

What are the Four Components of a Brain Smart Start?

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SUMMARY

The discussion focuses on the four elements of a "Brain Smart Start," which aims to create a conducive learning environment by fostering unity, reducing stress, building connections, and encouraging commitment. These elements are designed to enhance engagement and learning readiness in both students and educators.

- *Activity to Unite**:* Engages the group through collective actions like chants or songs to foster a sense of safety and cohesion.
- *Activity to Disengage Stress**:* Utilizes diaphragmatic (belly) breathing to lower cortisol levels and increase oxygen flow to the brain, enhancing learning readiness.
- *Activity to Connect**:* Emphasizes the importance of authentic relationships in learning, promoting willingness to take risks and self-regulation through impulse control.
- *Four Components of Connection**:* Eye contact, touch, presence, and playfulness are key to building strong relationships.
- *Activity to Commit**:* Encourages setting conscious goals verbally, using affirmative language to increase the likelihood of follow-through.
- *Overall Goal**:* To create a safe and engaging learning environment that supports emotional and cognitive development.

let's take some time to talk about the four elements that are embodied in a brain Smart Start the first activity or element if you will is an activity to unite it takes scattered minds and disorganized bodies and it brings them together so we're all on the same page and can be a congruent hold so we want to be a whole group that has a sense of safety so that I am able to

learn and be the best that I can be now in classrooms many times this is the Pledge of Allegiance it might be some type of chant it might be some type of a song uh it could be a call and response hey hey hey you what do you say hey hey whatever people are doing in unison right that is what an activity tonight is all about getting everybody on on the same page the second element of a brain

Smart Start is an activity to disengage the stress now more than ever with covid we're all feeling a little stressed and with stress comes cortisol cortisol is an enemy of learning so we want to be able to release the cortisol from our body and we want to increase the oxygen that gets to our brain so that we are prepared pred to learn the best way to do that is with diaphragmatic breathing

also known as belly breathing we want to make sure that we are always engaging that diaphragm when we engage that diaphragm we're also engaging the prefrontal lobes which is where executive function lives there is a metaphorical Supernova highway from the diaphragm to the prefrontal lobes as soon as that diaphragm begins to move and that oxygen

moves up to those prefrontal lobes the brain is ready to be engaged in learning without that diaphragm we only have the ability to react so we got to make sure that as adults we're practicing belly breathing and we're teaching kids to do the same we want to make sure that we get that oxygen in because oxygen is brain food the third part of a brain Smart

Start is our activity to connect what we believe in conscious discipline is that relationships govern behavior and when we have authentic relationships those outside connections literally wire the brain for two things one a willingness to do things differently a willingness to take risks a willingness to be able to learn

something that I never was able to do before so the two elements that those outside connections literally wire the brain to do are willingness and also Master the art of impulse control every time that we have kids stop and think before they do that is self-regulation in

action connection allows us to build those Rich relationships and what we know is that there's four components that can really up our relationship gain whenever possible you want to make sure that you're maintaining eye contact you want to have some type of touch always tapping into emotional touch and skin-to-skin touch whenever possible we also want to make sure we're present so that child feels seen and believed in

and we always want to add a little element of playfulness and fun so there's a playful situation so those four elements again are I contact touch presence and playfulness and finally we're going to make a commitment a commitment is a conscious goal when we say that conscious goal or that commit out loud there is a higher probability that it is going to happen we also want to make sure that when we make our

commitment we use language like I'm going to what we tend to do is use words like I should I should pick up my dry cleaning I should H we should all over ourselves instead of shooting all over yourself you're going to spring into action when you make a commitment that sounds like this today I'm going to pick up my dry cleaning so we have an activity to unite we have an activity to disengage the

stress we have an activity to connect and we have an activity to commit to keeping ourselves and others safe and setting some goals