

PROMOTING SELF-CONTROL

What you do makes all the difference.

1

Self-control is any effort by humans to modify our unhelpful natural reaction and substitute an appropriate response in its place. Our ability to modify our behavior increases when we buy into the reason behind the rule or request.

***Teach children why something is important in order to gain buy-in.**

2

Children have increased self-control today! Higher academic standards and more adult-directed activities, combined with reduced free play, has resulted in self-control fatigue and the stress behaviors that go with it.

***Build in sufficient unstructured time for children to explore, play, and rejuvenate.**

3

When children trust their adult caregivers, they exhibit an improved ability to control their impulses and delay gratification. In contrast, if trust has been broken, children are less likely to hold out and maintain control.

***Build trust with routines, dependable cues, and consistent rules and limits. When you say it, mean it.**

4

Children learn self-control from the examples they see. Their brain's "Mirror Neuron System" activates when merely seeing an action and doing it. Therefore, they copy what they see both in their mind and body.

***Co-regulate and infuse calm to help children react appropriately and recover during taxing situations.**

5

Adults can bolster self-control skills through specific games and activities. We can help develop the brain pathways needed to learn to self-regulate, calm independently, and avoid aggressive behaviors.

***Use specific reactions, activities and games to promote the critical skills children need.**



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