

THE **early** COACH⁺
childhood™
ANISHA ANGELLA

THE BASICS OF

UNDERSTANDING ATTENTION SEEKING BEHAVIOURS



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Meet your Facilitator and Coach!

Shelby Secoura, RECE

A portrait of Shelby Secoura, a woman with long brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a dark sweater. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

THE **ecc**TM

Shelby Secoura is a proud ECE Coach & Facilitator with The Early Childhood Coach. Over her nine-year journey in the early years, she has gained extensive experience working in infant rooms, toddler rooms, preschool rooms, summer camps, and school-age programs. She has also been in management roles for seven and a half years, including positions as a supervisor, delegate, executive, and consultant. Throughout her career, Shelby has seen and heard a lot, and she values the learning opportunities these experiences have provided.

As a seasoned Early Childhood Educator (ECE), Shelby loves networking, growing, and helping others learn, giving them the chance to succeed without having to learn everything independently. She is grateful for the opportunities she has had to create advancement in the field and is a strong advocate for the needs of Early Childhood Leaders and children alike.

Shelby's journey in this field was driven by her love for the ever-changing nature of the work, the joy of having small, innocent conversations amid the day's chaos, and the ability to stop, smile, and learn from tomorrow's leaders. As she progressed in her career, Shelby never lost her love and spark for story time with children.

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The Early Childhood Coach's Learning Space



GROWTH



SAFETY



**COMMUNITY &
COLLABORATION**



REFLECTION



BELONGING

About The Early Childhood Coach!



The Early Childhood Coach is a team of educators, coaches, and experts who support the Early Childhood Education (ECE) industry through coaching, advocacy, and professional education. Our founder, Anisha Angella, brings over 15 years of diverse experience in the ECE industry as an entrepreneur, author, Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE), and ECE leadership coach. Through education and support, we empower ECE educators and leaders to overcome challenges, strengthen their communities, and find fulfillment in their careers. Our experienced coaches support and guide educators, leaders, and ECE programs at all stages of their careers and development. Partner with us and gain a savvy sidekick to help you become the superhero of your ECE journey!

Our interactive workshops offer valuable insights and education on communication, diversity, leadership, burnout, and more. We've shared our work internationally and gained exposure through Breakfast Television, Authority Magazine, and The Today Show. The Early Childhood Coach has built a community of 20,000+ ECE professionals across our platforms. Our collaborative sessions are praised for their ability to energize educators, transform teams, and enrich ECE communities for professionals, parents, and children. Whether you wish to level up your leadership skills, create new programming, or find renewed passion for your career, we are your one-stop shop for community and support.

**SCAN THE QR
TO VISIT OUR
WEBSITE!**



LET'S SELF REFLECT!

When we think about challenging behaviours, what do you think about first?

The page contains a series of horizontal lines for writing, starting from the top of the white area and extending to the bottom. A large, faint watermark of a question mark and an exclamation mark is centered on the page.

LET'S SELF REFLECT!

Have I noticed any patterns — time of day, environment, transitions, certain peers?

The page contains a large, faint, light blue watermark of a question mark centered in the background. The rest of the page is filled with horizontal black lines, providing a space for writing a response to the reflection prompt.

LET'S SELF REFLECT!

What in the environment may have contributed?
(Noise, crowding, transitions, unclear expectations)



A series of horizontal lines for writing, overlaid with a large, faint, light blue watermark graphic of a stylized face with a wide smile and a question mark above it, centered on the page.

LET'S SELF REFLECT!

What does inclusion look like for this child in my space?



A large, faint, light blue watermark graphic of a stylized person with arms raised, overlaid on a background of horizontal lines. The watermark is centered and spans most of the page width. The background consists of approximately 18 horizontal lines, providing a guide for writing.

ABC's Observation Chart

| Date, Time and Place | A - Antecedent | B - Behaviour(s) | C - Consequences | Outcome | Who was involved? Child or educator |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|---------|--|
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ABC's Observation Chart

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| | | | | | |
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Quick Classroom Checklist: Attention-Seeking Behaviours

1. PAUSE

Take a breath.

Remember: Behaviour is communication!



2. IDENTIFY THE NEED

Ask yourself:

- Is the child seeking connection?
- Are they seeking validation?
- Are they seeking control or predictability?
- Are they expressing big feelings?

3. RESPOND

- Acknowledge the feeling
- Offer connection first
- Use calm, respectful language

4. SUPPORT

- Give brief, positive attention
- Offer a choice
- Redirect to an appropriate way to get attention

5. REFLECT (LATER)

- What was the child telling me?
- What support can I offer next time?



