



Supporting children with behaviours that challenge us.



Facilitator
Lauren Milton
Region 2 Team Leader



Presenter
Laura Carolan
Inclusion Professional



Presenter
Ally Williams
Inclusion Professional



Presenter
Deanna Giuliani
Inclusion Professional



One For All



yooralla



One For All



yooralla

The Victorian Inclusion Agency acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of this nation and the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work. We recognise their continuing connection to culture, land, water and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge the strength of family connection and kinship within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their ongoing dedication to educating and Caring for children. Sovereignty of these lands was never ceded.

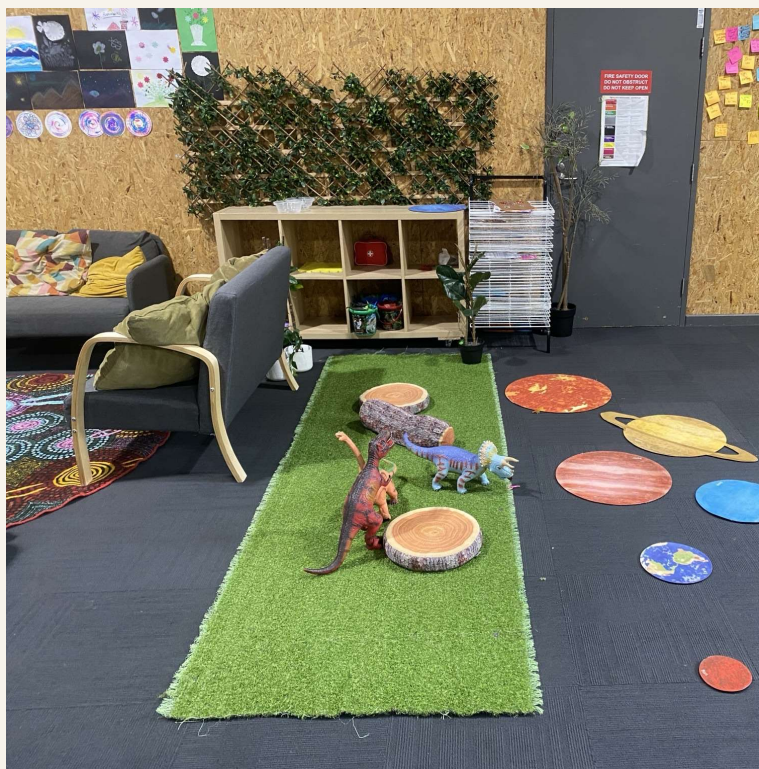
The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by



Department of Education



Teamkids Clifton Hill Primary
The DSHC Conference 2025



One For All



yooralla

Challenging behaviour or seeking a connection?



Laura Carolan



Supported by



Department
of Education



Changing our perspective

What if we stopped thinking of children's behaviour as challenging but instead shifted our perspective to understand the underlying reasons for the behaviour.



The **DSHC** Conference 2025

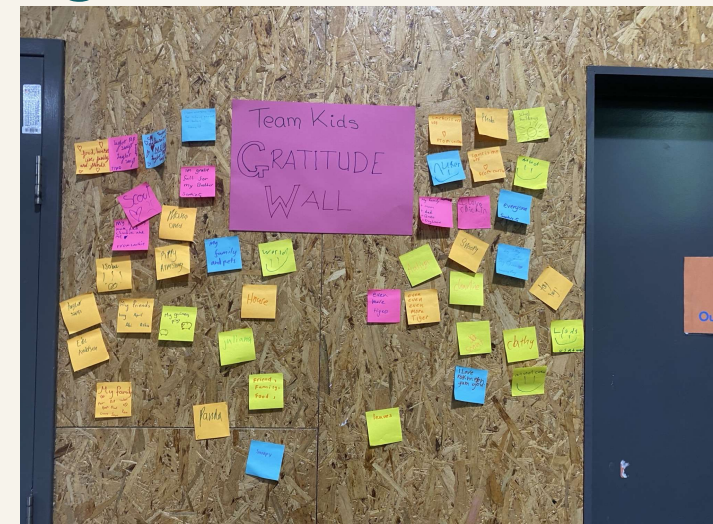


Supported by




Examples of connection seeking behaviours

- **Physical reactions** -tantrums, yelling, screaming, throwing things
- **Withdrawing** - becoming quiet, not joining in experiences or taking themselves out of games
- **Seeking physical touch** -needing to be close to caregivers and seeking physical touch from you
- **Seeking positive attention** -seeking your opinion and reassurance and wanting to be involved in everything.



