Primary PART 2 Managing challenging behaviour & boundaries

[00:00:00] **Hayley:** What? Yeah, with limits Marlina, I mean, I think it's, as you start having the conversations with your child it, it's important to kind of think about. What they can actually achieve. If we set a limit, which may be very reasonable, we are the parent, we are the guide, we are the teacher in these situations, of course we are.

[00:00:23] But if it's a limit that, that your child simply can't reach or, or, or manage, then they will. Often fail at it. You know, boundaries, we can review them constantly. Boundaries, you know, we talk about boundaries and consistency is really important of course, but actually some flexibility as well so that we can give our child a chance to, to work within those limits that we are setting as parents, as teachers, as guides.

[00:00:54] Um, work within those limits but find a way of being able to do it to learn. To do it, you know, not just not be able to do it one day and do it the next. It is a learning experience, isn't it? So we need to have a little bit of, of flex and not necessarily leeway because that, that kind of, goes against what we're doing with boundaries, but some adaptability as that learning process takes place as it completely

[00:01:20] **Marcelina:** No, I love that, Hayley, because actually this is exactly what what I, um.

[00:01:26] I was, I was just getting to, which is perfect that you picked up on that because it's Exactly, no, it's exactly that. It's the, the fact that we are setting a limit is because they can't do it and they might need scaffolding to be successful at what we're asking, and that might mean that even with a child that's 10, 11 or, bordering on between years.

[00:01:47] We might actually have to intervene physically. And that doesn't mean to obviously hurt them or anything like that, but we might do things like, I don’t know, block a hit if they're fighting with their sibling. Or we might have to take that screen out of their hands if they, it's so hard for them.

[00:02:06] And of course, doing this in an empathic, in an, in a regulated way. It's not about you. Well, that's it. I'm pulling that screen out of your hand. It's

going along the lines of, whoa, it's so, so difficult. When screen time is over, I'm going to, I'm going to give you a choice. You can turn it off your cell phone.

[00:02:23] I'm going to, I'm going to do it for you. And I think if we can stay within that regulated framework and be open to the fact that they will resist that, they might not want that. They might hold onto that iPad or they might run upstairs with it. Um. That we can, exactly like you said, Hayley, make room for the fact that they might have, they might need help, but that they might also have a lot of emotional reactions about it.

[00:02:49] And I think. We really need to think about what do effective limits look like, because I think sometimes we get so stuck in wanting to be right in wanting to win the argument, in wanting them to validate the limit that we've set, that we are not effective actually. So effective action. A couple of examples here are, like I said, physically blocking a hit, going in between fighting siblings, separating them, or carrying your younger child to a safe space where you can sit together.

[00:03:20] Ineffective action is when we threaten or when we plead with them or when we lecture with them. We're trying to appe appeal to this thinking brain, which in those moments is not actually available. And often ours is kind of bordering on not being available either because we might be dysregulated by their frustration, anger, resistance.

[00:03:43] So I think it's thinking about we, we might have to, we might have to use our power in a really kind and loving sort of way. And I think about that written here, this idea of a mama, mama bear or papa bear. I think we can all kind of imagine this big mama bear or papa bear that's just so powerful, but using it gently.

[00:04:05] So it's, it's helping them down from that counter that they're climbing rather than asking them 10 times. It's scaffolding to help them, just like you said, Haley, meet those expectations that we're setting. So if we've asked five or six times for the shoes to be. Brought and put on. Or if we've asked five or six times for the for the child to go up and brush their teeth and come down and they're not doing it, then we need to shift.

[00:04:29] We need to take action. That doesn't mean that they don't have to do it. It means that we need to help them. We need to meet them somewhere where they're at, and that might be different today than it was yesterday. I think all in all, what's really important coming back to these moments during these big feelings, when they have big feelings.

[00:04:50] When we have big feelings, we need to regulate them. And I think it's, again, coming back to this idea, we need to perhaps put to the side for a moment this idea of wanting to be right or wanting to tell them that that behaviour was unacceptable and wanting to tell them how much that hurt their little brother or sister when they hit them.

[00:05:10] We really need to. Help them regulate and connect with them. And there's this idea of sitting on the emotional bench with them, which is another lovely visual. You just sit down and you just hear them. Gosh, it was so annoying when she took your toy, when you asked that she wouldn't, or you really didn't.