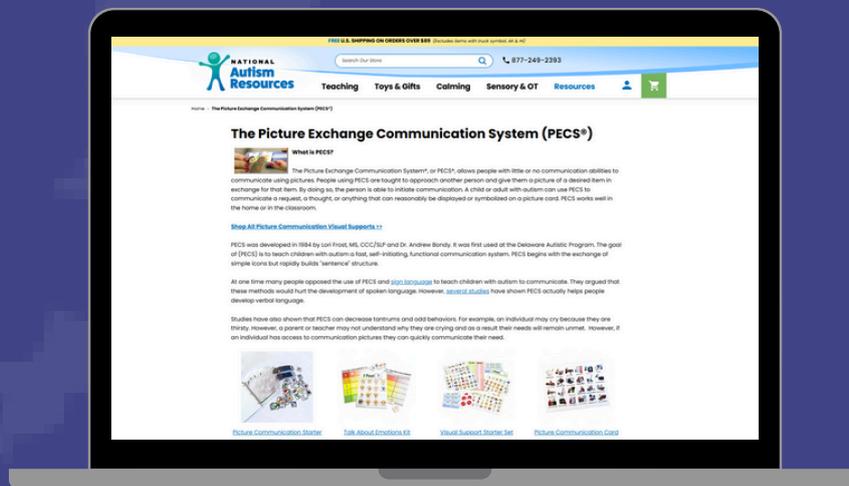
6. REMINDER

Attention-seeking is connection-seeking
These moments are opportunities, not disruptions.

Additional Resources

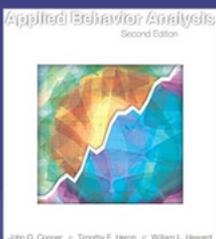
ARTICLES

The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS®)

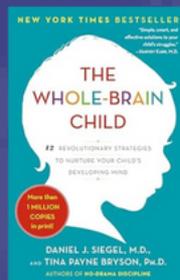


Click [here](#) for a full read.

BOOKS

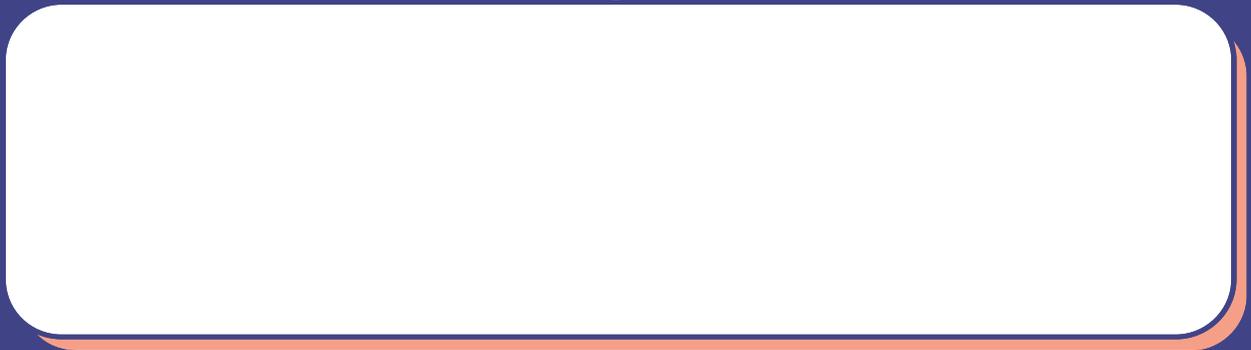
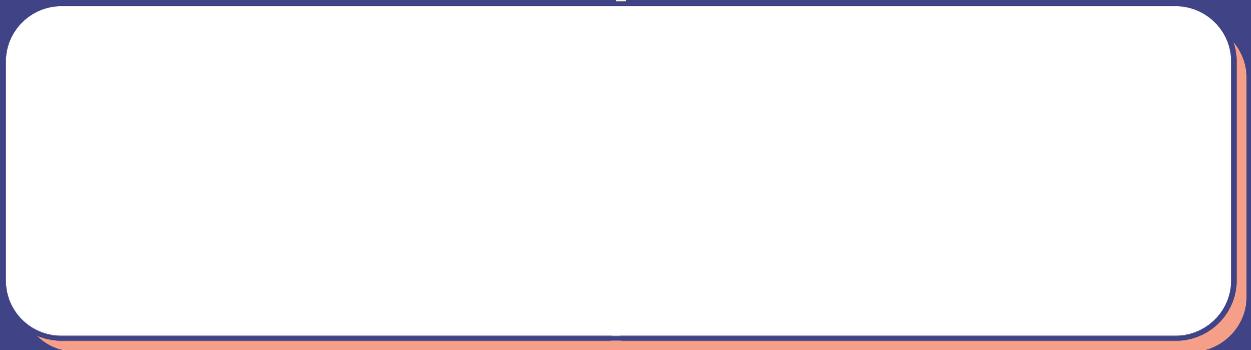


