



TIPS FOR PARENT - CHILD CONNECTION!



1. Connect Then Redirect:

- When a child is misbehaving, it is most helpful to *connect* with them before *redirecting* them.
- Example: If a child is throwing a tantrum because they are not getting what they want, instead of simply saying, "No," we are invited to physically bend down to their level, give them a warm hug, rub their back & show empathy through affirming their feelings. This may sound like, "I know. That's really hard & stressful. I understand how you could be upset." Once the child is calm and they know you are on their side, you can share the reason that they cannot get what they want.



2. Daily Engagement in Child-Led Play:

- Spending *uninterrupted* time with your child daily is important for the parent-child relationship. This "Child-Led Play" involves any activity that your child would like to do with you, as long as it is safe. I invite you to engage in Child-Led Play for 10 min. each day. (It is best if you are not using your cell phone. Instead, your goal is to be present.)

3. If Children Are *Giving* us a Hard Time, They Are *Having* a Hard Time:

- When children are struggling, their struggle *reveals itself* through misbehavior. Next time your child is misbehaving, consider asking, "What might they be struggling with right now? How can I support them?" If your child is yelling in anger, that behavior tells you that they are struggling with regulating their mood. In this case, you can say, "It seems like you're really upset. How can I support you? What do you need?" Healthy ways to release anger include crinkling up paper, punching a pillow or journaling. (It is never ok for a child to hurt themselves, others, or property.)



4. Model The Behavior You Want to See:

- If you would like your child to say "please" & "thank you," you are invited to emphasize using manners yourself. If you would like your child to be kind to others, you can make a conscious effort to be especially kind to others. Children already mirror the behavior they see, so we are invited to model & demonstrate the behavior we would like to see in them!

5. Compliance Through Connection:

- The Parent - Child relationship is strengthened through connection. Children are most likely to listen to adults if they feel connected to them. Easy ways to connect with children include listening, welcoming & affirming their emotions.