[00:05:28] Like when she was watching that really loud TV program and you couldn't focus on your homework or whatever it is that happened, you just relay it back to them. Without judgment, without condemning or condoning the behaviour or who's right or who's wrong, what's acceptable, what's not acceptable.

[00:05:49] That learning can happen later. But in the moment, we're dealing with a very raw brain. So take that off of your shoulders because we're not going to be effective in those moments until they are regulated and we are regulated. I think the other thing that I didn't say earlier that we want them not to do the behaviour, but actually the behaviour tells us so much.

[00:06:14] It tells us what they need and it tells us where we need to do our own work and kids will find the buttons that we have that are raw things that are important to us. I don’t know if somebody might be a, I know. A messy house maybe frustrates one parent and for another parent, they get really triggered if a child isn't polite or, you know, there, there will be, we all have our, our things that, that, that get revved up.

[00:06:44] Um, and that perhaps we didn't even really know, we thought were that important until we had kids. So again, coming back to this idea of a boundary, a boundary is what we do or what we provide. Simply telling them to stop the behaviour is actually, in many ways, not very effective boundaries. I think because they can't, they're doing the behaviour because for whatever reason, they can't stop that behaviour.

[00:07:09] They can't access the thinking brain that they have, or they can't stop the impulse. For example, a boundary is. Might be so that you hold your child's hand as they try to hit you, or you go in between fighting siblings or you turn

the TV off, you're doing something, you're being effective, but simply saying, stop fighting or turn off the TV when you've asked 10 times.

[00:07:33] And you know, your child for whatever reason, can't do it, is actually not really setting a boundary and it's getting you annoyed and it's. It's and they are out of control because they don't really know whether you mean it the 10th or the 11th time. And by then we've kind of risen to our own kind of.

[00:07:53] Eight out of 10 on our anger scale. And in those moments we make the worst parenting decisions. Those are the moments. Maybe we hold them a bit tighter than we intended, or we raise our voices or we threaten something that is just ridiculous. So I think it's also kind of it protecting you and them. So setting a boundary early, intervene before it gets to the point where you escalate and deescalate.

[00:08:20] And then of course, after. When all has calmed down, most of the time when big things have happened, most of us don't really want to go back there because the drama is over. The fight has been re, you know, the fight has stopped, the screaming has stopped, the kids are in bed or whatever. But I think really it's so important to circle back to some of these events.

[00:08:47] With our kids. And that can be hours. It could even be the next day later when there's, I suppose they can still remember it, but that there is, there's been some time to truly calm down. Sometimes we. Think we're calm and then we start talking. I know that about myself. I think I've calmed down after something that has happened and then I start talking and I think I'm being all empathic and curious and all that, that I can hear.

[00:09:12] My voice is harsh or I'm starting to lecture or I'm trying to hurry them along and telling them what is acceptable and what's not that whatever they should be doing, and I think so. So this is why really giving it. Time to cool down is really important. They're not going to, you're not going to miss your opportunity for teaching them.

[00:09:34] In fact, you're going to increase the chances that what you're telling them is going to be received. Uh, and you're going to be able to do that in a way that is genuine and connection focused to support and to nurture them rather than to punish. And deter them from doing it again. So for this reason, it's really important to connect before we do anything, and that might look like getting curious or simply acknowledging, wow, that was a really, really big fight between you and your sister earlier.

[00:10:08] Wow. She really made you mad and leave space. Leave space for them to tell you exactly how unfair it was and exactly how annoying she was and exactly how. Much. They absolutely hate having a sister because we want to jump in and we say no, you really love her. You really love her. You're just angry right now.

[00:10:27] But in that moment, that's exactly how they feel and they need to be heard. And then it's our turn to go in with some curiosity wondering aloud linking for them. Hmm. Okay. I know today you had a long day at school and you had that teacher that you don't really like and, and then I asked you to do this, and whatever happened.

[00:10:49] Relay it back to them so that they can see, first of all, that you get them, but also that you can link that cause and effect for them because they can't always effectively do that. And just like you said, Haley, it's really about scaffolding to help them meet the expectations. So whatever has happened has given us a lot of data about what they can and can't do in a certain situation.

