



When my child is having big behaviours, I will ask myself:

- Is my child overstimulated? Hungry? Tired? Stressed?
- Is my child able to hear anything right now? Or is their brain flooded with stress hormones from big emotions, making them unable to listen or think?
- What could my child's behaviours be trying to tell me? When I focus on the emotions or unmet needs underneath, I am more likely to respond kindly and in ways I feel proud of later.

In this moment, I can focus on our connection and on keeping my child (and others) safe.



Things I can say

- “This is such a big feeling.”
- “You didn't like it when...”
- “I'm here. We'll get through this...”
- “It's hard to...”
- “This isn't working right now.”
- “I see you are hitting (yelling, throwing things, etc.). In this family we don't (hit, yell, throw things, etc).”

I will hold boundaries in a loving way, knowing that my child may not like it. I will not take my child's behaviour personally.

I will remember that what my child is going through right now feels worse to them than it does to me (really!).

When my child is more settled and able to follow my lead, I can show different ways to express upset or frustration, such as running, jumping, using their words, scribbling, drumming, crumpling up paper and throwing it, or through physical play with me (e.g., pillow fights or tug-of-war).

Or I will just resist the urge to keep talking, and continue taking slow breaths.

“ See a child differently and you'll see a different child. ”

Stuart Shanker

This isn't just about a shift in how you perceive a child's behaviour. A child responds to the change that they sense in you. This is why, when you see a child differently, you really do see a different child.