



PEACEFUL PARENTING

WEBINAR

23 March 2021

7.00pm-8.30pm

Laurie Arrowsmith



PARENTZONE

**BETTER
TOMORROWS**

Getting To Know Each Other

PARENTZONE

Launch Poll

1. *Where are you from?*
2. *What are the ages of your children?*
3. *How peaceful do you currently feel your parenting is?*



What is Peaceful Parenting?

Peaceful parenting...urges parents to leave behind yelling, bursts of angry, rigid demands, and other forms of communication that focus on control and manipulation, opting instead for behaviour and communication styles that foster collaboration, a back-and-forth dialogue, and an exchange of ideas.

In peaceful parenting, parents are not strict authority figures, but function more as guides in helping their children navigate themselves, their relationships, and the world.

Six Peaceful Parenting Principles

PARENTZONE

1. Relationship and connection comes first
2. Accept our child's "big" emotions
3. "Emotion coach" our child
4. Regulate our own emotions
5. Responsible for our own "self-care"
6. Set limits with empathy – problem solve instead of "threat" or "punish"



Six Peaceful Parenting Principles

PARENTZONE

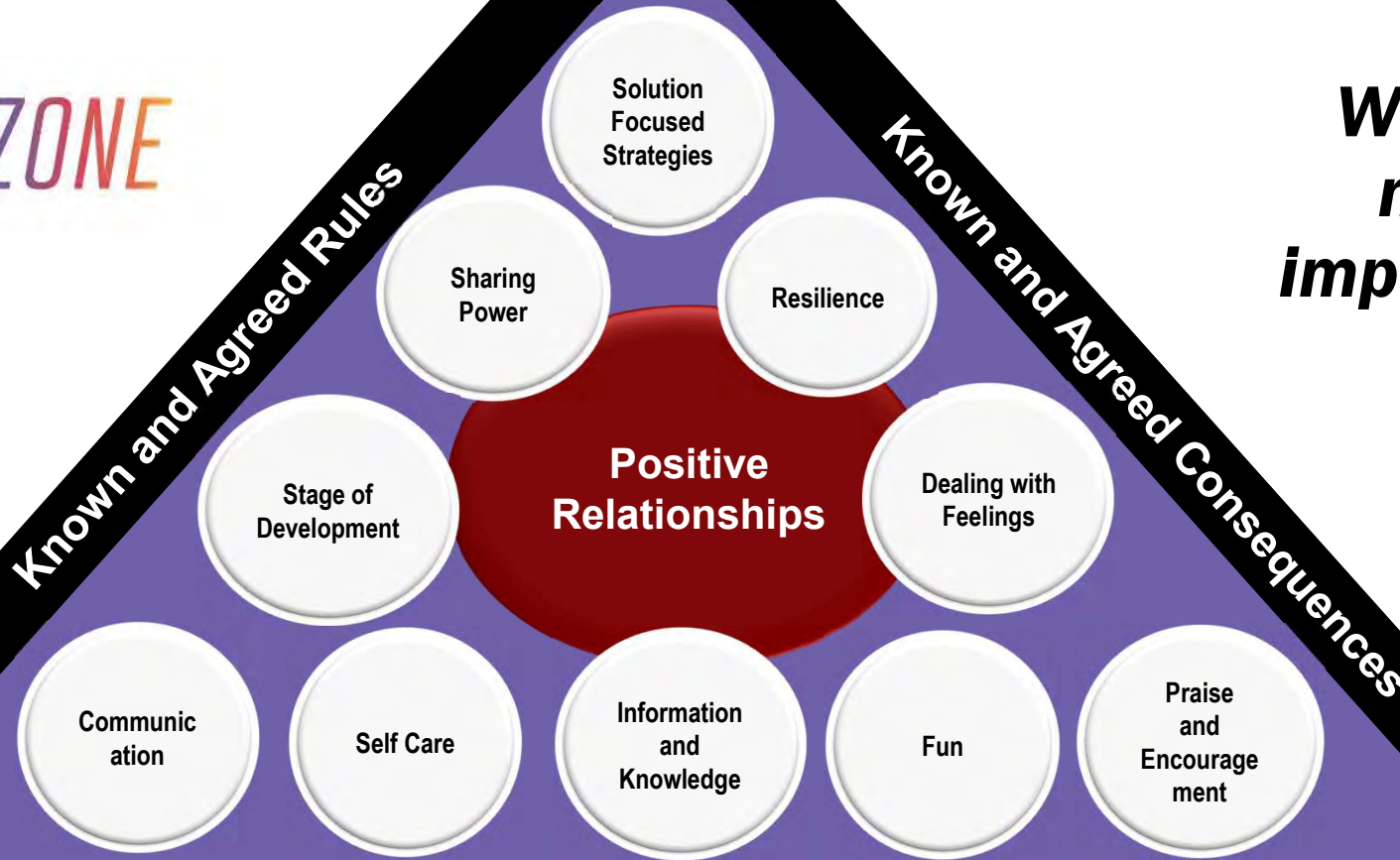
1. Relationship and connection comes first
2. Accept our child's "big" emotions
3. "Emotion coach" our child
4. Regulate our own emotions
5. Responsible for our own "self-care"
6. Set limits with empathy – problem solve instead of "threat" or "punish"



Relationship First

PARENTZONE

What is most important?