[00:11:13] So maybe right now your child can't be left with a sibling. Unattended or maybe right now there need to be some tweaks to the way your child does screen time because simply stopping it at a certain time or in a certain way doesn't work for them. Or maybe we need to tweak what we, how we ask them to do things.

[00:11:34] So I think use that data and then rethink a new way of dealing with that situation, which most likely will come back again. because it often does for us as families. I think ultimately really it's coming back to this idea of how do you want them to feel about your relationship? And I think we can all perhaps relate to times when we've been, I don't know, maybe we've been given some feedback at work, or maybe we've been given some feedback from a friend or something about what we do or say has been picked up and it's.

[00:12:08] We're so much more willing to take guidance from somebody that we truly feel that they care about us and that we, we really trust their judgment and their authority, and I and the same goes for our kids. If we can keep the relationship strong then it's not just because it's nice. Like I said earlier, it's because it will make our lives easier because they will be more willing to do that.

[00:12:35] Extra thing for us, they will be a little bit more willing to be cooperative or they might be certainly much more open to the guidance that we're giving about what expectations we set and what rules we have in the

house. And I think, again, sometimes things get broken physically or emotions get hurt.

[00:12:55] And I know in this country particularly, there's a huge. Kind of pressure on being overtly polite and say, please, and thank you. And, and we want sometimes to hurry up this again, hurry up our children's process by forcing them to apologize. But we know that a forced apology if a child isn't ready to do that or isn't willing to do that, is, is kind of just tokenistic and it doesn't really teach them anything and it doesn't feel good to receive either.

[00:13:26] So I often try to encourage. Parents to think more broadly about repair rather than a specific word that they have to say and think about, what is it that I want this apology to do? We want to mend a relationship. We want them to acknowledge that what they did or didn't do affected somebody else. And they might need an awful lot of time and help to get there.

[00:13:52] It might be so that they make it up to somebody. So using words like. I wonder what we could do to make it up to her. You know, it sounds like that really upset her. Or I wonder if it scared her when you, you know, when you shouted at her or whatever. Whatever it is that our kids have done, and really think about that.

[00:14:10] But that has to come after they've been heard and their perspective has been taken as their honest kind of, you know, and we've taken seriously. And,

[00:14:23] **Carol:** uh, just on the, on the subject of apology, apologizing rather. You know, I think as parents it, it, it, we, we do expect an apology for things, uh, from our children.

[00:14:34] We have to teach them what an apology is and what it, what it actually means. And, and how it feels. And I think leading by example is, is really, really important. I grew up in a household where I was never apologized to by my my, by my mother. And it was something that I, it was really strongly held for me that if I made a mistake, I would own it with my children.

[00:14:57] That doesn't mean. That we accept their behaviour or that we are okay with what they've done or said. But if I've raised my voice and my, you know, as you've been explaining earlier mossel, if we're, our resilience is low. And we don't respond in perhaps the way that we, we would like to, then, you know, we may have something to apologize for ourselves.

[00:15:20] That doesn't mean that we have to accept their behaviour. But it's, it's being an exemplar to our children and they may not. Respond likewise immediately, but in my experience as a, as a parent, and it, it, and it took a lot of time to learn this, but by doing that, the circle does come round and my children did then acknowledge and then understand, you know, it took time to process.

[00:15:48] Sometimes they don't always get it. They had to think about it. They had to go and lick their wounds. They had to go and do all of those things and kind of work it out for themselves. Um, even, you know, when they were really, really young. And just having that time and space to do that made an apology. So much more, um, valuable and effective.

[00:16:09] Just saying, oh, I'm sorry, in the moment. Often you can hear it in the voice, you can hear, you can see it in the body language. You know, you know whether your child means it or not. And so I think, you know, apology is a, is a really, really important place to think about how you want that to work from you as a, as an adult, as a parent, as a teacher, and what you would like from your child, children.

[00:16:35] Yeah.

[00:16:36] **Marcelina:** And I, and I love what you said there, Haley, because. This is another thing that doesn't go with a lot of previous generations in terms of what we expect from adults. And actually, certainly the way I see it is that as adults, as the parent, we lead their repair. We take, we, we kind of, we, we reach that handout so that they can take it.

[00:17:03] And of course that, that will make it so much easier for them to acknowledge whether this is a, a simple, sorry, and a genuine, sorry, of course, from our, on our part, but also to sit down and say, Hey didn't handle that really well. That's not how I wanted to ask you to do that. Or Can we do a, can we start again?

