



SHANE LYNCH PSYCHOLOGY

Boo!

Be safe this Halloween. Have flashlights and have fun!

Don't forget...

While your oldest child might be into the scary stuff, what they find scary and what their younger siblings find scary may be quite different! Keep in mind what's developmentally appropriate for each child and make a plan when watching your favourite Halloween movies and attending Halloween parties! Always remember, it takes courage to say you're scared. Don't downplay what your kids say is scary and don't let your older kids downplay their younger siblings feelings either.

About Shane

I'm always quite impressed with family Halloween costumes. I've seen all the Mario characters, I've seen different Tetris shapes, and I've even seen Star Wars characters. Any suggestions, please email them to me!
Thanks!



ADHD Part Two

In my experience, after Academic interventions for ADHD (see previous issue), the most common and most important intervention area for parents and teachers is in the Psycho-Social realm.

In order to increase one's awareness let me plant these first two concepts in your mind so that you can reference them with each intervention you have with your child: (1) Parents provide love and leadership; (2) Parents use a low percentage of interventions that are corrective (e.g., scold, criticize, punish, time-out, angry words, raised voice, insult, berate) and directive (e.g., boss, nag, remind, request, demand). The former is important with all kids and the latter is particularly important with kids who have or experience ADHD symptoms.

For example, move away from "look what you did" or "you're mean" to helping them clean up (undo) the damage (physical or emotional) that occurred as a result of their behaviour. Then help them re-enact (redo) what occurred using an improved approach.



Tips for Dads & Moms

Here are some common parenting patterns I often see with children who may or do have an ADHD diagnosis: nagging, verbal abuse, hypervigilance, overprotection, overindulgence, emotional abuse, ignore...nag... yell...punish.

Instead go to your child and enter their space, gently touching their arm, shoulder, or back, to gain their attention.

Kindly, firmly, and clearly relay the message you want them to receive or depending on the circumstances, ask them an open question:

What is a nicer way to say that?
 What is a better way to do that?
 How do you think s/he feels now?
 What are you supposed to say now? What is the best thing to say now? What do I want you to do about this?



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First, undo: “We’ll/you’ll have to clean up that mess now” or “What you said was unkind and we’ll/you’ll have to apologize.” Then, redo: “Where could we put your cup in case you forget about it and spill it?” Or “Instead of name calling, let’s try telling your brother you don’t like that game and suggest a new one.”

The undo and redo concept can have a significant impact as it allows parents and teachers to model the desired behaviour that can be done in-the-moment or after-the-fact.

To improve friendship skills you can encourage your child and model for them how to: share, take turns, be a good host, be polite, show that you care, let your friend choose the game, let your friend go first, let your friend decide when the game might end, let your friend control half the game and you control the other half, and talk about your friend’s interests. These opportunities to model help children to focus outward which, is a break from their self-focused default way of being. If you notice your child having difficulty or even returning to their default ways of being, use this as an opportunity to undo and redo the behaviours with the replacements noted above.

Lastly, how can we support better decision-making with children who find stimulating environments distracting, and have difficulty focusing? Remember the acronym KITE.

K - know the problem. Ask your child to help you define the problem, as they see it first.

I - identify their choices. Help your child figure out what their options are. These may be context specific where different rules may apply (e.g., at school or at home).

T - take the best choice, and do it. Help them to determine the best choice and help them make a plan to act.

E - evaluate the action, based on the choice, compared to the original problem and determine if adjustments need to be made. For example, ask the child if their choice and plan of action successfully addressed the problem. Yes? Celebrate. No? Make adjustments with them and support them to try again.

Don’t forget love and leadership. If either feel challenging, make an effort to care for yourself, too. Research tells us the more self-compassion we possess the more compassion we have to share.