



# **Age-Appropriate Behavior Management Strategies to Address Difficult Behaviors in Children with Neurologic Conditions**

**February 10, 2021**

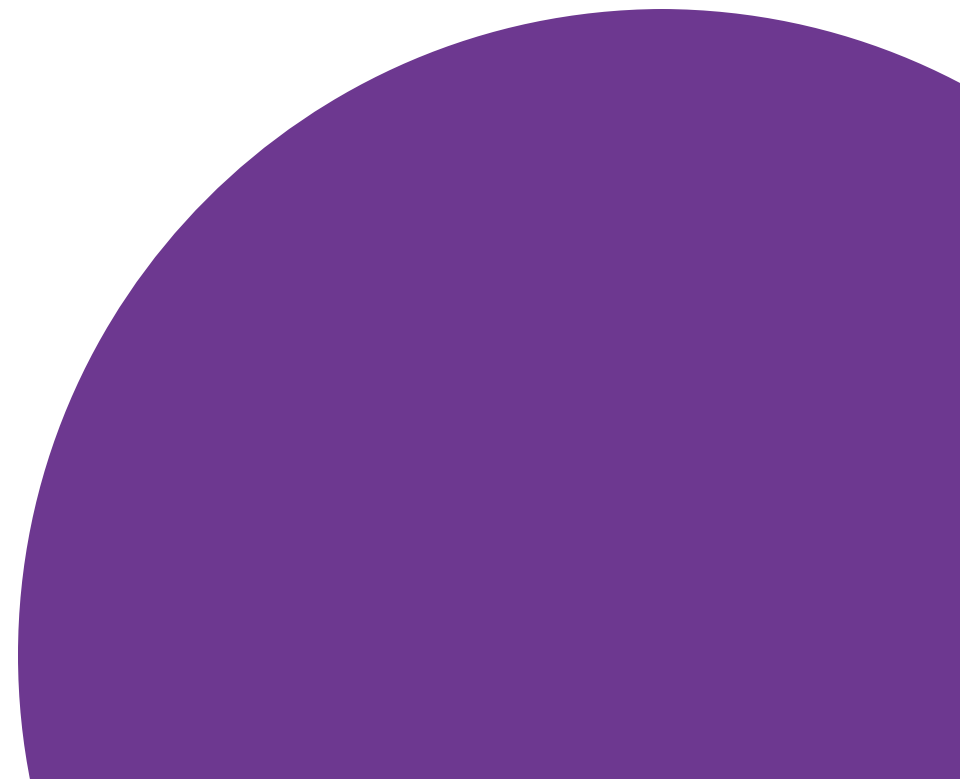
# Thank you to our 2021 Education Series Partners





# Age-Appropriate Behavior Management

**Strategies to Address Difficult  
Behaviors in Children with  
Neurologic Conditions**







# Today's Presenters



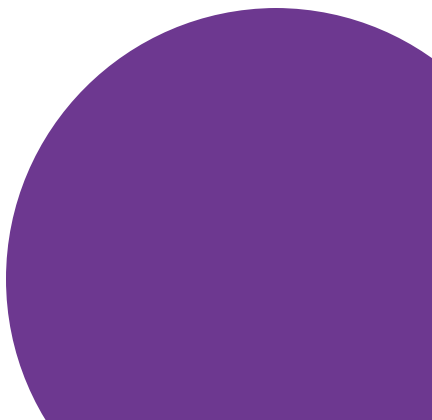
Eileen Devine, LCSW

Neurobehavior Support Coach for Parents



Karin Kelley

Parent





# What does behavior have to do with the brain, anyway?

**Everything, actually.**

Neuroscience research tells us that behaviors belong in the brain.

It provides understanding and clarity, giving us a new lens by which to view our child's challenging behaviors and the reason behind them.

It reduces frustration and improves outcomes.

# What if...?

## What if the brain is the source of challenging behaviors?

What exactly does this mean for my child who struggle behaviorally?

What does it mean for the way I parent them?

Why do very good parenting techniques fail miserably with my child?

What if I always started from the stand point that my child would do well if they could? What would change?

What if I didn't focus on changing the behavior, but instead focused on brain function? What would change?



# Brain First Approach to Parenting



## The brain - behavior connection

- There are many reasons a person's brain may be changed in function and structure.
- Physical changes of the brain impacts the way it functions.
- Behaviors are often times the only symptoms.
- Brain-based differences are physical disabilities with challenging behavioral symptoms.

# Accommodations

The path to helping our child settle over time

- Accommodations are just, right, and fair.
- Accommodations are the treatment and path to helping our child experience less challenging behavioral symptoms.
- They are proactive and preventative.
- It is not "giving in", but instead is the recognition of lagging cognitive skills due to a brain-based difference in our child.





# What Our Brains Do for Us Everyday



## Assumptions and Comparisons

- Ignore or manage sensory input
- Recognize hunger cues and respond appropriately
- Think fast and listen fast
- See what's coming next
- Predict outcomes
- Learn from past mistakes
- See another's perspective
- Pick-up on social cues
- Support us in making and keeping friends
- Follow 2 or 3 step verbal instructions
- Inhibit impulses
- Compromise



# Our Child's Fragile Nervous System & Co-regulation



## Our greatest parenting tool

- Window of tolerance for strong emotions and frustrations is more narrow
- They get out of their “thinking brain” quickly
- They need help to regulate and allow their thinking brain to come back online
- Our greatest parenting tool = providing co-regulation to our child

# Dysmaturity

The gap between our child's chronological & developmental age

Chronological age: \_\_\_\_\_ 16

Social/emotional age age: \_\_ 8

Strengths (sports, arts, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_ 18

Expressive language: \_\_\_\_\_ 16

Receptive language: \_\_\_\_\_ 12





# Steps You Can Take Now to Think Brain First

Disengage, stop fighting and think brain.

Focus on regulation and connection first.

Ask what if...? And when in doubt, assume brain.

Ask, what age does this remind me of?

Adjust expectations to be more in-line with your child's cognitive skills..



# Parent's Perspective





# Questions?





# Thank you!

Please let us know how we did...



@cnfoundation



@childneurologyfoundation



@child\_neurology



childneurologyfoundation.org