

Use the 3Rs

when conversing with your child
(the tricky behaviours edition)

1 REGULATE

2 RELATE

3 REASON

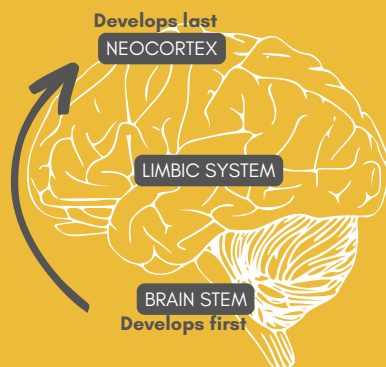
Let's apply these 3Rs to our conversations with our children during their tricky behaviours.

1 REGULATE

Our brains develop from the bottom up. This means that for our children, their emotional reactions (amygdala in the limbic system) are more developed than their logical thinking (prefrontal cortex in neocortex).

In other words, when your child is overwhelmed with emotions, the learning centers in the brain shut down. **Do not attempt to reason or teach.**

Focus on calming your child first.



Try this

Calm yourself

Pause, take a deep breath before you speak to your child. Chant a mantra to override your instinct to yell or judge.

"My child is not giving me a hard time, my child is having a hard time."

"Homework is not an emergency."

"My relationship with my child is more important than the unpacked school bag."

Calm your child

Hold space for your child: be mentally, physically and emotionally present for your child. Focus on supporting your child through the big emotions.

Hold your child's hands if they are hurting anyone, stroke their backs if they are crying, model and encourage deep breathing to calm their nervous systems.

The 3Rs interventions are proposed by Dr Bruce Perry, a pioneering neuroscientist in the field of trauma. This 3-step approach helps children learn, think and reflect as they develop the skills they need to thrive in life.

Try this

2 RELATE

Connect with your child so that they feel seen and heard.

One way to do that is to remember this mantra: Be **CURIOUS**, not furious.



Address emotions BEFORE you reason with your child.

Practise active listening by acknowledging how your child feels and thinks.

"You are telling me that..."

"I know this is hard..."

"You wish it did not happen..."

"Tell me more, I'm listening."

3 REASON

When your child is ready, engage your child in problem solving. Help your child understand that you are on their team.

Try this

Help your child understand it's you + your child vs the problem. (Not you vs your child.)

"It's ok to be angry, but it's not ok to hit. How can we help you manage your anger?"

"It's me and you vs the handphone. How can we make the use of your phone work for both of us?"

"It's me and you vs the homework. Let's figure out how to make completing homework less stressful. Tell me how you feel."



Family Meetings

Family meetings are get-together sessions to help children understand family values, learn problem-solving and decision making skills. They foster open communication among family members in a safe environment, and are also great for promoting family bonding.

5 steps to a family meeting



1 INTRODUCE THE CONCEPT OF FAMILY MEETINGS

"Meetings are times when people come together, discuss problems, brainstorm solutions, and have fun!"

"We are going to have a family meeting every week, and all of us can decide what we can do during family meetings!"



2 SET A SIMPLE AGENDA

"Let's list down what we are going to talk about during the meeting."



3 SET GROUND RULES

"In order for the meeting to run smoothly, we need to set ground rules. At work, our meeting rules include being respectful so only one person can talk at one time. Let's set some of our own meeting rules."



4 TAKE TURNS TO LEAD THE DISCUSSION

"We have a problem. How can we help you to study for your spelling tests so Mummy and Daddy don't have to keep nagging at you?
Let's brainstorm all possible solutions!"



5 SUMMARISE THE SESSION

"Let's go through what we have discussed..."

"It's time for our check out activity, shall we play Monopoly Deal or Battleship?"

Tips for success!

- Family meetings don't have to be long. They can be casual discussions on a car ride and take 5-10 minutes! You do what works best for your family!
- Keep an open-minded and avoid judging and interjecting with your comments.
- Encourage participation but do not force your child if they are not ready.
- End the meeting on a positive note!

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Family Meeting

DATE

COMPLIMENTS AND APRECIATION

AGENDA

- ✦ _____
- ✦ _____
- ✦ _____
- ✦ _____
- ✦ _____
- ✦ _____
- ✦ _____

HOW DID THE SOLUTIONS GO FROM
THE LAST MEETING?

BRAINSTORM SOLUTIONS FOR
AGENDA ITEMS

UPCOMING EVENTS

FUN FAMILY ACTIVITY

WORD OF THE MONTH