[00:17:21] You know, can we do a do over? So I think some of those things are just. Incredibly powerful when they come from us, who are their, kind of, their most important people in the world. So absolutely. I, I really love that. And, and really to, we need to perhaps break down old expectations of what a, a parent-child relationship looks like, uh, and perhaps part with this idea that we should have some sort of authority over them simply because we're their parents and we do anyway.

[00:17:52] We have an awful lot of power. So I suppose sometimes we, there will be situations that are, I'm aware we're so running over time, but just, just this last slide because I think this is important because this, I think sometimes when parents come to me and I'm sure to you as well, Haley, and there's this exasperation that a child is doing a behaviour that is just dangerous or really unacceptable or really, really.

[00:18:19] Triggers us so much and we just need to make, make, you know, we want it to stop straight away. And, and so sometimes parents come with this idea, well, if I, if I don't say it in the moment, they won't learn. Or how will they learn if I simply acknowledge their feelings or if I get curious about their feelings, you know, or behaviour.

[00:18:40] Again, coming back to this idea that this happens after the learning happens after, when their thinking brain is back online. So we need to work with the brain and the way this might work for a problem that is recurring. You might, again, coming back to this, you know, you might, you might raise the topic in a situation, I don't know, whatever problem it is that, that you might be dealing with, and you need to hear their concerns first.

[00:19:05] What it is about those flashpoints, those situations that is hard for them and that they really dislike or find hard. And then you can share your observations and your concerns, and then you can think together how to solve this problem. And in this situation, all ideas are important. You write them all down.

[00:19:26] I don't know whether you're, I don't know. Negotiating screen time and they say, well, I want to be able to have my iPad whenever I want 24 7. Write it down. It doesn't mean that you're going to that, that you're going to agree to that, but then you look at the list and you choose mutually satisfactory solutions.

[00:19:45] And this might be easier for some issues and harder for some, but I think the key thing here really is that you're willing to hear their concerns and that you're willing to write down the ideas that they have. They're important enough to be written down on paper. And I think the other thing about discipline, because this comes back again and again, we want them to learn.

[00:20:06] And so it's very easy to use different kind of punishment and reward systems of if you don't do this, you won't have iPad. Or if you hit your sister, then we'll take that away. It makes sense because in some ways our society

works like that. You don't pay your mortgage, you lose your house, you don't go to work, you don't get paid.

[00:20:28] You know, you go to the shop, you're expected to pay. I suppose all of those are quite logical, but I think we've created a, a very unhealthy power dynamic where we. Have the right to take away privileges that our kids have. But unfortunately, we know that it doesn't translate into learning what it is that we want them to learn.

[00:20:49] So let, let me explain this. So, so the way I think about discipline is asking ourselves these three questions to do a bit of detective work about why did they do what they did? What is it about that situation? Every afternoon or every other day that makes them behave in that way that I don't like, or that makes me worry, or that makes me scared, or that hurts their sister, or that whatever it is, why are they doing it?

[00:21:16] And thinking really about. Some of those things that, you know, it might be they're immature, they are tired, they're dysregulated, they have no impulse control, they don't have cause and effect thinking. They are in that moment, unable to act on what they really would like to do. The second thing is what?

[00:21:37] What is this behaviour telling us about them? Is it a skill they need to learn? Do they need to learn to ask in a more polite way rather than. Barking at us that they want something. Is it so that they have a need that is that, that, that needs beating? Maybe they're tired, maybe they're hangry, maybe they are struggling with with the, I don't know, a sibling.

[00:22:03] This often happens, of course, when. Young si, new siblings are born. But also when you, when babies turn into toddlers or babies turn into preschoolers and suddenly this older primary age child has this, there was a bob there six months ago, and now they're crawling and taking my things. They might be an awful lot of things that their behaviours telling us about them, why they might be hitting or excluding or lying or whatever it is that they're doing.

[00:22:30] And the final question is how. How can I teach them what it is that they want them to know in a way that doesn't erode our relationship? How can I teach them in a way that he or she is responsive and open to what I, what I'm asking of her? And I know that if we send our kids off and we punish with the relationship, or if we take things away from them, it's unlikely that they will be sitting in the room thinking, you know, I've really learned my lesson here. I'm not going to hit my sister again. I think what they're going to be thinking a lot of

the time is how unfair it was and how they didn't feel heard that that fair side of the story wasn't considered or how mean mom is right now for, for not letting me have my iPad or whatever it is.