Teamkids Clifton Hill Primary



Consider a situation where a child's behaviour has challenged you?

- What happened before?
- How were you challenged?
- What could have happened in that moment?
- Could they have been seeking connection?
- Why?



Teamkids Clifton Hill Primary

Supported by

The DSHC Conference 2025



4 strategies to promote calm

'When little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it is our job to share our calm, not join their chaos.'

—L.R. Knost

1

Notice the child's feelings and offer empathy. Let them know it's OK to feel this way.

2

Speak in a calm tone. The child will absorb your energy.

3

Decrease sensory stimulation. Take the child to a cool, quiet place.

4

Co-regulate by modelling behaviour. Remind the child they are in a safe environment and try to keep your own emotions regulated.

You can find more strategies and support at www.viac.com.au



One For All



yooralla

Be the calm not the chaos

"When little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it is our job to share our calm, not join their chaos."

L.R. Knost



Supported by



Department of Education

Meet Bobby

Bobby walks into the service looking frustrated, he throws his bag down and goes towards where the balls are kept. You call everyone to the mat for mat time. Bobby continues to try and get the ball. You ask Bobby to come over and he yells at you to leave him alone.



Consider

- What happened before?
- How were you challenged?
- What could have happened in that moment?
- Could they have been seeking connection?
- Why?

The DSHC Conference 2025



Teamkids Holy Rosary Primary School



Supported by





Teamkids Clifton Hill Primary

Reflect and reframe

The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by





What would this look like in the moment?

For example

“It seems like you might have had a rough day, I understand your need to want to do something physical now but it’s not ok to yell at me to tell me what you need - when you have bounced the ball come find me and let’s grab something to eat and have a chat”

The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by





REFLECT
SOLVE
CREATE
GROW
THINK

The DSHC Conference 2025

Reflection

Consider your programming
and transitions



Supported by



How can this can improve practice?

- “See a child differently, you see a different child” Dr Stuart Shanker



The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by



Department
of Education



**ALL
EMOTIONS
ARE OKAY**

The DSHC Conference 2025



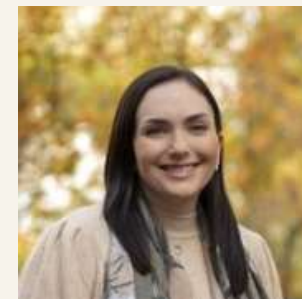
One For All



yooralla

Strategies to support Emotional Regulation


Ally Williams



Supported by



Department
of Education



What strategies do you use to get ready for the day?



The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by





The DSHC Conference 2025

Children and emotional regulation

What does a child who is emotionally regulated look like at your service?

What does a child who is dysregulated look like at your service?

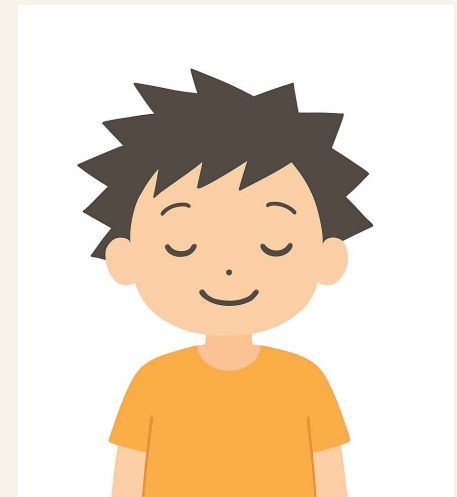


Supported by



Back to Bobby...

Children meet their needs
in the only way they know.



The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by



Department
of Education



Relationships matter

P- Playfulness

"You've got speedy feet today, are those shoes or rockets?"

Light, joyful tone to build connection and reduce tension.

A- Acceptance

"It's okay to feel angry, we all have big feelings sometimes."