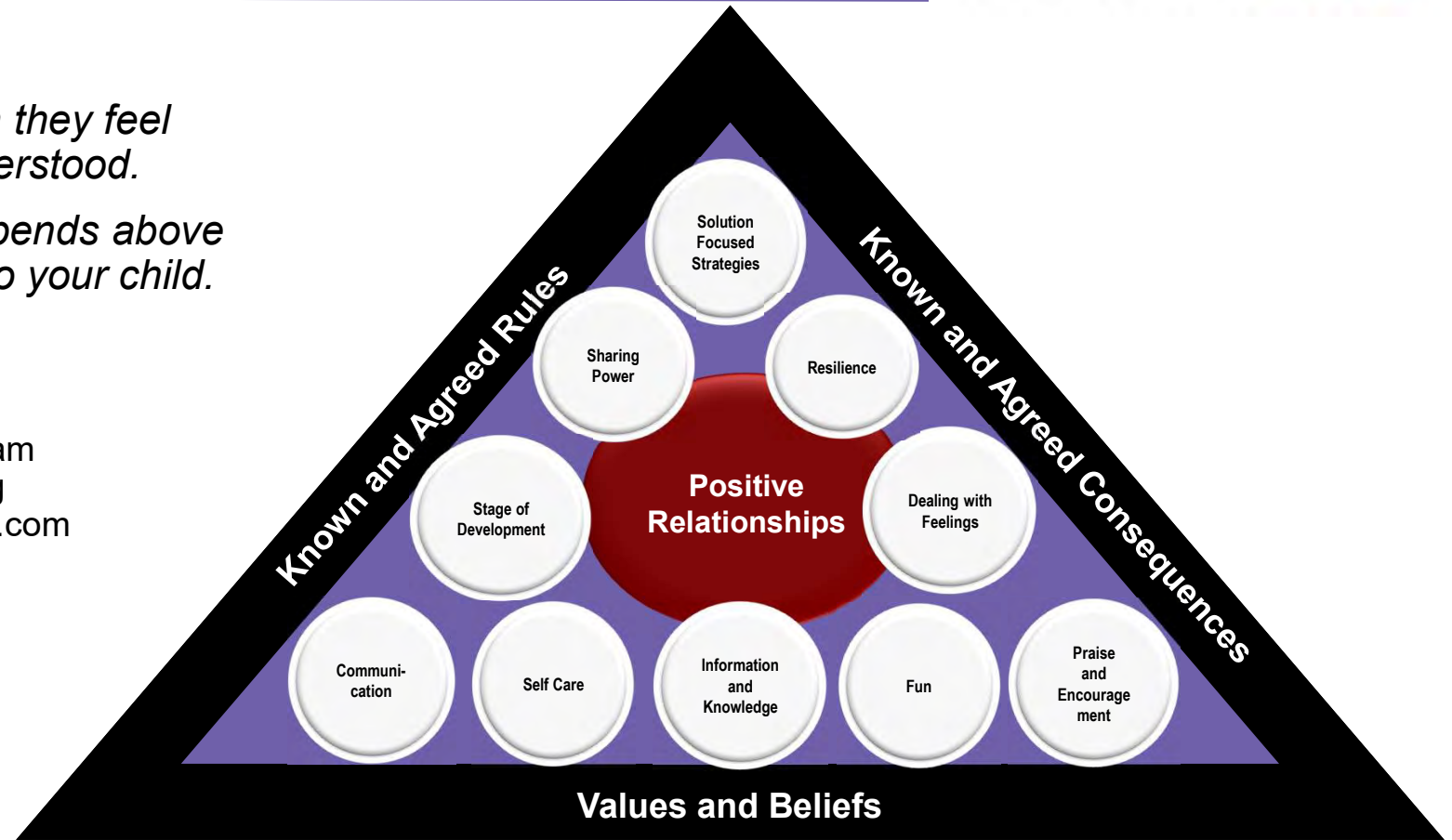
Values and Beliefs

Connection is Key

PARENTZONE

*“Children thrive when they feel connected and understood.
Parenting effectively depends above all on your connection to your child.
Period.”*

Dr Laura Markham
Aha! Parenting
www.ahaparenting.com



The Relationship Car

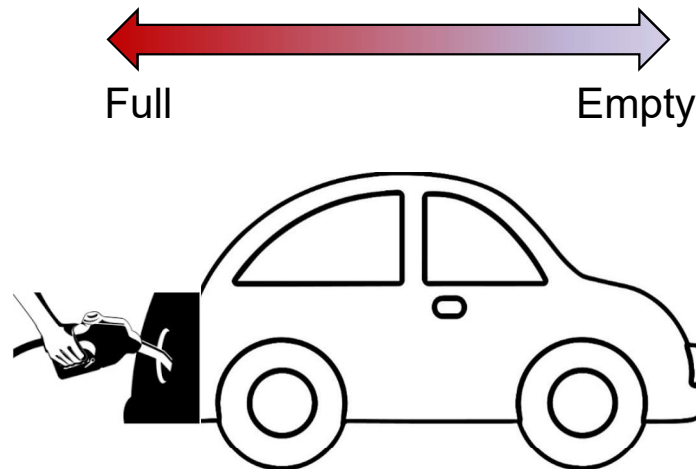
What fuels your relationships?

Uninterrupted time together

Affection

Genuine listening

Apologising



What uses up the fuel?

Yelling / Screaming

Punishments

Unrealistic expectations

Not being present

Six Peaceful Parenting Principles

PARENTZONE

1. Relationship and connection comes first
2. Accept our child's "big" emotions
3. "Emotion coach" our child
4. Regulate our own emotions
5. Responsible for our own "self-care"
6. Set limits with empathy – problem solve instead of "threat" or "punish"



Understanding Children's Emotions

PARENTZONE

Self Regulation in our Children

- Self-regulation is the ability of a person to manage their own energy states, emotions, behaviours and attention, in ways that are socially acceptable.
- A child's innate capacities for self-regulation are due to temperament and their environment.
- Stages of brain development play a HUGE role!



Brain Development

Develops from the bottom up

Even though the brain may reach its adult size by 11 to 14 it is still developing until mid 20s.

The front part of the brain, called the **prefrontal cortex**, is one of the last brain regions to mature.



Cortex

Reasoning / judgement
Under construction
until age 21-25

Limbic System

Emotional centre
1-4 years

Cerebellum

Motor movement
Birth to age 2

Brain Stem

Basic survival functions
Pre-birth – 8 months
Fight, Flight, Freeze

The Pre-Frontal Cortex



- The Prefrontal Cortex is the executive function system of the brain.
- It is responsible for planning complex cognitive behaviour, decision-making and moderating social behaviour.
- Ages of full pre-frontal cortex development range from 21-25 years.
- Females' brains develop about on average two years earlier than male brains.

When Our Children Flip Their Lids

Dan Siegel's Hand Model



Pre-Frontal Cortex
The Wise Leader



“Flipped Your Lid”

The Amygdala

- Alarm Centre
- Acts on instinct (fight / flight / freeze)

Good vs Bad Emotions

List of GOOD feelings or emotions

Love
Joy
Satisfaction
Contentment
Non-judgemental
Excitement
Happiness
Fulfilment
Wonder
Kindness
Compassion
Wellness



List of BAD feelings or emotions

Loneliness
Anger
Depression
Sadness
Rejection
Guilt
Frustration
Hopelessness
Worthlessness
Betrayed
Selfishness
Anxiety



Good vs Bad Emotions

List of **GOOD** feelings or emotions

COMFORTABLE



Curious



Kind



Excited



Happy

List of **BAD** feelings or emotions

UNCOMFORTABLE



Angry



Sad



Frustrated



Sneaky

Key Points:

1. Remove the stigma attached to “bad” feelings.
2. It is not “bad” to be frustrated and angry.
3. It is the “expression” of that feeling that may be unacceptable.

