



The Tip of the Iceberg

The behaviours we see in children are a little like the tip of an iceberg. These are the things we can see above the surface. However, it's important to consider what is lying below the surface in order to better understand how we can support and help.



Consider what other behaviours you might see in your child and what other things might drive those behaviours. Things that are driving those behaviours might be below the surface.

When your child is stressed, they may seek your attention by:

- talking a lot or asking a lot of questions
- overreacting to minor upsets or injuries
- using baby talk
- creating a problem when you are distracted or occupied (e.g., on the phone)
- telling long fantastical tales
- repeating the same behaviour over and over

“All behaviour is communication. If we get caught up in how the communication is delivered, instead of the need behind it, a child will turn up the volume to be heard, or shut down the need completely.”

@The_Therapist_Parent

It can be especially hard to find the patience for these attention-seeking behaviours. If you begin to feel irritated, remind yourself that your child's behaviour is communicating feelings of stress and/or unmet needs. Think of your child's "attention seeking" as "attachment seeking" – and your child's attempt to feel better by finding reassurance, closeness and security in you.