Acknowledges the emotion without judgement.

C- Curiosity

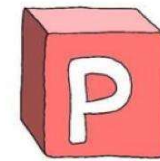
"I wonder if it felt a bit loud and busy when you walked in?"

Opens space for understanding what's behind behaviour.

E- Empathy

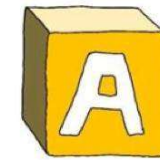
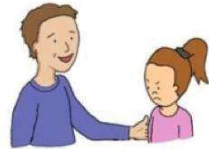
"That sounds really hard. I can understand why you're upset. I'm here with you."

Shows care and validates the child's experience.



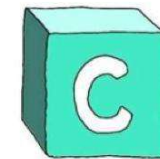
Playfulness

- Playfulness in interactions can diffuse conflict and promote connection
e.g. Maintaining a relaxed 'lightness' and can involve making a joke (though this has to be done carefully)



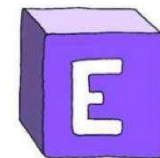
Acceptance

- Accepting needs and emotions that drive behaviour (not necessarily the behaviour) without judgement



Curiosity

- Being curious to where a behaviour has come from (in your head or out loud...)



Empathy

- Really connecting with how they are feeling and showing compassion



P.A.C.E is an approach developed by Dr Dan Hughes aimed at supporting recovery from developmental trauma. However, it can be a useful attitude to adopt with anyone who is emotionally dysregulated

<https://www.kingathelstan.kingston.sch.uk/assets/Uploads/The-PACE-Model.pdf>

Supported by



Department of Education



Practical strategies

- ✓ Predictable environments
- ✓ Regulation tools and spaces
- ✓ Model and teach regulation skills
- ✓ Tune in to individual needs
- ✓ Use emotion coaching language

The OSHC Conference 2025



Lake Boga OSHC

It is a journey...



<https://mswjake.substack.com/p/co-regulation-the-missing-link>

The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by



Emotional regulation: a skill, not a switch.



The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by





Transitioning into the program

"The start of our day is the end of theirs."

Deanna Giuliani



The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by





**Transitioning children into
the program with
connection seeking
behaviour.**

METALUDE

The moment of inner contemplation.

The DSHC Conference 2025





Go back to your childhood...
“What was play to you?”