Your Child's Anger

PARENTZONE

Are you threatened by your child's anger?

Do any of these apply to you?

- You say yes when you know it is best to say no.
- When a child challenges your ideas, you immediately speak with greater force.
- You give excessive explanations for choosing a discipline.
- Inwardly you think, *How dare my child speak to me in that tone of voice.*
- Discussions with your child can seem like a battle of wills.
- You will fume for quite a while after a confrontation with your child.
- You give in too easily to a child's whining or fussing, wanting peace at any cost.



Your Child's Anger

PARENTZONE

Are you threatened by your child's anger?

A child's anger is **NORMAL**.

When we respond in **FEAR** to a child's anger we give them the message '*you are very powerful and I have to overwhelm you to teach you*'.

It is an invitation to battle where **NO-ONE WINS**.

Don't feel like you have to immediately **SQUELCH** their irritation, that's not your job! They need the opportunity to **FEEL** this emotion.

You still need to maintain **BOUNDARIES** whilst staying **CALM**.



Six Peaceful Parenting Principles

PARENTZONE

1. Relationship and connection comes first
2. Accept our child's "big" emotions
3. "Emotion coach" our child
4. Regulate our own emotions
5. Responsible for our own "self-care"
6. Set limits with empathy – problem solve instead of "threat" or "punish"



Dr Gottman's 4 Parent Types

PARENTZONE

1. The **Dismissing** Parent



2. The **Disapproving** Parent



3. The **Laissez-Faire** Parent



4. The **Emotion Coaching** Parent



Dr Gottman's 4 Parent Types

1. The Dismissing Parent...

...ignores "bad" emotions

Parent says:

"You don't need to be sad. It's not that bad. Put a smile on your face. There's no reason to be unhappy."

Child feels:

- Ignored or disregarded when they have strong feelings.
- Learns to believe that emotions like sadness and anger are "bad" and need to be fixed quickly.
- Doesn't learn how to handle emotions and has trouble with their feelings when upset.



Dr Gottman's 4 Parent Types

PARENTZONE

2. The Disapproving Parent...

...punishes "bad" emotions

Parent says:

"Stop feeling that way. You have no reason to be sad, and nobody wants a whiner around. If you keep that up, you'll be in trouble."

Child feels:

- Something is wrong with them if they get upset or sad.
- They don't learn how to handle strong feelings.



Dr Gottman's 4 Parent Types

3. The Laissez-Faire Parent...

...allows emotions but without guidance

Parent says:

"That's it, just let the feelings out. Do what you need to do. It doesn't bother me. Whatever you feel like doing is OK"

Child feels:

- Comfortable in expressing their feelings.
- Knows it is acceptable to show all types of emotions.
- Has no guidance on how to deal with those emotions and handle them in an appropriate way.



Dr Gottman's 4 Parent Types

PARENTZONE

4. The Emotion Coaching Parent...

...uses empathy AND guidance

Parent says:

"Tell me how you feel. I've felt that way too. And you can't hit somebody when you're angry. Let's think together about other things you can do when you feel this way."

Child feels:

- Valued and comforted when all emotions are accepted.
- Learns that there are limits on their behaviour when has strong feelings.
- Comfortable expressing all emotions and learns to trust these feelings and solve problems.



Dr Gottman's 4 Parent Types

PARENTZONE

What were your parents?

What are you?

1. Dismissing Parent – avoids emotions
2. Disapproving Parent – dislikes emotions
3. Laissez-Faire Parent – no emotional guidance
4. Emotion Coaching Parent – embraces emotions

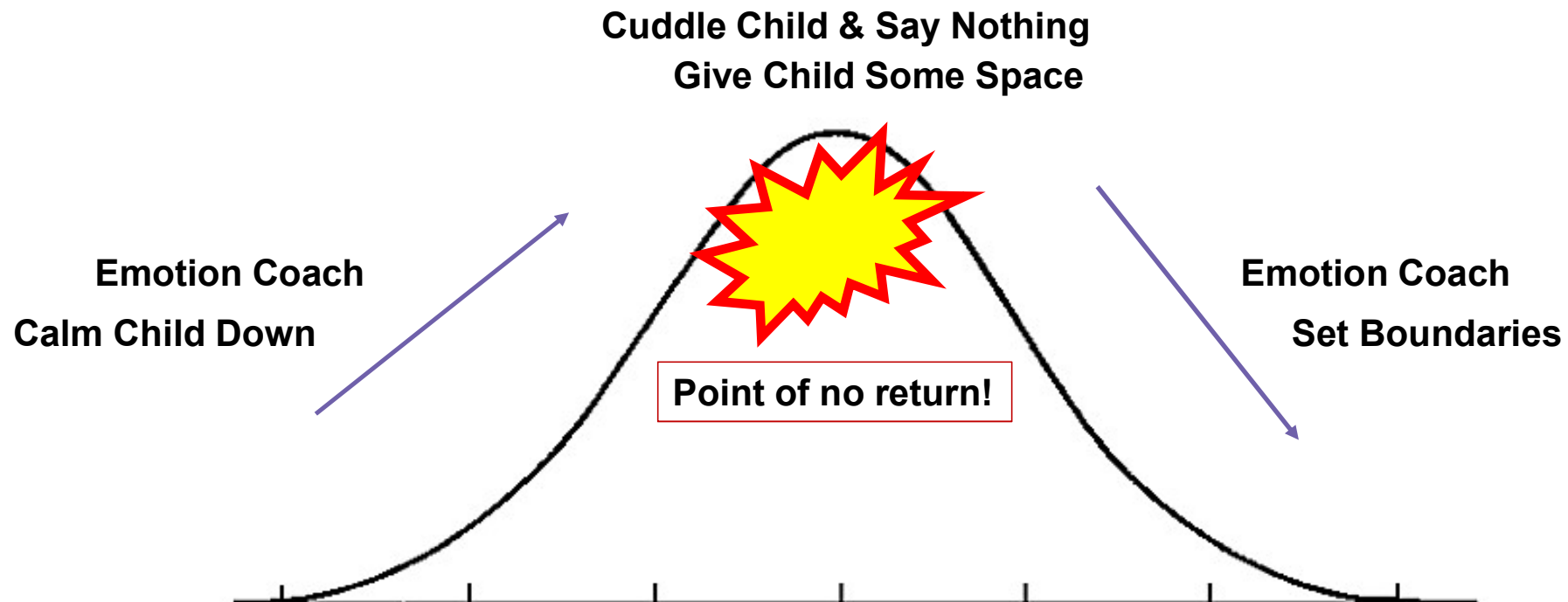


The 5 Steps of Emotion Coaching (Dr Gottman)

1. Be **aware** of the child's emotions.
2. Recognise emotions are an opportunity to **connect**.
3. Listen with **empathy** (congruence is essential).
4. Help the child **name** emotions.
5. Set **limits** and find good **solutions** (together).



