

Part 2 Supporting Child & Family Adjustment Following Brain Injury

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SUMMARY

The speaker provides ten key strategies for caregivers to support children, particularly those affected by brain injury, emphasizing the importance of being a strong, reassuring presence. Caregivers are encouraged to foster secure connections, plan for transitions, and instill hope and resilience in their children while maintaining clear boundaries.

- *Be in charge: Caregivers should present themselves as confident and capable to provide stability for children.*
- *Foster secure connections: A strong relationship allows children to focus on growth rather than questioning their bond with caregivers.*
- *Plan for transitions: Avoid surprises; use visual aids to help children understand daily expectations.*
- *Instill hope: Reassure children that they cannot "blow it" and that caregivers can handle their emotions.*
- *Emphasize do-overs: Teach children that mistakes are part of learning and they have opportunities to try again.*
- *Limit explanations: Avoid over-explaining decisions until children have accepted the situation.*
- *Graceful exits: If overwhelmed, caregivers should exit situations calmly to maintain their authority without causing distress.*
- *Establish boundaries: Clear boundaries create a safe environment for children, helping them feel secure.*

you to close out the time that we have together today I wanted to leave you with sort of ten ideas or different things that you can land on in terms of finding your way through with your child the first thing that I wanted to suggest to you is to really be in charge this is not a time for children to look in a dependent kind of position that they'll be in to their big people and find their

big people overwhelmed and undone and not able to handle the situation that everybody is in you can have those moments of course and and we wouldn't deny those moments to you as a big person who cares deeply for a child that's been affected by brain injury but we also really want your children to experience you as large and in charge not in a scary way but in a kind and compassionate way I want to suggest to

you as a second thing to keep in mind that when children are really secure in the connection that they have with you it gives them the opportunity to grow when they have to question the connection that they have with you their foundational response to that always is going to be to direct energy towards making sure their connection with you is okay and so if we want to gift children the opportunity to be resilient and to exact better than expected outcomes we

really want for them to not have to waste any energy focusing on whether we are good with them and so we as

big people want to take care of the relationship we take care of apologies we take care of fights we take care of hurts even if as a big person you find yourself saying but that wasn't my fault or I didn't start that we want for your child to experience you as somebody who is bigger than the fight bigger than the

outburst bigger than the brain injury bigger than the things that might rain down upon them that you are the rock for that child and that they know they can look to you to guide them through and be in charge third we want your child to experience you as all-knowing we know that in this period you may not have all the answers and you may not know exactly where it is that you're going to land but your child needs to believe that you

do and so in the best way that you know how we want you to find ways of respond bonding to your child so that they can look to you and say oh okay they've got it and they know what's happening and they're going to be able to support me through this time in life next I want to suggest to you that this is a time to really focus on planning for transitions and change this is not a time during

which children are going to love surprises and love spontaneity necessarily and so we want to be really compassionate about that for them we often suggest that you find ways to visually script or otherwise script a day that we don't zoom in and pull the rug out from under a child in terms of what their expectation was for that day or for that moment or for that activity that we would want to be just real compassionate and caring towards them

regarding how we kind of maneuvers through the day so they could have some sense of settling in security and knowing what is coming next and it takes the guesswork out of it for them we also really want to encourage you with big people in terms of finding a way through that you land on this idea of hope in advance your children are probably going to have a lot of moments where they're feeling like things get a little bit

bigger than they are and what happens is when a child feels like they've entered into a situation and maybe things get ugly and they get a little loud and they let it get a little yella shouting or a little angry or a lot angry they will often have this experience of feeling like they just blew it and for a child who has the experience of feeling like they just blew it there really isn't a reason for them to sort of try and rein

it in and hold ground because they'll they'll have this internal sense of feeling like they just kind of zoomed past the point of no return and now they totally mess the situation up instead what we want to have children now is that they can't blow it that we can handle whatever it is that they throw our way even if they have a super yelling shouting kind of day that we're okay we can manage that because we're

the big person and we're in charge in the most nurturing kind of way we also as far as another idea for you to kind of put in your two about for this period in life is at want to really have children here and understand the message of do-overs they don't have to nail it the first time they don't have to be awesome at recovering they don't have to be a rock star at may be working with a new therapist or managing

a new situation that there's going to be lots of opportunity for do-overs because that's what we expect right now that's what it is to sort of flex ourselves in terms of making sure that we are awakening our inner resilience we want you as well to be able to sit with your child and be in charge with them in a way that doesn't have you endlessly explaining yourself we know that when adults enter into this period of

endlessly explaining themselves and the decisions that they're making and all of those kinds of things to a child it really actually does less in terms of justifying those things to children and des more as far as having the child belief that you actually really aren't in charge really don't know why you're doing it a certain way or why you've implemented a certain therapy or whatever the case might be and it brings them to question that so until a child

has come to a place of really being able to accept a situation we limit our justifications and explanations around that situation or change that must occur and once they've been able to come to terms with it then we can go into the explanations but only once they've been able to come to terms with it I want to encourage you with big people if you are having a really hard time finding yourself regulated and finding yourself settled around your child that you find

a way to gracefully exit stage left don't stay in a situation and overwhelm your child with responding and find yourself mired in their own frustration if you can just find a way to get out of there and what we don't want is for you to say I can't handle you today I'm out instead what we want is for you to be able to say you know what I just remembered have a load of laundry upstairs I have to go and sort that out

and I'm going to be right back hang tight or find some other way to gracefully exit stage left to your child can continue to experience you as being in charge but not experience you is becoming frustrated and overwhelmed and undone second to last I want to encourage you to really get your comfort on so this is a time to really connect with children in their moments of forestry really empathize with them be soft for them have them feel understood nurture

them be the one that gets it for your child really get your comfort on for them so that they can sense you as that person and then finally make sure you have boundaries in place we want to establish them have them be known have your children feel protected by them so that they know the world that they live in is a place that is safe that they're not blowing about in the wind that everybody knows the direction that we're

headed the path that this is going to take and exactly how it's going to look to the best of our ability so where I will leave you today is with a couple of take-home points the idea that all children can adapt all human beings have at their core and inner resilience and that this resilience for our children is awakened by the relationship that we have with them and that the understanding they feel from us is what

Prime's that this is what allows children to reach better than expected outcomes and this is what allows them to adapt we just really want you to be encouraged in your journey as a big person to just take this gentle and consistent approach as it goes a long way towards cultivating deep roots and lasting change in your child thank you for your time you