

# No-Drama Discipline

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## Before we start...

- Think about a challenging child or situation you are working with this year, or worked with last year. Keep this child or situation in mind as we go through the session.

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## What does “discipline” mean?

- To You?
  - What does it “look” like?
  - What does it “feel” like?
  - Do you discipline the children in your care? Why?

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## Connect and Re-Direct

Attitudes and strategies that:

- Are Relationship-Based
- Build brain connections
- Are intentional and pro-active, not reactive
- Help children make better decisions now, and in the future.

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## Your Brain on No-Drama Discipline

The Three "Brain C's"-- Changing, Changeable and Complex

### 1. The brain is **changing**

- **Downstairs brain:** primitive, basic functions, reactive. "Fire, ready, aim"
- **Upstairs brain:** more sophisticated thinking, leading to:
  - Sound decision making
  - Regulation of emotions and body
  - Personal insight
  - Flexibility and adaptability
  - Empathy
  - Morality

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### 2. The brain is **changeable**

- It can be "intentionally - or *unintentionally* - molded" by experience.
- Repeated experiences shape the brain.
- The idea of "neuroplasticity"

### 3. The brain is **complex**

- Many different parts, responsible for different functions
- Don't unintentionally "poke the lizard."

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## Applying the Brain C's

- Calm first, then connect
- Engage the upstairs, don't enrage the downstairs
  - Lecture or dismissing can enrage
  - To engage:
    - Validate emotions
    - Help them tell their story
    - Encourage them to come up with a solution, OR partner with them to do so

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- Intentionality and repetition matter
- The importance of setting limits – learning to recognize when they have “crossed the line.”
- Setting limits is more than just “saying no.”
- Misbehavior communicates what the child needs to learn

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## Calming and Connecting

- **Why connect?**
  - **Short-term:** Moves a child from reactivity to receptivity
  - **Long-term:** Builds a child's brain
  - **Relational benefit:** Deepens your relationship with the child.

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## Connection Principles

- Turn down the "shark music"
- Chase the why
- Think about the how

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## Steps to Connect

- Communicate comfort
- Validate
- Stop talking and listen
- Reflect what you hear

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## What Is Mind-Sight?

Mind-sight is the ability to see our own mind, as well as the mind of another.

It allows us to develop meaningful relationships while also maintaining a healthy and independent sense of self.

When we ask children to consider their own feelings (insight), while also imagining how someone else might experience a situation (empathy) we are helping them develop mind-sight.

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### Three Mind-Sight Outcomes

- Insight
- Empathy
- Integration and Repair of Ruptures

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### Re-Directing

- First, check yourself– Are you calm? Are you connected? Are you ready?
- Encouraging children to use their "upstairs brain."

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### Three Questions to Help Us Shift out of Auto Pilot

- WHY did the child act this way?
- WHAT lesson do I want to teach in this moment?
- HOW do I teach this?

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### WHY did the child act this way?

- Shifting your own brain state.
- Allows for us to be intentional, not reactive
- "I wonder."
- Think about:
  - Child's age, developmental and skill level
  - Contributing circumstances
  - Intention
  - "Can't or Won't?"

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### WHAT lesson do I want to teach in this moment?

- Requires acting on a belief that children CAN learn without punishment
- Could be...
  - What's appropriate in this moment?
  - Better ways to meet a need or want
  - Delaying gratification
  - Managing strong emotions
  - Choosing a different way to act
- The child's behavior gives you a clue

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### HOW can I best teach it?

- Avoiding "knee-jerk" consequences or punishment
- Wait until the child is ready...and you are too.
- Use No-Drama Re-Direction Strategies

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**R**educe words  
**E**mbrace emotions  
**D**escribe, don't preach  
**I**nvolve the child in the discipline  
**R**eframe a "No" into a "Yes" with conditions  
**E**mphasize the positive  
**C**reatively approach the situation  
**T**each mindsight tools

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### Let's Practice

- Read through the scenario with your small group. How could you apply REDIRECT strategies to your scenario? Be prepared to share with the group.

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