

DHC Parent Meeting
Thursday, August 27, 2015
6pm

Welcome & Introductions

Mindful Parenting - Tamara Walden, PhD

There are 3 main/very important concepts to Mindful Parenting

(1) Emotion is our friend

Distinguish emotion from behavior

- Safe Expression – I won't let you hit yourself or me.
- I won't let you hurt me/you/your friend/sister/etc

Create Emotion Vocabulary

- Help your child identify the emotion they are feeling.
- Ex – I can see that your hands are clenched and your face is showing that you're angry. Are you angry?

Strategies: Focus on the emotion/not the behavior

- BREATHE (Blow the emotion out)
- Where on/in your body is the emotion (you can help them see that if they relax their jaw/hands/etc, they might be able to release the emotion.
- What movement might help the emotion come out (ex – hitting a pillow, crying, a loud scream, etc)
- Ignore the circumstances – It really doesn't matter why they are upset, sad, angry, etc....as their parent, you are there to help them through it.

(2) Relationship/strong connection with your child is key

Connection: Authenticity

- Say what you mean and do what you say

Share the Power – Promotes trust, autonomy, confidence, collaboration.

- Let's do it together
- Can you help me? They need to see they can impact you!
- Give Choices (that are appropriate)

Be Descriptive, Not Evaluative

- Show them (it will fall/it is sharp)
- They can't imagine some things until they see it concretely.
- Remember - they really don't get it.
- Empathize & Learn and Explore the world with them
- Be positive/constructive
- Be specific, no generalization
- If/Then – teach consequences
- Time In (approach emotions directly rather than removing the child from them)

(3) Listen, love and look for inspiration

Listening – biggest gift to a parent. Biggest tool in box.

- Cues & Clues – curiosity/Be curious with your child. You may already know what will happen, but they don't....share in their surprise and opportunity to learn.
- Put yourself in their shoes. They have billions more synapses in their brain than adults to. They are seeing MORE than us.

Conscious Discipline – Kathryn Schmidt, Educational Coordinator

All adults and teachers demonstrate a code of conduct and a value system. This is done through daily interactions with others. Until we become conscious of these patterns of interaction, we will not be able to guide our children.

What happens when we're:

- Stressed
- Life becomes complicated
- How do we behave in traffic
- You're going to be late for work
- Your spouse forgot to mail your mother's birthday present

We have to become conscious of behavioral patterns, because this is what our children see and learn from each day.

POWERS OF SELF CONTROL [Perception and Composure]

Perception – No one can MAKE you mad without your permission

Self discipline will allow you to teach composure by example. It is an essential prerequisite to disciplining children. You cannot teach skills you do not possess.

A parent or teacher who has composure does the following:

- Focus on what they want the child to accomplish (not on what the child is doing wrong)
- Celebrate the child's successes and choices (even if the child was unsuccessful the first couple of times they made choices)
- See situations from the child's perspective as well as their own (children see the world very differently than adults and will make choices that are perplexing, but we must understand their intent). Ex – coloring on the walls, floor, sibling)
- Creatively teach the child how to communicate her wishes and frustrations with words, and in an acceptable manner. (sometimes when we're upset, we don't want to talk, but we can still communicate – sign language, pre-generated faces to indicate emotion, puppets, a special story about a child who makes the wrong choice)
- Hold the child accountable to those teachings (consequences, not threats...just the natural events that come from a poor choice).

What you pay attention to is what you value.

- Focusing on what the child is doing wrong will get you more of that behavior.
- Telling a child what you WANT and focusing on the behaviors you want will get you more of that behavior.

Whomever you have placed in charge of your feelings, you have placed in control of you. Have you ever said or thought, "You are making me so angry!" You have given up your power and placed THAT person in charge of how you feel, react, etc.

You are never upset for the reason you think you are.

Your UPSET is not caused by your child, it is TRIGGERED by them. Trigger thoughts can make a situation seem much bigger than it really is.

What are you assuming the child's intent was:

- To annoy you
- Defy you
- Drive you crazy
- See how far you can push me today
- Tuning me out intentionally

When my husband, Cliff was just 3 years old, he spend time with a babysitter. One day, his babysitter put up a cork board so that she could display photos of the children at play. Cliff drew a picture on the cork board with the INTENT to show his love for her. However, the babysitter and Cliff's mom misunderstood his intent as being destructive and "why would you be so inconsiderate to someone who loves you?" He was yelled at, belittled and spanked.

His major caregivers (mom and babysitter) misjudged his intentions, as we sometimes do with children. This interaction has caused him (even into his 50s) to be very sensitive and unsure about relationships (personal and professional).

With INTENT – don't assume adult intentions or forethought . Your child did not do whatever it was just to annoy you, they probably wanted attention.

Magnification

- I can't stand this one minute longer
- This behavior is intolerable
- You've gone too far this time
- You never pay attention or listen

Once you know what your triggers are, you can work to control your upset

Changing trigger thoughts to calming thoughts through Self talk –

- I am safe. (turns off alarm system)

- I am calm. (your body begins to relax - breathe)
- I can handle this. (affirm that you are capable)

The problem belongs to the child, not to me. My job is to help the child come up with solutions

To help you, your child, or someone who is stressed, be a S.T.A.R.

STAR Smile Take a deep Breath And Relax

Preschool Update

Facility Updates: – Ms. Kim

- Staff Update
- United Way
- Building and Playground Update

On Site Field Trips: – Ms. Kathryn

July– Native Nursery came to our school and played a fun game with our VPK children that demonstrated how our fragile ecosystem works. They also helped us plant “Steve” our live oak planted in front of the school.

August – Tallahassee Fire Fighters will be visiting on September 24th to talk to the children about being safe at home and school. They'll bring a fire truck for us to inspect too!

September – Do you know a high school or college athlete (soccer, basketball, volleyball, etc)? We'd love to have a few team members come out to demonstrate skills for the children.

Teacher Training – Ms. Kathryn

DHC just graduated four staff from our 1st CPR/AED/First Aid course taught at DHC.

Important Dates:

Monday, September 7, 2015 – Labor Day – Preschool Closed

Tuesday, September 8, 2015 – White t-shirts due. We'll be tie dying them to make school shirts

SPIRIT WEEK

Monday, September 14, 2015 – School Shirt Day

Tuesday, September 15, 2015 – Favorite Hat or Tiara or Crazy Hair Day

Wednesday, September 16, 2015 – Favorite Character or Sports Team Day

Thursday, September 17, 2015 – Wacky Tacky Day

Friday, September 18, 2015 – Pajama Day

Friday, September 25, 2015 – Parent's Night Out from 6 – 11pm

Thursday, September 24, 2015 – Next Monthly Parent Meeting at 6pm