[00:23:20] So I think it's really thinking more creatively about why did they do what they do. What is it that it tell tells us about what they need and how can I most effectively teach what it is that I want them to know? And that can be done without harsh consequences and punishments that I think leave people on both sides very upset.

[00:23:45] I see that there's a question in the chat. I think

[00:23:48] **Carol:** I actually just, it was, oh, that was you. Okay,

[00:23:50] **Marcelina:** cool.

[00:23:51] **Carol:** I was just, um, popping in, in the chat. If, if you want to take a look at it. There's an article on, on the, um, TATF website about temper tantrums. And there actually a lot of the points and, and topics covered today are kind of.

[00:24:04] Threaded in through that and, and expanded on in some areas, but it's, it's a, it is a really good read. So, um, do, have a look at your leisure, I think, and find it helpful.

[00:24:16] **Marcelina:** Great. Thank you. So let's have a little think about, we've got a few minutes left. I want to make sure that we get through Jennifer's question.

[00:24:26] Do you have it, Haley, in front of you? I've got it otherwise, yes, but I know I've, you've had to listen to my voice for an hour, so you might want to hear Haley's voice.

[00:24:35] **Carol:** Yeah. Jennifer, you, are you happy for me to read your question out in its entirety? Yeah, sure. Okay. So, Jennifer's, asked us how she can help, um, to manage when, when her daughter is having a meltdown or she's cross or frustrated, angry or upset, and she speaks badly to us.

[00:24:54] She shouts, snarls, or hits Jennifer. So they try to do a lot of the, you know, we can see what you are feeling right now, but it's not okay to speak to us the way. That you are speaking to us star charts, question mark. Stars are good for good behaviour and star's lost if she speaks disrespectfully, hits, et cetera.

[00:25:13] So, you know, there's a, there's a few things in there. I think we've, we've, we've talked about a a little bit already, but. I absolutely hear and, and feel your frustration that, how do we get on top of our child who is shouting at us and talking really badly to us? It's a really, really tricky one.

[00:25:34] because it isn't Okay. Hitting isn't okay. Shouting and, and, and, and, you know, speaking badly to us Yeah. Isn't okay. How do we get that message across? And I think, you know, Marcel, you've, you know, you, you've talked about what do we do in the moment, you know, when the emotions are high and what do we go back to?

[00:25:56] Um, yeah. When things are then calm. But hitting is a tough one, isn't it? Because we need to find a way to diffuse that, don't we? Yeah. In some way.

[00:26:09] **Marcelina:** There's so many parts to this question, and it's such a brilliant question because I think it really is just envelopes everything that we've talked about today and, and touches on things that I think in some shape or form happens in all families at different stages.

[00:26:22] I think first of all, I think what's really important here is a lens shift, because when we. Think about these behaviours and we, I can imagine, and of course as a parent, I've experienced this as well. When our child snaps back at us or talks back at us or uses a tone of voice, that gets our backs up.

[00:26:43] It's very, very easy to want to somehow punish that behaviour. Somehow. In our heads, we're thinking it's unacceptable, it's bad. We want to withhold what it is that they're asking for because they're asking in a rude way. But I think what we're missing here, and we all go into this trap, is that the reason why they're behaving this way, whatever behaviour of these once mentioned here, Jenny, I, is that.

[00:27:09] She is showing that she can't handle the situation in the way that it is. Obviously it's, um, these meltdowns. I don't know if there's specific situations when they happen, but the, this, it's telling us that she is disintegrating, she is losing control over her brain and body, and her thinking brain is, we actually know is not accessible.

[00:27:33] To the same degree as it is when we're calm. So the, there is, the focus is downstairs, which is her survival part of the brain. So if you want to talk to her about it, it's, we sometimes call it, then the guard dog kids can kind of get that quite easily. This idea of a guard dog that's there to protect you.

[00:27:51] And that's what's happening here. Her guard dog is going loud and growly. Most likely over something that isn't really an emergency, but her brain is perceiving it as an emergency and it's acting like that. And what's interesting about it is that her behaviours will make our brains feel like it's an emergency because we want to make it stop right now.