When is the best time to Emotion Coach?



Six Peaceful Parenting Principles

PARENTZONE

1. Relationship and connection comes first
2. Accept our child's "big" emotions
3. "Emotion coach" our child
4. Regulate our own emotions
5. Responsible for our own "self-care"
6. Set limits with empathy – problem solve instead of "threat" or "punish"



The Anger Iceberg

What do our children see?

Stamping foot or hitting objects

Hard stare

Clenching fists

Angry facial expression and body posture

Raised voice and yelling

Impatience and short blunt responses

Using belittling words like “entitled” or “selfish”



Anger

What is hidden under the surface?

Fear of losing control

Irritation at being ignored (again!)

Time constraints – “I don’t want to be late”

Broken sleep and tiredness

Personal agenda – what you want to do

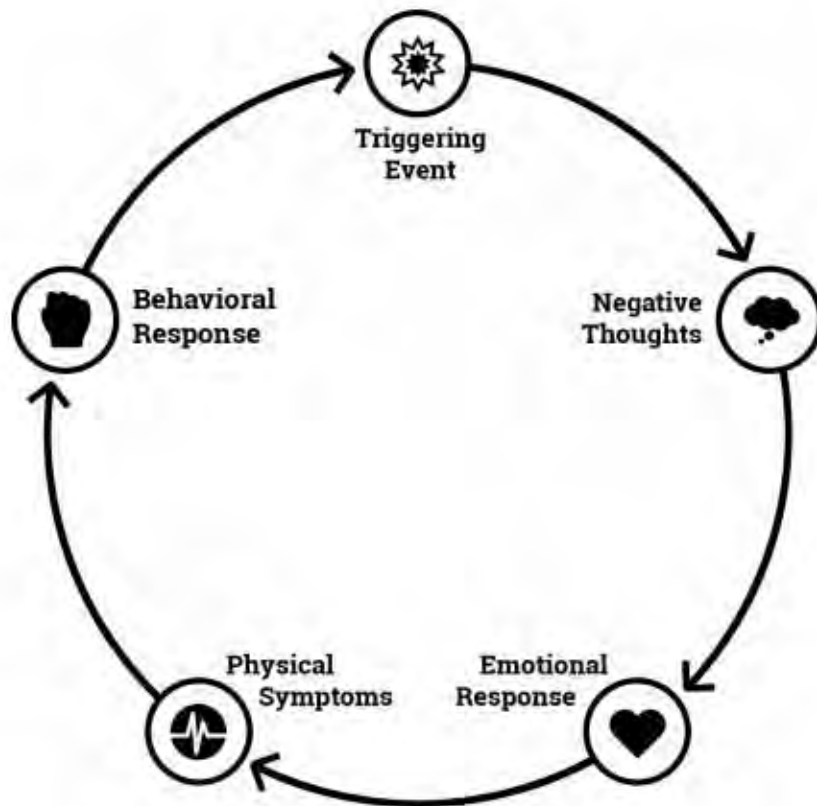
PARENTZONE

Likely there are unmet needs smouldering under the surface

- Hunger
- Exhaustion
- No time for self
- Wanting to get stuff done
- Having a tidy home
- Wanting to be somewhere on time
- To be seen as a good parent

Identifying and reviewing these needs is the first step to letting go of anger and frustration

The Cycle of Anger



Triggering Event

An event or situation "triggers" a person's anger. Examples:

- Getting cut off while driving.
- Having a bad day at work.
- Feeling disrespected.

Negative Thoughts

Irrational and negative thoughts occur as a result of the triggering event. Examples:

- "I'm the worst parent ever."
- "The jerk who cut me off doesn't care about anyone but themselves."

Emotional Response

Negative thoughts lead to negative emotions, even if the thoughts are irrational. Examples:

- Feelings of shame and guilt due to being the "worst parent ever".
- Rage directed toward a bad driver.

Physical Symptoms

The body automatically responds to anger with several symptoms. Examples:

- Racing Heart
- Sweating
- Clenched Fists
- Shaking

Behavioral Response

The person reacts based upon thoughts, feelings, and physical symptoms. Examples:

- Fighting
- Arguing
- Yelling
- Criticizing



Recognising Triggers for Anger

What makes us really mad?!

- What are some situations or behaviours that are likely to set off our anger?
 - Back chat
 - Child not listening
 - Running late and trying to get out the door
 - Bad attitude – rolling eyes, swearing, hitting
 - Disrespect



Recognising Triggers for Anger

PARENTZONE

What makes us really mad?!

- When have we experienced one of these situations but NOT reacted with anger, or when have we dealt with our anger in appropriate ways and coped with the situation?
 - Back chat = walking away and not engaging further
 - Child not listening = getting down to their level – eye contact
 - Running late and trying to get out the door = getting up 15 mins earlier








Parental Triggers

Trigger Sheet

Date	Incident	Pre-Incident	My Trigger	Child's Trigger	My Feelings/ Internal Dialogue	Child's Feelings	Prevention Ideas
EXAMPLE 21 Jan	Lost it at son in car and called her names and said mean things	School pick up – was asked to buy treat & I said no	He started talking defiantly and saying he was going to wreck things	Not being able to have a treat. Transition from school.	What's wrong with you?! Fear he is going to be uncontrollable in teen years	Disappointed Tired Unheard	Make it clear every morning for 3 days that there will be no treat after school

- Complete as soon after an 'incident' as you can. The fresher it is in your mind, the more accurately you will recount it.
- After noting triggers over a number of days or weeks, you may start to identify patterns in terms of *your* triggers and your child's triggers. These patterns will help you prevent the behaviour in the future.
- Once you have identified some patterns, you can start thinking of skills to prevent them from happening so regularly, making you calmer and giving you more emotional capacity.
- When your child is doing something that is upsetting you ask yourself "What am I scared of when my child is doing this?" "Why has my brain gone into fight-or-flight, perceiving my child as a threat?" It will almost always come down to a fear e.g. how is this going to be when my child is a teen?!

The Anger Thermometer

5	Rage, Furious		Rush of blood to head Yelling Face scrunched up/frowning
4	Angry, Mad		Move quicker Red face Raised voice
3	Frustrated, Confused, Annoyed, Sad		Body feels heavier Headaches Tense muscles – jaw and hands
2	Nervous, Worried, Anxious		Tightness in the chest Quicker heart rate Butterflies in the stomach
1	Happy, Calm, Satisfied, Pleased, Okay		Relaxed muscles Slower breathing Smiling, singing, whistling

***Regulating
our own
emotions***

Five Ways to Handle Anger

How do you manage YOUR parental anger?