Applied Behavior Analysis (2nd Edition) - John O. Cooper, Timothy E. Heron, William L. Heward (Textbook)



The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind (Book)

What are Your Next Steps?



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Empowering the ECE industry, one professional at a time.



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THE BASICS OF

Understanding Attention Seeking Behaviours

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My Personal Land Acknowledgement

I want to take a moment to gently and respectfully acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek, the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa peoples of the Three Fires Confederacy. This land is home to the Aamjilwanoag First Nation and the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point, whose deep and ongoing relationships with this land continue to guide and sustain their communities.

For me, this acknowledgment is part of an ongoing journey, one that's been opening my eyes and my heart to the history of this land and the resilience of its First Peoples. As someone who lives and learns here, I offer this acknowledgment not just as words spoken, but as a step toward something deeper: a practice of listening, reflection, and continued learning. I know that this is just one part of a longer journey toward truth, healing, and respectful connection. I'll be honest: I didn't always know what it meant to live and work on traditional territory. But over time, I've come to understand that this isn't just about the past; it's about the present and the relationships we choose to build moving forward.

As someone who's still learning, I say this with humility and respect. I'm committed to listening more deeply, learning from Indigenous voices, and finding meaningful ways to show up, not just in words, but in action. I invite all of us here today to join in that process by being curious, being uncomfortable sometimes, and choosing to grow together as a community that values truth, respect, and reconciliation. As a community, we can grow by taking time to learn the histories and living cultures of the First Peoples of this land. We can support Indigenous voices, stories, and leadership. We can ask hard questions and open ourselves to unlearning together.

This acknowledgment is an invitation to walk forward with humility, curiosity, and care, to build relationships rooted in respect, and to never stop learning how to be better relatives on this land.

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The Early Childhood Coach's Learning Space

GROWTH **SAFETY** **COMMUNITY & COLLABORATION** **REFLECTION** **BELONGING**

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Who Am I ?

Shelby Secoura, RECE

- ECE Coach & Facilitator @ The ECC
- 9 years of experience in early childhood education
- Worked in infant, toddler, and preschool rooms, summer camps, and school-age programs
- 7.5 years in management roles, including supervisor, delegate, executive, and consultant positions
- Passionate about networking, growth, and helping others succeed
- Advocates for Early Childhood Leaders and children's needs



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THE ecc³ Chats



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Introducing The ECC Chats!

- **Spark lively conversations, build connections, and foster a supportive virtual community!** "The ECC Chats" is all about getting everyone engaged in meaningful discussions, brainstorming, and envisioning big goals together. Let's turn great ideas into actionable next steps and make an impact!
- **Dive into the Discussion, Show and Tell, & Plot the Next Big Moves**
- **Take Initiative:** Each participant can contribute to keeping the conversation flowing, ensuring everyone has a voice and capturing the group's most inspiring ideas. Creative note-taking encouraged!

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Introducing The ECC Interactive Workbook!



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Introducing The ECC Interactive Workbook!

What you'll find inside:



Interactive Exercises



Real-World Application



Collaborative & Fun



Reflect & Revise

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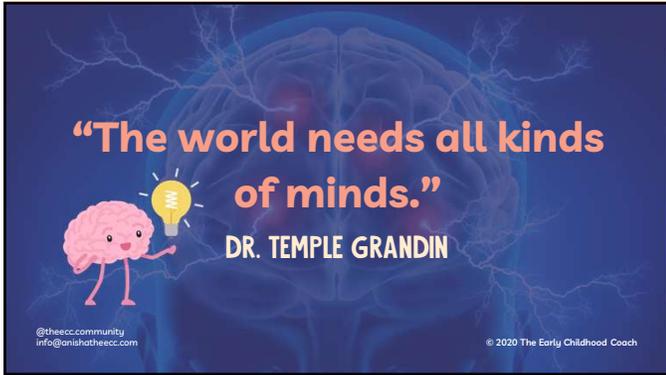
What are the goals of this experience?

