

In Home Care

SUPPORT AGENCY TASMANIA



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Newsletter

December 2021

Dear In Home Care Educators,

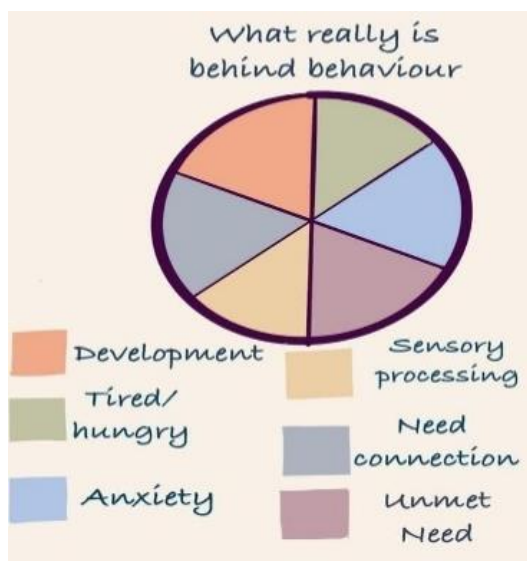
Welcome to our December newsletter! It is hard to believe that Christmas is almost upon us and that 2021 is coming to a close!

This edition of the newsletter will focus on some important information regarding our Christmas closure period, as well as some information in relation to Challenging Behaviours for your ever-growing resource folder.

Christmas Closure dates and Emergency Contact number

The In Home Support Agency will be closed from 5pm on Thursday 23rd of December and will reopen on Tuesday the 4th of January 2022. In the case of an emergency, we can be reached on 0427 796 233 during this closure period.

Challenging Behaviours



According to a guide produced by Developmental Disability WA, when a

child exhibits challenging behaviours, they may be trying to express one or more of the following:

- Frustration—they can't do something or can't tell you what they want.
- Fear—they are frightened of something.
- Strong feelings—they are unhappy or angry about something or a situation.
- Anxiety—they are feeling confused, worried, stressed, unable to think well.
- Hyperactivity—they have excess energy and cannot seem to burn it off.
- Discomfort—they are in pain and can't tell you.
- Attention—they are making attempts to meet their need for attention, attachment, and interaction by behaving in a certain way and they are wanting engagement with you.
- Difficulty with understanding - if a child has difficulties with understanding, they may not know what is expected. They may need time to work out what you mean and so don't respond to an instruction when you expect them to. They might not know what is happening around them or retain information that you have given them.

- Difficulty processing or making sense of sensory experiences in the environment—for example, certain touch, noise and lights may stress the child. Some children may have hyper or hypo-sensitivities to certain stimuli in an environment.
- Seeking sensory input and/or experiences.
- Using simple language, one step instructions or key words.
- Giving your child time to understand and process what you've said or signed and repeat key instructions.
- Remembering the power of your own nonverbal language. Your tone of voice, warmth, posture, stance, positioning, eye contact and facial expression all speak volumes about your own feelings and will affect how a child responds to you.

Strategies which support children

Predictability and structure.

Most people respond to any given situation better if they have the right information, know what to expect, feel a sense of control over what is about to transpire. Using visual information like pictures and symbols can help children process what is happening now and what will happen in the future. If the child has a clear understanding of what is happening, this will help them feel in control, safe and secure.

Building 2-way communication

All children have a need for strong attachments and relationships and will sometimes use behaviour to engage and interact with you, even if it is in a not so positive way. It is important for you to find a way to communicate to the child, enable them to communicate with you and give them information about your daily routines that will help them understand what is happening and their ability to have some choice and control. When you are looking to establish clear communication channels with a child, you could try.

Jump it out

Exercise is a great way to relieve stress and get rid of frustrations. This is the same for children. Introducing breaks that involve physical exercise like jumping on a trampoline or even just a walk in the fresh air can help a child clear their mind and come back to a task with a renewed approach

Recognising and responding

Recognising and understanding why a child might be acting a certain way will help you to navigate the best solution. To help you recognise the trigger, you could consider asking yourself the following questions:

- Does the child understand what is being asked?
- Do they understand the task, and have I explained the steps clearly?

- Are they hungry, thirsty, tired or in pain?
- Do they know the person that is interacting with them and is the interaction positive?
- Is the situation too noisy, too crowded?
- Are they struggling with change?



TIME- IN versus TIME - OUT

A positive parenting tool called TIME-IN, is when a child that is having a difficult moment, is invited to sit somewhere near by a care giver and be supported to express their feelings and eventually calm down.

During the time in, caregivers are encouraged to empathize with the child and support them to label their feelings. Often just quiet connection with a caregiver is all that is needed to support the child until the storm (big emotion) has passed. Time-in gives you the opportunity to really connect and discuss other options or choices the child could make next time they feel overwhelmed by big emotions.

Embracing the New Year

2021 has been a challenging year; it has again refocussed attention towards what is important in our lives whilst at the same time perhaps highlighted the things, we often take for granted. The following ideas may be helpful towards setting ourselves up with a positive vibe for 2022:

- Regularly slowing down and taking time out to do something nice for yourself, or just breathe.
- Planning and writing down your goals and aspirations for the new year.
- Regularly exercising and maintaining healthy eating and sleeping habits.

These ideas at face value may sound easy but committing to making yourself and wellbeing a priority is often simpler said than done.

We hope that all IHC educators have a wonderful Christmas and hopefully enjoy a well deserved break with family and friends! We look forward to continuing to work alongside you all in 2022 supporting Tasmanian IHC children and families.

*Roxanne and Natalie
In Home Care Support Agency Tasmania*

