

# Brain Zones Quick Reference

A fridge-friendly companion to *Brain Aligned Parenting*

Includes: 3-Sentence Script • Brain Zones Chart • Weekly Micro-Win Tracker • 5R Method™ Reminder • Respond Scripts

## How to use this PDF (30 seconds)

- 1) When behaviour spikes, use one short script (don't lecture).
- 2) Identify the likely Brain Zone (Primal / Paleolimbic / Neolimbic / Prefrontal).
- 3) Aim for one Micro-Win this week. Small repetitions change the pattern.

**Tip:** Print pages 2-3 and keep them where the hard moments happen (kitchen, hallway, car).

More support: [parentwith.me/book](https://parentwith.me/book)

## Tool 1: The 3-Sentence Script (for your fridge)

Use this when your child is dysregulated (tantrum, shouting, refusing, aggression). Say it once, then stop talking.

### 1) Acknowledge

"I can see this is really hard."

### 2) Boundary

"Screens are finished." / "Hands stay safe." / "We're leaving now."

### 3) Support

"I'm here with you. We'll get through this."

### Then do this (quiet leadership)

- Stop talking. Too many words can feel threatening in the moment.
- Steady your body: soften your face, drop your shoulders, slow your breathing.
- Follow through calmly (no bargaining).
- Stay close (unless they clearly need space).

**What you're doing:** holding a clear boundary *and* helping the nervous system return to calm. This is not "giving in."

## Tool 2: Brain Zones Visual Chart

Match your response to your child's state. If the brain is in protection mode, help them return to calm first; teach later.

Brain Zone	What it's doing	What you might see	Your best first move
Primal	Survival mode	Screaming, hitting, freezing, bolting	Reduce demand. Support the body. Fewer words.
Paleolimbic	Safety-seeking	Clinginess, anxiety, "You don't love me!"	Increase safety cues, predictability, warmth.
Neolimbic	Connection-driven	Big feelings, jealousy, attention-seeking	Connect first, validate, then boundary.
Prefrontal	Thinking brain	Cooperation, reflection, problem-solving	Teach, collaborate, practise skills.

### Quick diagnostic (fastest zone read)

- **Tired / hungry / overstimulated** -> **Primal**: simplify + support body, fewer words.
- **Clingy / anxious / separation fear** -> **Paleolimbic**: increase safety cues + predictability.
- **Big emotions / social pain / needs attention** -> **Neolimbic**: connect first, then boundary.
- **Can talk, reflect, problem-solve** -> **Prefrontal**: teach and collaborate.

**Key principle:** you can't reason with a dysregulated brain. Help them return to calm first; teach later.

## Tool 3: Weekly Micro-Win Tracker

Choose ONE micro-win for 7 days. Your goal is not perfection - it's repetition.

### Step 1: Pick your ONE focus this week

Screen time endings • Bedtime battles • Morning chaos • Public meltdowns • Sibling conflict • **My own nervous system** (pausing before I react)

### Step 2: Define your micro-win (one sentence)

My micro-win is: \_\_\_\_\_

*Examples:* "I paused before I spoke." • "I kept to two sentences." • "I followed through calmly."

### Step 3: Track it

Day	Micro Win Achieved?	What happened (1 line)	Recovery
Mon	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Faster <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Slower
Tue	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Faster <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Slower
Wed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Faster <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Slower
Thu	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Faster <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Slower
Fri	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Faster <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Slower
Sat	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Faster <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Slower
Sun	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Faster <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Slower

**Mini-celebration:** Even if imperfect, I practised steadiness today.

## Tool 4: 5R Method™ Reminder

This is the order of calm, brain-aligned discipline: don't fix behaviour first - stabilise state first.

<b>R1 - Regulate</b> Get steady first (tone, posture, breath).	<b>R2 - Recognise</b> Identify the child's dominant zone in the moment.
<b>R3 - Reframe</b> Behaviour is a signal, not a character flaw.	<b>R4 - Respond</b> Choose a response that fits the zone.
<b>R5 - Rewire</b> Use routines + repetition so calm returns faster over time.	<b>One-line reminder</b> Calm the state -> guide the behaviour -> teach later.

## Tool 5: Respond Scripts Sheet

These cover most high-frequency parenting moments. Memorise one. Keep this page where you can see it.

### Script A: Disappointment (when they want more)

**"I know you want more. The answer is no. I'll help you handle it."**

Use for: screens ending, leaving the park, treats, bedtime starting.

### Script B: Safety (when behaviour is unsafe)

**"I won't let you hit. You're safe. I'm here."**

Use for: aggression, throwing, danger, sibling conflict.

### Script C: Transition (when it's time to move)

**"It's time to move. You can do it, or I'll help you. We're going now."**

Use for: shoes, car, leaving, bath, homework, dinner.

## Your family's top 3 boundaries (write them once)

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

Educational resource only. Not medical or mental-health treatment. If you have serious concerns about safety or wellbeing, seek support from a qualified professional.