- Identifying the 4 main types of attention-seeking behaviours
- Managing these types of behaviours
- What to do after a child exhibits a behaviour
- Providing resources to encourage ongoing learning for support
- Additional tips and support

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Four Types of Attention Seeking Behaviour

- Attention Behaviour
- Escape Behaviour
- Access Behaviour
- Sensory Behaviour



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Are The 4 Types of Behaviour Only Negative?

Of course not! Children, like adults, will often seek out positive attention or interactions, however, if they do not receive it continuously- we begin to see negative behaviours form.



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What is Attention Behaviour?

- Behaviour to get attention from providers/parents/peers

What type of attention are they looking for?

- Facial Expressions
- Gasping
- Loud exhales
- Verbal interactions (Saying no or no thank you, calling their name)
- Physical interactions (being picked up, hugs, hand holding)



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What Could Attention Behaviour Look Like?

- Calling your name repeatedly
- Yelling across the room
- Interrupting conversations
- Throwing toys or objects
- Knocking over materials
- Making loud, silly, or exaggerated noises
- Rough play that escalates quickly
- Following you around the room
- Doing the same "forbidden" thing after being told not to (like pushing or biting)

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How to Manage Attention Behaviour

- Be in proximity - silently
 - Lower engagement
 - Functional communication
 - Increase attention to positive behaviour
 - Contingent / Non-contingent praise
- Attention or praise given on a set time/schedule regardless of behaviour
- Based on Specific Behaviour - Rewarding or praising for "good behaviour"



** This does not mean do not give attention, or physical contact to children who are in need of it. We do have to understand the difference in the children at each step of the way.

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What Is Escape Behaviour ?

- Behaviours to avoid a task/transition, or to prolong things they do not want to do.

What could this look like?

- Feet stomping
- Throwing their body down
- Crying/whining
- Breath holding
- Avoiding eye contact
- Running away/hiding



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How to Manage Escape Behaviour

- Choose your battles
- Give Transition cues to the children (visual and auditory)
- ALWAYS give positive reinforcement for 'positive' choices
- Provide choices where and when you can

Ensure we are giving positive reinforcement to the children. Even if the behaviour is modelled first:

- Showing them to put toys away
- Hand over hand
- Saying 'yes please' or 'no thank you' and the child repeats

Ensure we are providing choices where we can:

- Can I change your diaper before or after this friend?
- Would you like this toy now or wait for this toy?
- Would you like to help me find your outdoor items or wait inside with your friends?
- Do you want to go outside now or in 5 minutes?



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“Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning.”

MR. ROGERS

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What Is Access Behaviour ?

- Behaviours to gain a turn in an activity, transition, or gain a toy they prefer. Could also be referred to as 'Tangible' behaviour.

What could this look like?

- Pushing friends so they can fit into the activity
- Pulling hair
- Biting
- Pulling clothing
- Taking toys
- Crying/screaming

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How to Manage Access Behaviour

- Reduce temptation (add more of that specific toy or remove it for a little bit)
 - Change your wording
 - Utilize non-contingent reinforcement
 - Try having a more structured or scheduled day while working through this with the child
-
- Attention or praise is given on a set time/schedule regardless of behaviour
 - If you can, engage in 1-on-1 activity at a set time each day or 3-5 days a week

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What Is Sensory Behaviour ?

- Behaviours that they engage in because it would reward them internally. Could also be referred to as 'Automatic' behaviour.

What could this look like?

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| • Jumping | • Pinching (mostly faces or arms) |
| • Biting | • Hand flapping |
| • Rocking (on feet, on chairs, on toys) | • Ear covering |
| • Feet tapping | • Auditory output (humming/screaming) |
| • Finger or hand rubbing | |



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How to Manage Sensory Behaviour

- Could require a 3rd party consult (Community Resources)
- Could result in medical intervention (Paediatrician, ENT, ASD support)
- Have open communication with parents, and supervisors for support
- May require outside support or individual support
 - Examples: Chair reverb straps (where children can bounce foot off them), headphones, 'heavy' lifting activities, and communication boards.



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LET'S SELF-REFLECT!

Have I noticed any patterns — time of day, environment, transitions, certain peers?

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What is there was a way to track these things?



