found a poem that was an inspiration to her. The author is unknown but it was an inspiration to her. And with that poem she gave it to me and she said you know this has helped me tremendously to understand and have patience and feel more connected to my children. I feel as though I can listen to them and understand where their brains are different than my brain and how I'm turning interpreting their behavior is maybe not the same as what I'm actually seeing. That kind of thing. So here's here's the poem. We'll sort of read it together and this is a poem on tolerance and patience.

I try to get through this poem without crying. I bumped into a stranger as he passed by. Excuse me please was my reply he said Oh please excuse me too. I wasn't even watching for you. Oh we were polite the stranger and I we went on our way and we said our goodbye but at home a different story is told how we treat our loved ones young and old. Later that day cooking the evening meal my daughter stood behind beside me very very still. As I turned I really almost knocked her down. Move out of the way I said with a frown. She walked away. Her little heart was broken. I didn't realize how harshly I had spoken. Later that night awake in my bed a still small voice.

Whispered in my head while dealing with a stranger common courtesy you use but the children you love. You seem to abuse look upon the kitchen floor you'll find some flowers there by the door. Those are the flowers she brought for you. She picked them herself pink yellow and blue. She stood quietly not to spoil the surprise. And you never saw the tears in her eyes. By this time boy I felt very very small and my tears began to fall. So I quietly went and knelt by her bed. Wake sweet heart. I whispered and said Are these the flowers that you picked for me. She smiled. I found them out by the tree. I picked them because they're pretty like you. I knew you'd like them. Especially the blue. I said daughter I'm sorry how I acted to you today. I shouldn't have yelled at you that way. She hugged me and said Mommy that's okay. You know I love you. Anyway. I said daughter I love you too. And I do like the flowers. Especially the blue.

Thank you so much for allowing me to come and share my ideas about children and families and how we connect in established relationships. Now go out and remember to move closer when you see those behaviors that you want to see happen over and over and over again. Thank you. Can't touch everyone. The more people you do touch the more there is out there. As model and example for the rest of the way I keep my sort of healthy thinking going instead of getting depressed that we cannot get to everybody and that people that really need the help don't get it. Yes they will. I believe that with all my heart and soul as long as you're out there giving the healthy message to as many people as you can.