1. Suppressing Anger
2. Open Aggression
3. Passive Aggression
4. Dropping it
5. Assertiveness



1. Suppressing Anger

- **Do you hold your anger inside?**

- Is resentful thinking common for you?
- Do you suffer from physical issues – headaches, stomach pains, sleep irregularity?
- Do you sometimes feel paralysed when confronted by an unwanted situation?
- Can you be reserved about sharing your problems or frustrations?
- Do you tend to be moody and depressed?
- When someone upsets you, do you tend to keep it to yourself?



Five Ways to Handle Anger

PARENTZONE

2. Open Aggression

- **Do you expose your anger?**
 - Are you a yeller?
 - Do you tend to repeat yourself several times during disagreements?
 - Do you tend to give advice when others have not asked for it?
 - When you speak your convictions does your voice become increasingly louder?
 - Are you sometimes blunt and forceful when someone does something that frustrates you?



Five Ways to Handle Anger

PARENTZONE

3. Passive Aggression

- **Do you use subtle sabotage?**
 - Do you become silent when you are frustrated knowing it bothers others?
 - Are you prone to sulking and pouting?
 - Do you lie and say everything is fine when it is not?
 - Are you sometimes deliberate evasive so that others won't bother you?
 - Do you tend to complain about people behind their backs and not face to face?



Five Ways to Handle Anger

What's the difference in these expressions?

1. Suppressing Anger
 2. Open Aggression
 3. Passive Aggression
 4. Dropping it
 5. Assertiveness
- Unhelpful
- Helpful



4. Dropping It

Picking your battles!

Walking away from minor but annoying behaviours

Examples:

1. Child splashing in bath
2. Child not sitting during mealtimes
3. Child singing loudly



Five Ways to Handle Anger

PARENTZONE

5. Assertive Anger

A healthier way to express parental anger

- When you communicate with true assertion, you combine firmness with respect.
- It is accomplished while considering the needs and feelings of our children.
- This form of anger can actually help our relationships with our children grow.
- Assertiveness does not equal “pushy” or “abrasive.”
- True assertiveness is not abrasive, nor is it meant to harm.



Five Ways to Handle Anger

5. Assertive Anger

Some examples

- A parent stating guidelines for discipline without resorting to debate or to being condescending toward the child.
- A tired mum telling her family she will take a 30 minute break with no interruptions.
- Spouses openly talking about their differences and offering helpful suggestions without raising their voice or repeating their messages incessantly.
- Using I-Statements (and avoiding U-Statements) to get our message across to our children.



5. Assertive Anger

Best done using I-Statements

I-Statements must consist of the following 3 parts:

1. I feel _____
2. when _____ because _____
3. and I would like _____



5. Assertive Anger

Best done using I-Statements

I-Statements DO NOT contain:

1. Put-Downs
2. Accusations
3. Threats
4. Ultimatums
5. Name-Calling
6. Blame



5. Assertive Anger – Some I-Statement Examples

“**I feel** worried **when** there is Lego on the floor **because** it hurts when stepped on **and I would like** the floor clear when you have finished playing”

“**I feel** frustrated **when** you don't get off the iPad at the agreed time **because** I don't get to spend time with you, **and I would like** to have some time together”

“**I feel** annoyed **when** lots of water is spilled out of the bath **because** it takes me a long time to clean it up, **and I would like** to use that time to cook dinner

“**I feel** anxious **when** there is no toilet paper available when I use the toilet **because** I have to call out and ask someone to get me one, **and I would like** everyone in the house to be responsible for replacing the toilet paper if they finish it”

5. Assertive Anger – I-Statements for Young Children

Combine verbal message with non-verbal body language to modify behaviour

Example 1: Your 16 month old baby is pulling your hair

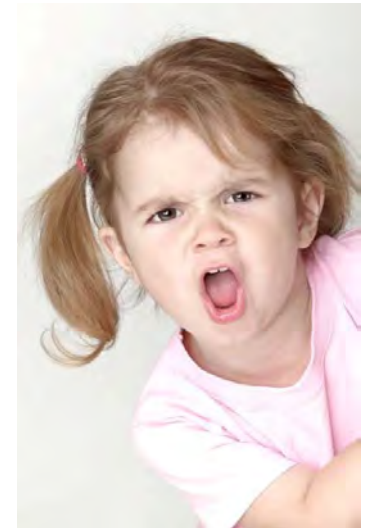
Verbal: “Ouch! I don’t like it when you pull my hair because it hurts!”

Non-verbal: You put your hand to your scalp and move away from child

Example 2: Your 3 year old squeals really loudly

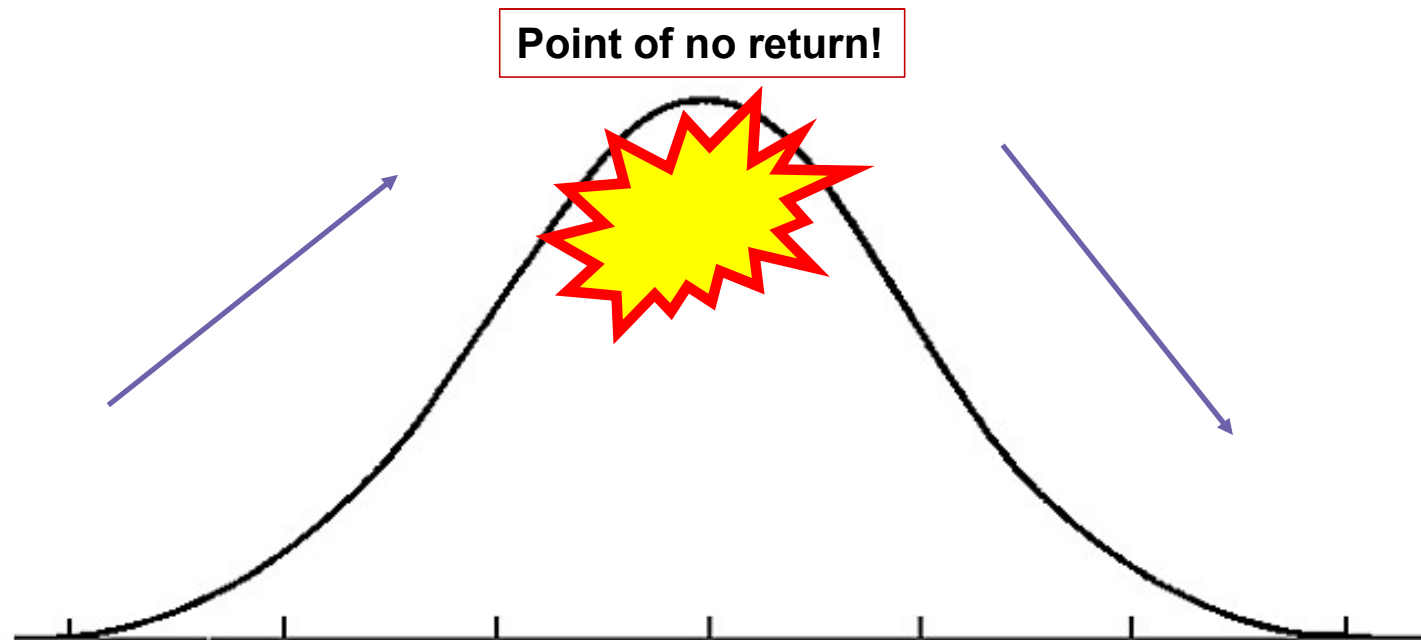
Verbal: “That was sore! Your loud voice really hurt my ears!”