[00:28:15] We can't wait. We can't wait for tonight. We wanted to stop right now. And that's why we say, we see you. Can you feel like this, but you can't do this. You just can't do this, and I think it's, it's just so it's so lovely and great, Jennifer, that you've been able to share this very vulnerable sort of example because this is, I know this happens in all families.

[00:28:38] And of course then we go into what do we do with this? How can I make this stop immediately? Can I take away a start? Can I give her a start for good behaviour instead? But like I said earlier, I wonder if. It's kind of missing what it is that she needs in that moment. And what she needs is to have help with regulation in that moment.

[00:28:58] That's why she's doing all of the behaviours. That's just noise. But what's underneath is overwhelmed. It's being overtaken by emotions that she might not even know how to name. I don't know how old she is. Jennifer, how old is is your daughter? Um, she's co She's coming up to six. Oh goodness. Okay. So her brain is extremely immature.

[00:29:19] So she is,

[00:29:19] **Speaker 3:** yeah. I mean, she, she has no concepts of her of her emotions, I wouldn't say. Yeah. Um, yeah. You know, it is, you know, it's just with any point you're in that situation, you've got the 6-year-old hitting you in front of the two and a half year old, the two and a half year old getting very upset.

[00:29:36] That's being hit of course. And, and you know, managing that, of course, especially you're on your own and because obviously I don't want the two and a half year old to think that it's okay for my to be, yes. Exactly. It's very complicated as you know.

[00:29:53] **Marcelina:** No, it, um, and, and then you're torn of course, because you want to model and you want to educate and you want to stop the behaviour and you want to help her calm down.

[00:30:02] So that, that's an awful lot of things you're asking yourself to juggle in that moment. And actually really, I wouldn't in this scenario be too concerned about your two and a half year old, because is it a boy or a girl? Your little one. Another

[00:30:14] **Speaker 3:** girl. Yeah,

[00:30:14] **Marcelina:** another girl. Your values as a family will be passed down to her as well over time.

[00:30:21] And the way you speak to your older daughter and the way you speak about behaviour will all be passed down in, in a if we so, so the way sometimes as your little one grows older, you can have. Conversations about that too. And you can have conversations with an earshot of the older child too.

[00:30:41] You can say, goodness, you know that it sounds like, sorry, I don't know your, your daughter's name, but I don't know. You know, it sounds like, you know, your big sister was just so overwhelmed right now, and she just didn't know what else to do than to scream and shout. You know, that might be in another situation when, for example, you feel like.

[00:30:59] Your older daughter is too much in shame, too overwhelmed by the situation to talk about it. That's another way to then circle back later on. So, but for the, for the time being, I wouldn't be too worried about your two and a half year old because the focus is to help regulate yourself and your older daughter.

[00:31:17] Then the learning can happen and the learning is a long-term process. She's got so far to go with her brain development and it will develop impulse control over time and with your guidance she will be able to make better choices. But I think in the moment we need to see that they're both hurting that and it is, you know, I think in that moment you need to obviously.

[00:31:41] You need to do what you can do to protect yourself. If she is, if she's hitting you, if she is, obviously she's hitting her younger sister, then you need to, to separate them, put yourself in between. Um, and I know that I, even a 6-year-old can be very strong and it can be very hurtful and it can be emotionally very overwhelming when you're being attacked by this little creature that you just live, live your life around.

[00:32:05] We, we give so much to our kids. But don't worry so much about the learning. The learning will happen when you circle back later on when you have that chat at the end of the day. And it doesn't even have to be a long lecture. It

can be, a couple of sentences and you don't even have to expect her to, to chat back to you.

[00:32:23] She doesn't have to know the solutions for why she suddenly hit her sister or why she was overtaken by that sort of rage. But I think the other thing about that is. I wonder if you're noticing any patterns, because ideally, of course, we would like to be able to catch this sort of meltdown early. And I'm sure that there are days when you can do that in situations when you can't.

[00:32:46] Have you noticed any patterns, Jennifer, about when,

[00:32:51] **Speaker 3:** When I think, you know, she's going to, that thing of with Lizzie, the little one has a toy. Katie will auto, you know, straight, you know, I get like, you know, like a lot of, sibling relationships will automatically want that toy even though she's had no interest in it whatsoever.