Stepping Stones Mildura West OSHC

The OSHC Conference 2025



Supported by



Team Kids – Clifton Hill Primary

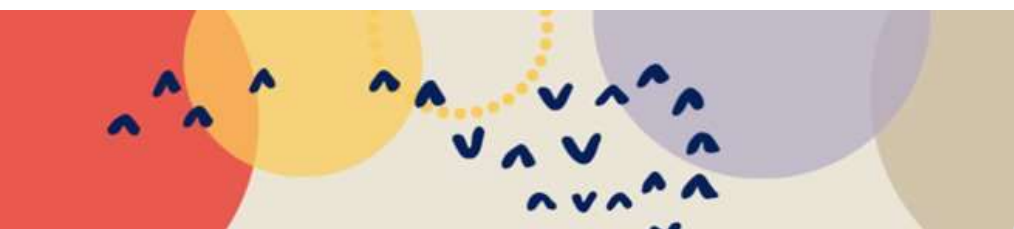


The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by

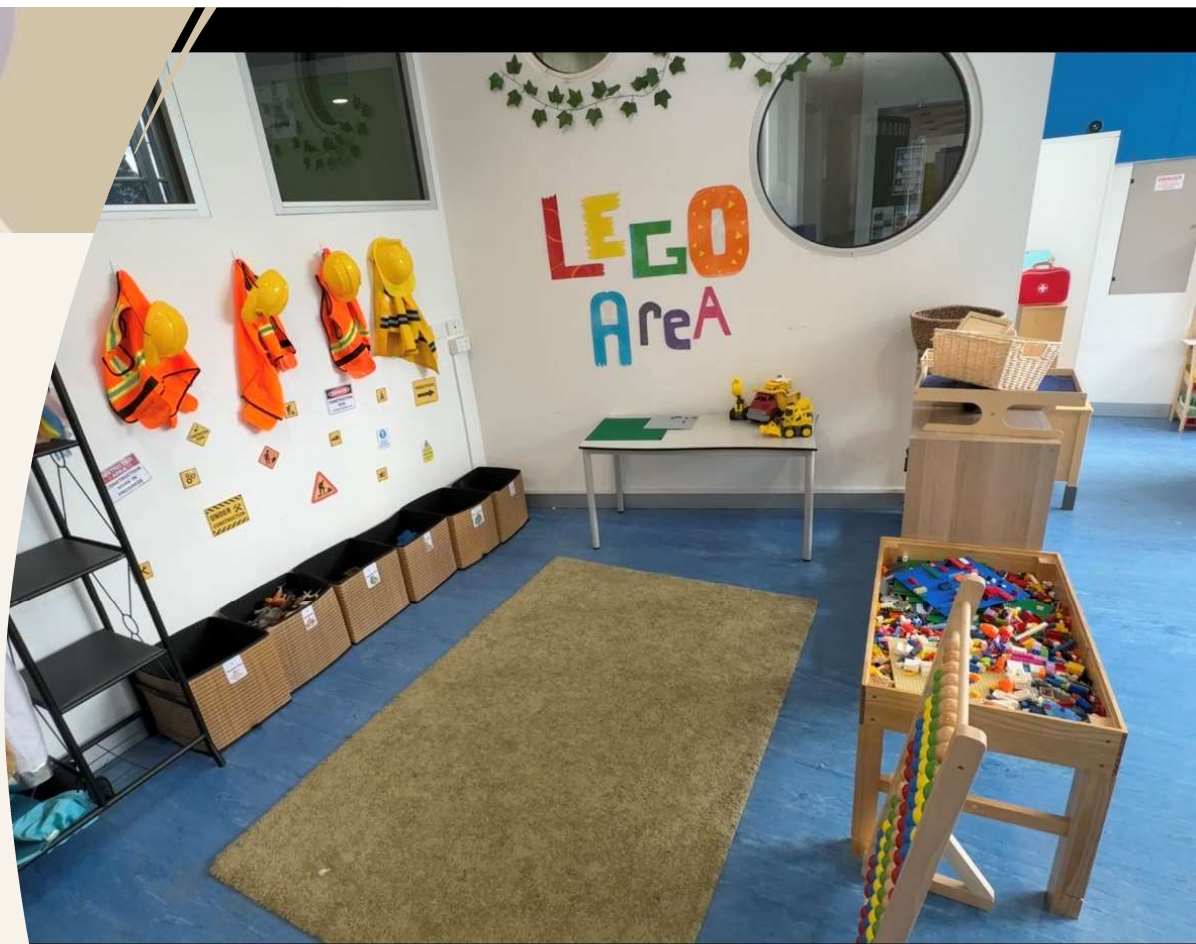




*Our subconscious is triggered by the
environment and object
(and often a combination of both)*

**What does the environment
and object show us?**

The DSHC Conference 2025



Team Kids Holy Rosary



Team Kids Clifton Hill Primary

The DSHC Conference 2025

Consider strategies:

Zones of play , with a timer – divide the room up, choose the space until your name is attended to.

- All children take a ticket and once its removed you've been marked off the list and marked as present.
- A mid moment freeze for final names called forth.
- Children pass by the meal station to see what is available and have name marked off from this area.
- As children put their vests on or lanyards can this be the place we mark their name off.



Supported by





Time and Space

Prepare to be prepared

Resource boxes:

Dressing up box: Outfits, accessories – hats, glasses, scarves, tool belt, walking stick, baby carrier.

Linen basket – curtains, table cloths, shower curtains (transform these into magic carpet, tunnels, dividers)

Treasure box – mirrors, shells, ceramics, teapot.

Creative box – craft materials, pot plants.

Construction – Cardboard boxes, tarps, branches, hay bales, taps, fixings.

Active – Skipping rope, balls, chalk, hoops

Sensory Box – squish balls, stretch bands, fidget, lava lamp, goop, liquid timer, Rubik's cube.

Supported by



Department
of Education



Thank you!

For more great resources:

www.viac.com.au

The DSHC Conference 2025



Supported by



Department
of Education