Non-verbal: Put your hands over your ears and have a pained look on face



Five Ways to Handle Anger

5. Assertive Anger – when do we use this strategy?



Five Ways to Handle Anger

5. Assertive Anger



Key tips for parents

- Choose your battles – decide what behaviour you cannot live with and what behaviour can be ignored?
- Be aware of your tone of voice – does it create an atmosphere of respect?
- Communicate how it is affecting YOU – does it sound like your problem or their problem? Avoid blame.
- Choose the best time to use assertiveness – is the emotional temperature way to high now or is it calm enough that I can give this a go?

Other Ideas to Regulate Our Emotions

Top tips to try at home:

1. View your child's behaviour differently – think, what feelings or unmet needs lay under the surface?
2. Review your own iceberg – what unmet needs are laying under the surface?
3. Change your presence – quieten your voice, slow down your body movements.
4. Use the emotional thermometer.
5. Walk away – it takes the body 20-30 minutes to return to “normal.”

What if you can't walk away?

Try a time-in, silence, box breathing, stay in the moment, emotion coach!

Six Peaceful Parenting Principles

PARENTZONE

1. Relationship and connection comes first
2. Accept our child's "big" emotions
3. "Emotion coach" our child
4. Regulate our own emotions
5. Responsible for our own "self-care"
6. Set limits with empathy – problem solve instead of "threat" or "punish"



Self-Care as a Parenting Priority

PARENTZONE

Why is self-care such an important part of Peaceful Parenting?

- If our tanks are empty, we become frustrated and cannot parent peacefully.
- If our tanks are full, then we have more empathy and patience.
- It shows our children and partners that our needs are important too.
- When we do it, we role-model its importance to our children.
- Time spent caring for yourself is time spent caring for your family.



Self-Care as a Parenting Priority

PARENTZONE

Your personal water tank

- Think of the water tank as how we are currently feeling
- When the tank is full we feel strong and full of energy
- When the tank is full we are able to give to others
- When the tank is empty we feel down and frustrated
- When the tank is empty we find it hard to give our time and attention to others, including our children



Self-Care as a Parenting Priority

Your personal water tank

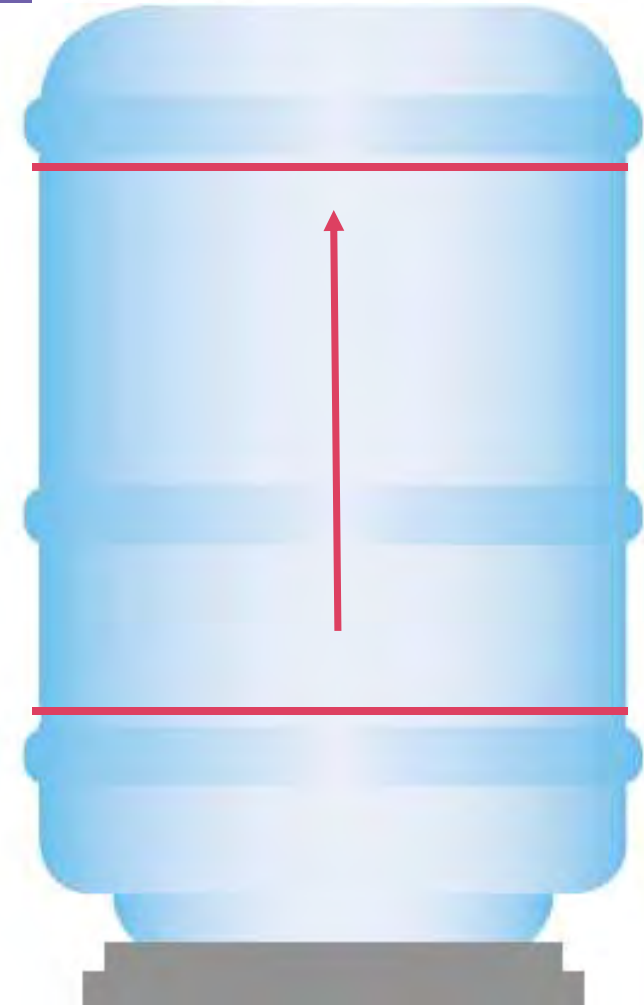
If you were to draw a line showing how full your tank is now:

- Where would you put it?
- What can you do to push the level up higher?

Remember

The water will get used up, so constant topping up will be required to keep you full and strong.

PARENTZONE



Self-Care as a Parenting Priority

PARENTZONE

Launch Poll

1. *How full do you think your tank is most days?*
2. *How much self-care do you do?*



Self-Care Options

PARENTZONE

What does self-care look like to you?