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ABC's of Behaviour

The ABC's of Behaviour is a system designed and used to document the Triggers before or set off the behaviour, behaviour/s that occur, and the consequences after the behaviour. Ensure you document what you can in detail about the experience, after meeting the child's needs post behaviour.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Antecedent</p> <p>Triggers to the behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not sharing • Hitting/pushing • Biting • Overstimulation • Transition • Not able to get a turn • Being told no • Turn taking | <p>→</p> <p>Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Tantrums' • Hitting • Biting • Pushing • Toy 'stealing' • Throwing • Screaming • Running away | <p>→</p> <p>Consequence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redirection • Reinforcement • Positive or negative |
|--|--|---|

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ABC's Observation Chart

| Date, Time and Place | A - Antecedent | B - Behaviour(s) | C - Consequences | Outcome | Who was involved? Child or educator |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| | | | | | |
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“Affirmations are our mental vitamins, providing the supplementary positive thoughts we need to balance the barrage of negative events and thoughts we experience daily.”

TIA WALKER

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What To Do When The Behaviours Continue ?

- First and foremost, BE KIND TO YOURSELF!
- Some children may need a room change or an educator change—it's nothing against you. We all respond differently to different personalities.
- Talk to the parents, or ask your supervisor for direct, clear questions to ask the parents. Try to be on the same page as each 'team' (childcare team and home team).
- Ask others in the centre for ideas!
- Some children will need third-party support, no matter your skill set.
- Remember, the child is still learning; this is just the way they have found to communicate their needs successfully.
- Have someone observe you or your peers' interactions during these behaviours. Often, someone may be inadvertently reinforcing the behaviour (parents, support staff, or even us when we are busy). Consistency is key, although it can be very tough.

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Let's Check the Environment!

Children don't act in isolation. Their behaviour can be a direct response to their environment or situation. A cluttered, overstimulating, or unclear space can create:

- Children to disengage and become overwhelmed or under stimulated

FYI, both under- and overstimulated children can exhibit the same types of behaviours. These can look like: Attention seeking (running, pushing, or rough play, overly emotional, difficulty focusing), Escape behaviour (running)

Sometimes the behaviour isn't the child, it's the setup. Layout changes can remove hidden triggers like: Bottlenecks during transitions (small spaces or not a direct line to get to the line-up space or bathroom), "hot spots" where conflicts always happen (ex. all my accident reports are happening in the block area), spaces that invite unsafe running (large open areas), areas with too much visual or auditory noise.

Adjusting the environment can eliminate many behaviours proactively.

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LET'S SELF-REFLECT!

What in the environment may have contributed? (Noise, crowding, transitions, unclear expectations)

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Is my environment set up for success?

- Children regulate through cues in their environment.
- A layout may look like: clearly defined spaces, soft, cozy corners for quiet, predictable pathways with visual supports. These could give children a sense of safety and control, which reduces overstimulation behaviours.

Support sensory and regulatory needs proactively. This can look like:

- A cozy "regulation" corner with soft lighting
- Access to noise-cancelling headphones
- Fidget/sensory toys
- Visual schedules, timers, and transition cards
- Plants, different coloured lighting, and natural décor on the walls to reduce noise



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LET'S SELF-REFLECT!

What does inclusion look like for this child in my space?

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Tips & Recommendations for



Attention Seeking Behaviours.

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Tip #1:

Remember children are learning and growing, so use a Q.T.I.P when you find yourself asking "WHY ARE THEY DOING THIS WITH ME?"

Q - Quit
T - Taking
I - It
P - Personally

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Tip #2:
 When you are feeling frustrated with a behaviour - It is OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP OR SUPPORT.

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Tip #3:
 "Inappropriate" or difficult behaviours are a way of communicating needs to adults.

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Tip #4:
 Set small and attainable goals for both you and the child - then remember to recognize and celebrate the small wins!

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Tip #5:
 Ask for feedback from peers or parents.

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Tip #6:
 After a behaviour episode, start working on a positive rapport as quickly as you can.

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Tip #7:
 If a behaviour continues after lots of intervention, someone or something is reinforcing the behaviour.

- Parents, peers, or something internally like relief.

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Tip #8:
 You may not have the same success with a child as your co-worker. IT IS OKAY for children to respond differently to other adults, we all have different preferences- you are still an amazing educator!

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Tip #9:
 Keep your reinforcement short and sweet. For example: “Yay, you did it!”, “Good job!” or simply clapping for the child.

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Tip #10:
 Network with community resources for support.

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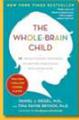
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Recommended Resources :



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(Textbook)



The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind
(Book)

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What are Your Next Steps?

Open the conversation with your peers/support systems.

↓

Observations and documentation on your ABC's Chart.

↓

Talk with parents/guardians. They might have advice for what works at home.

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Q & A





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**Let's Stay
Connected**

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