[00:33:07] Yeah. And then we go through and explain that she can't have it because Lizzie was playing with it and that's kind of when the hitting will stop. Yeah. But, but generally, I, you know, as with a lot of kind of autistic children, it's kind of, you know, when there's a change, when there's a, a change in situation and kind of.

[00:33:23] I think, I guess feel like no matter how much prep we do for the change that's going to happen, it'll still and sometimes

[00:33:30] **Marcelina:** change. Yeah. And sometimes change is un unavoidable and sometimes it is possible to prep before and sometimes it's not. But I love this example about the toy because it's not about the toy, it's about she's exploring her relationship with her sister.

[00:33:45] If I take this toy. What's she going to do? She's being a bit of detective. She's trying to figure out what's mom going to do, what's that going to do? Is it going to be the same when they're both there? Is it going to be the same when we're just on her own? And I think it's, again, it's for us to really shift away from the behaviour to what it is that she's trying to achieve with that.

[00:34:05] And actually in that sort of situation, if you're there, I would take it off of your shoulders to try to educate her in that moment, because. She is, she's, she's lost it by the time she starts hitting and because you know that she's going to hit, your hand is there, and you can, as much as you can, remain calm and say, whoa, whoa.

[00:34:26] You really want to hit Lizzie? Was it your little one? Yeah. You really want to hit Lizzie did. You really? Didn't like that. She took, say she's playing with that toy and you can't have it. Wow. That's really hard. And so your job really is to almost. Sportscast what she's experiencing because just like you mentioned, uh, a couple of minutes ago, even, even an average 6-year-old doesn't have an awful lot of awareness in those moments of high arousal.

[00:34:56] So you're there, you expect it. So because you expect it, it doesn't catch you by surprise and it doesn't dysregulate you in the same way. So there will be perhaps a period of time when she's doing this and you're there and you're protecting her from herself and you're protecting Lizzie from Katie.

[00:35:17] Yeah. And actually there's nothing it sounds very typical in a sibling relationship where children explore each other's reactions over toys and over parental responses, and it's not alarming. We have to remind ourselves sometimes that it's not an emergency because you're there to protect the little one, and you're there to protect Katie from doing something to her sister that she might regret or that might really have that kind of consequences.

[00:35:50] Serious consequences in terms of, of health. But it's hard, it's really hard to shift this lens. If we were not parented that way, and I don't know anybody of our generation that was parented the way that I'm talking about today, and there were much higher expectations on conduct and behaviour and or maybe parents were absent in, you know, eighties and nineties.

[00:36:17] I grew up in Sweden. Parents were at work, both parents were at work. That was, that was the done deal and kids were kind of left to fend for themselves a little bit. So I think there's something about, about a shift in, in, in generation and, and because we don't carry that in our bodies, that somebody sat down with us and said, Hey, whoa, that was a tough moment.

[00:36:39] Or, whoa, you must have been so angry to hit your brother. Or, you are really upset about this. Or. It sounds like you really just need a hug. I don't know many adults that got that as kids, so we're having to parent from from our heads rather than from our hearts, if that makes sense. And it is, it's really difficult to kind of, it, it takes practice to make this shift, but I think all in all really seeing beyond the behaviour will.

[00:37:10] Actually lower our frustration with our kids because if we see a child that's confused and overwhelmed and anxious, we automatically have a much more empathic response than when we see a child that's being deliberately disobedient and aggressive and violent then that gets our threat response going.

[00:37:33] So hopefully Jennifer, there's been something in today's. Presentation that is kind of, that you can take away and, and do a little bit of a, you know, sometimes it's about little tweaks, you know, it's not about a whole new, um, yeah, no, definitely. Thank you. You're welcome. That's hour and a half.

[00:37:50] Goodness. So if anything has popped up for people. During this presentation that you wanted to ask further about or specific resources that you would like us to, to point towards? I know, Haley, you've already done that, which is great. But please feel free to, to type in questions as well to, to Lucy.

[00:38:12] Send them into they are the future and she can then pick them up at the next q and. Session where you can ask anything really that, that you've that you've thought about it, it doesn't necessarily have to be linked to the topic of that month. It can be anything that pops up in your minds, in your families, in your everyday challenges that you might want to want us to, to offer an answer to.