- Exercise – walking, dancing, swimming, running, sports
- Yoga and meditation
- Baking and cooking
- Getting creative – colouring, painting
- Spending time with partner, family, friends
- Watching your favourite shows or movies
- Reading your favourite genre of books
- Having a long bath or having a massage
- Gardening



Six Peaceful Parenting Principles

PARENTZONE

1. Relationship and connection comes first
2. Accept our child's "big" emotions
3. "Emotion coach" our child
4. Regulate our own emotions
5. Responsible for our own "self-care"
6. Set limits with empathy – problem solve instead of "threat" or "punish"

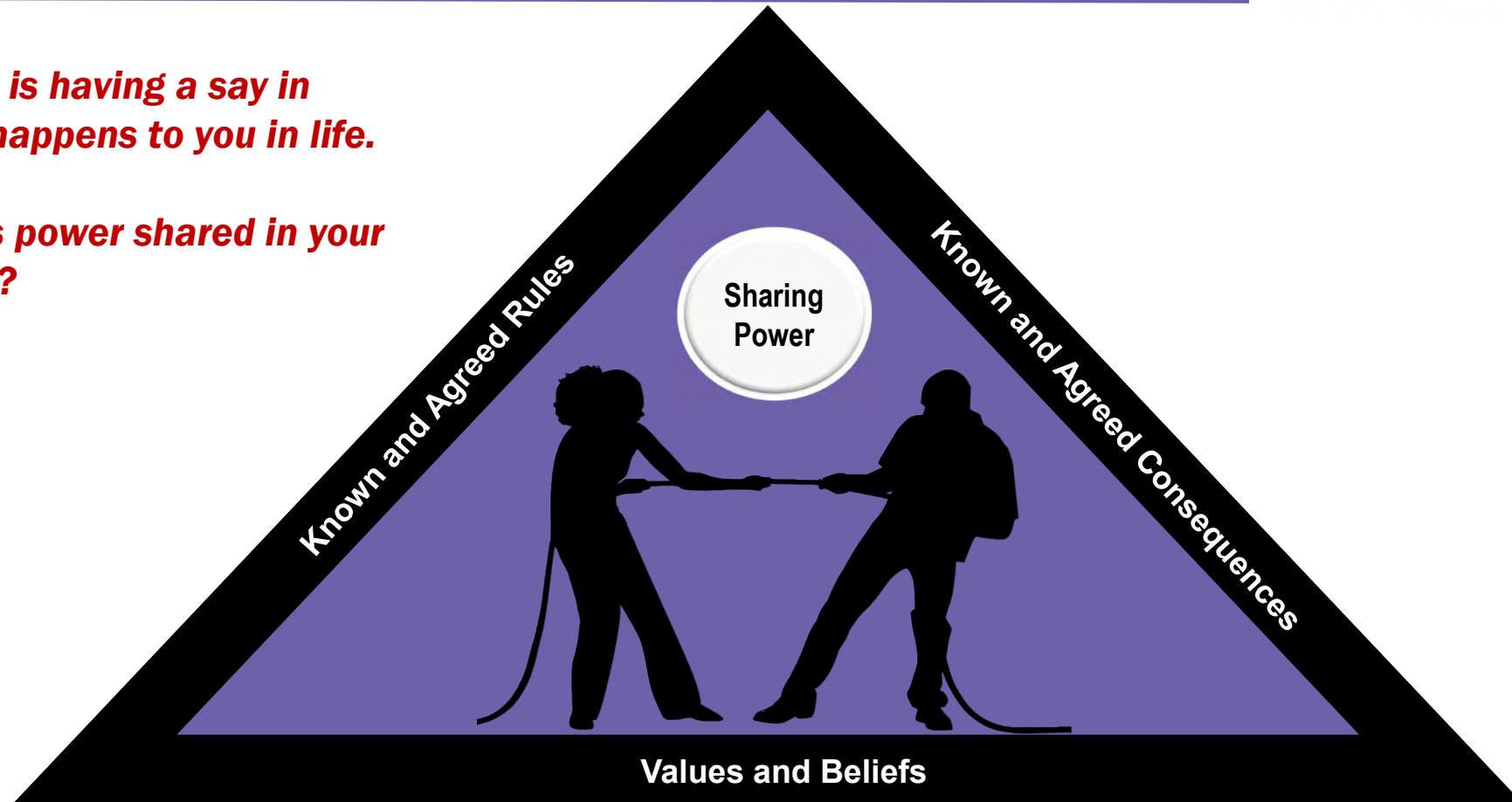


Sharing Power Reduces Conflict

PARENTZONE

Power is having a say in what happens to you in life.

How is power shared in your family?

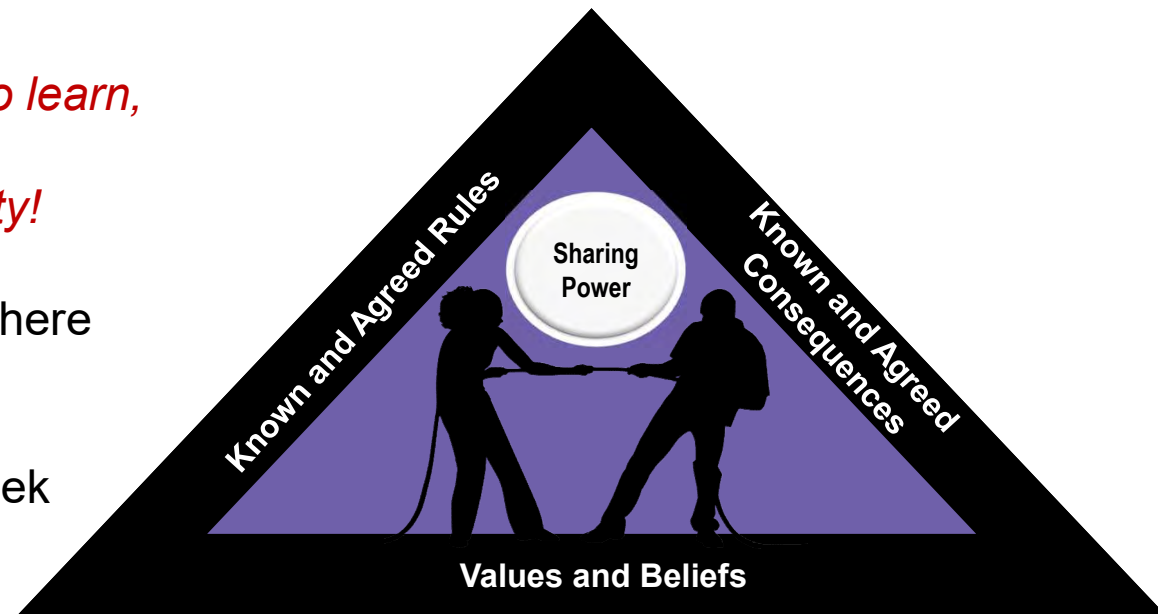


Sharing Power Reduces Conflict

How do you share power with your kids?

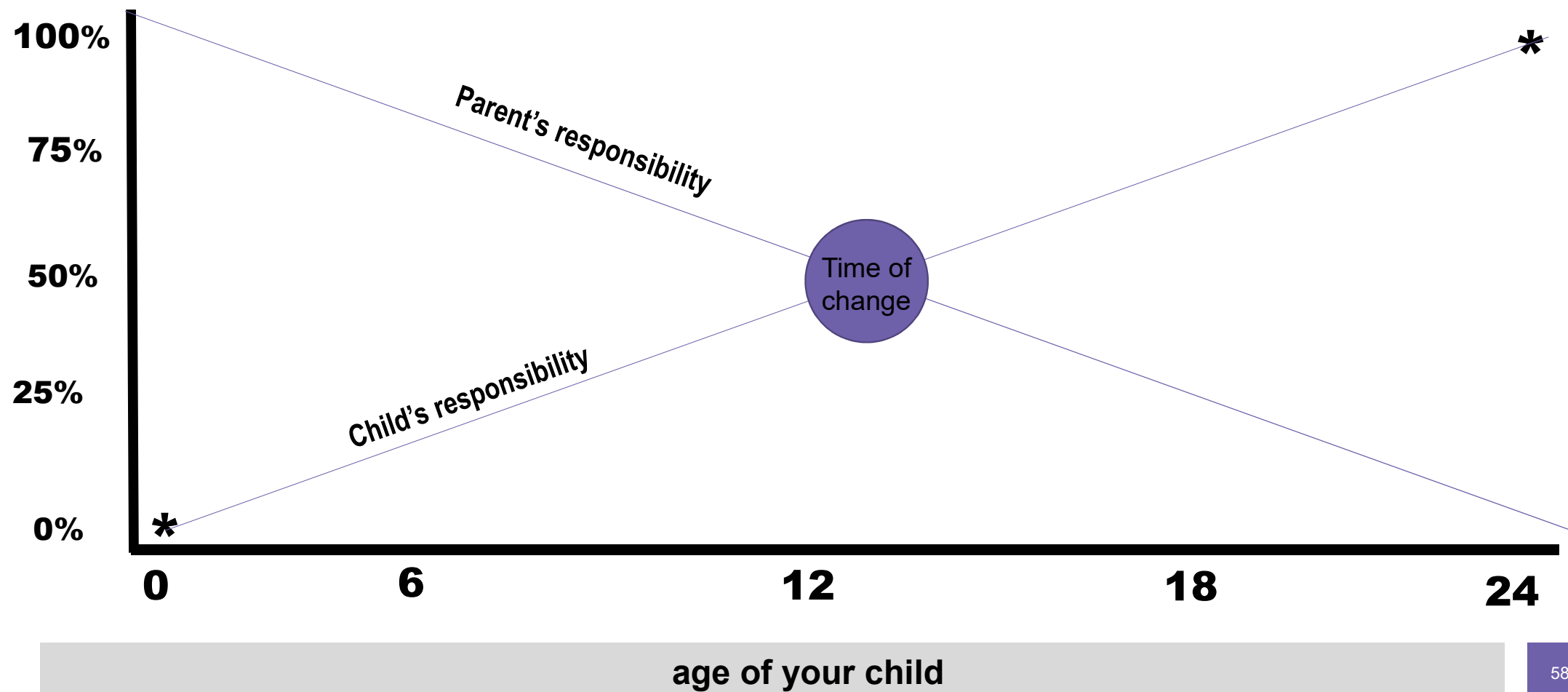
*Sharing power with our kids allows them to learn,
make mistakes, and grow!
It can also teach children responsibility!*

- Allow children to make their own decisions where appropriate!
- Offer choices – would you like to.... or
- Allow your child to choose one dinner per week
- List chores and ask children to choose
- Have family meetings to discuss concerns



The Responsibility Graph

PARENTZONE



How to Share Power

PARENTZONE

Winning vs Losing – 3 Ways

1. **Parent Wins and Child Loses** – parent wins by dictating terms and child loses by not getting his needs met.
2. **Child Wins and Parent Loses** – child wins by parent not wanting confrontation or to avoid being dictatorial and controlling.
3. **Parent Wins and Child Wins** – Both parties are happy because needs are being met on both sides.



Winning vs Losing

1. Parent Wins and Child Loses
2. Child Wins and Parent Loses
3. Parent Wins and Child Wins

Types of Parents

1. Dismissing & Disapproving Parents
2. Laissez-Faire Parents
3. Emotion Coaching Parents

Parent Wins and Child Wins – a different approach

The 6 Steps of Problem-Solving

1. Define the problem
2. Generate possible solutions
3. Evaluate solutions
4. Decide on mutually acceptable solution
5. Implement the solution
6. Evaluate the results



How to Share Power

PARENTZONE

The 6 Steps of Problem-Solving

1. Define the problem

- Send an assertive i-statement
- Allow child to express their feelings and possible frustrations
- Define the problem and how it is affecting you both
- Make it clear you're looking for solutions that are acceptable to both of you

2. Generate possible solutions

- Ask your child first for their solutions to the problem
- Don't be critical of the solutions – there are no bad solutions
- Deliver some of your solutions



How to Share Power

PARENTZONE

The 6 Steps of Problem-Solving

3. Evaluate solutions

- Go through each solution and critically assess them
- Some may not be mutually fair
- Some may be too difficult to implement

4. Decide on mutually acceptable solution

- Both agree on a solution – otherwise back to the drawing board
- Often the chosen solution is a combination of the of the suggested solutions
- Don't try and persuade or push your child into your solution
- Don't accept a solution that you are not happy with



How to Share Power

PARENTZONE

The 6 Steps of Problem-Solving

5. Implement the solution

- Agree on who does what and when
- Trust the child will carry out their end of the bargain
- Offer suggestions on how to remember the agreed plan

6. Evaluate the results

- Not all solutions work out – that's life
- Some parts of the solution may need to be altered
- Sometimes you need to start at step 1 again
- Have a open conversation about how the solution is working for both parties



Some words of warning about problem-solving

- This is a planned approach and not done for every problem
- Your child might be used to the Parent Win/Child Lose or Child Win/Parent Lose methods
- Your child might take a while to get used to this new method
- If your child does not commit to their part in the solution, send Assertive I-Statements, but give them time to do so first
- Be prepared to do a lot of these Assertive I-Statements until the child gets the idea that you are not going to accept non-performance
- Try not to fall into the habit of nagging and monitoring the child to ensure they carry out the assigned tasks

Problem Solving with Young Children

- Can still be done, but requires more of parent's input into solutions as children too young will not be able to come up with their own.
- Requires parent to really think about what need their child is trying to meet with this behaviour



Any Final Questions?

PARENTZONE



How Did We Do?

PARENTZONE

Launch Poll

We would love to get your feedback!

Please complete the following poll.



CONTACT US



Laurie Arrowsmith

Parent Resource Coordinator

ParentZone, Anglicare

Phone: 9721 3646

Email: parentzone.eastern@anglicarevic.org.au

PARENTZONE