

Managing the *mayhem* of Meltdowns!



Course Pack

**What is happening with my
child's brain development?**

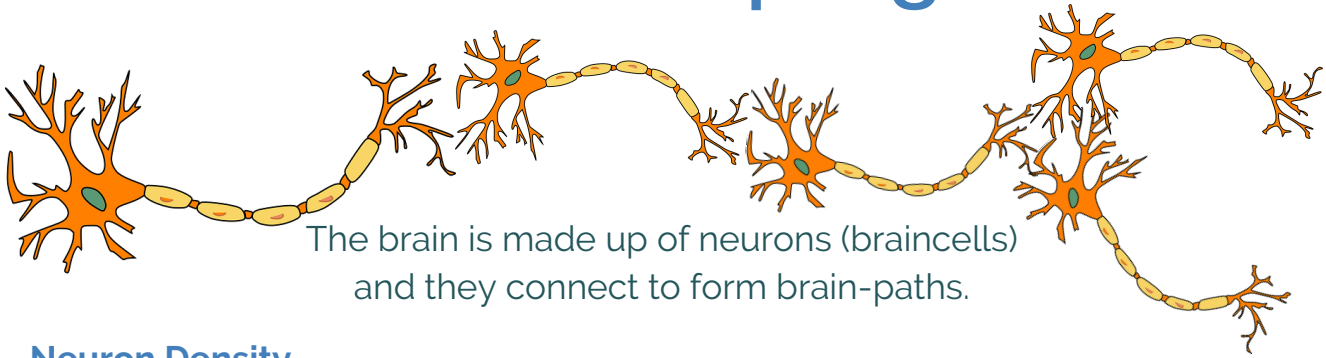
**Why is Pro-Active
parenting important?**

**What is Emotional
Intelligence?**

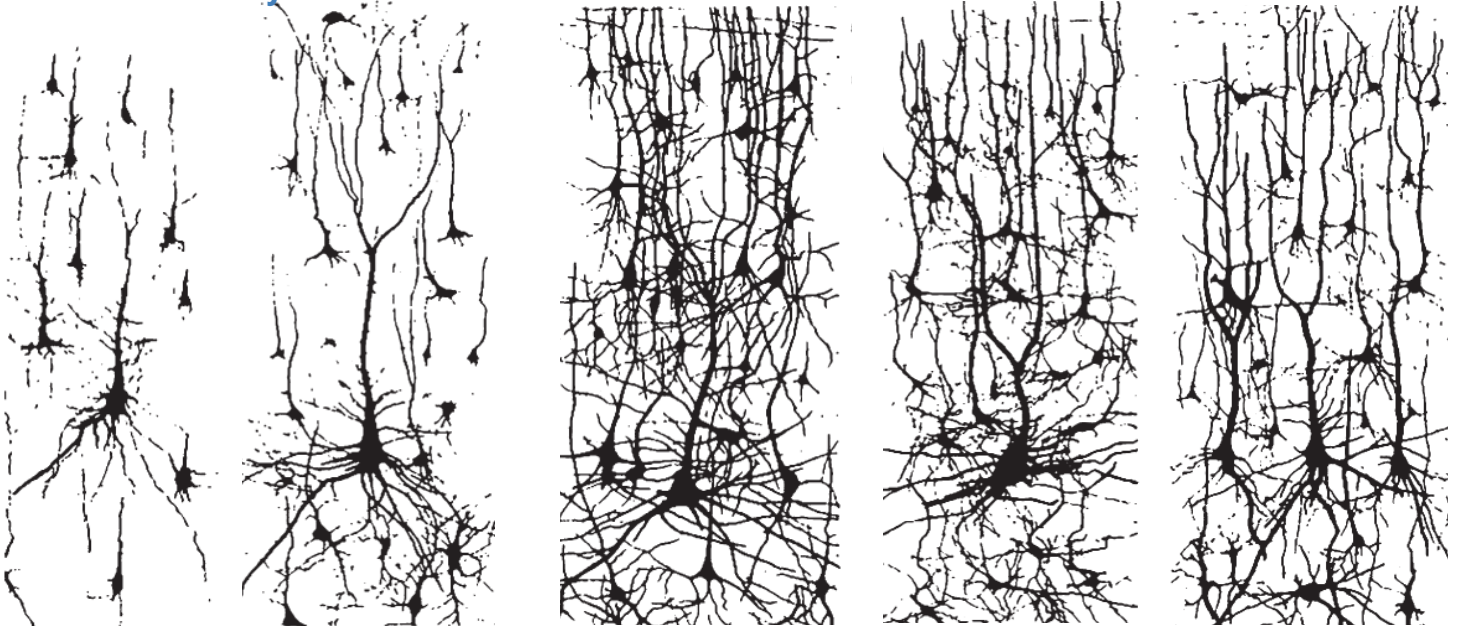


Neurons that fire together, wire together

The Developing Brain



Neuron Density



Birth

1yr

2 - 5yrs

Teens

Adult

- Our brains develop through experiences.
- Every new experience forms and strengthens the connections.
- The formation of new neurons and connections is fastest at birth, then slows down over time.
- Each neuron can have as many as 40 000 connections.
- During the teenage years, the brain prunes all the unused connections to streamline the existing pathways.
- Each day, we have 10 000 new neurons, that are able to migrate to where new learning takes place.

2 - 5yrs 80%

Adult

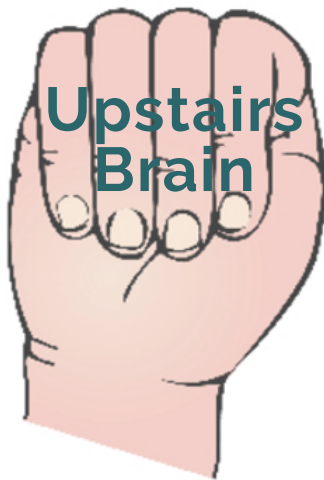
Birth 25%



The Upstairs and Downstairs Brain *for kids!*

Based on the 'Hand Model of the Brain' by Dan Siegel

Make a fist with your thumb tucked in. Let's pretend this is your brain.



The Upstairs Brain

This is where you make good choices and think about doing the right thing. You use this part of your brain to keep yourself calm and in control.

The Downstairs Brain

If you lift your fingers, you will see the Downstairs Brain. This is where all the big feelings come from, like being very upset, scared or frustrated.



See how your Upstairs Brain hugs your Downstairs Brain? This is how your Upstairs Brain helps your Downstairs Brain to be calm, even when you're upset.



Sometimes, the feelings in the Downstairs Brain are so strong, that the Upstairs Brain can't hold on! This is when you flip your lid! See how the Upstairs Brain isn't hugging the Downstairs Brain anymore? That means it can't help the Downstairs Brain stay calm!

Next time you feel like you're going to flip your lid, quick!
Let your Upstairs Brain hug your Downstairs Brain!
Use good choices to calm the big feelings!

Strategies to help your child integrate their Upstairs / Downstairs brain

Mind, Body and Soul Time -

Our children, just like us, have 2 basic needs -
Imagine those needs as buckets to be filled &
your child wakes up each morning with empty
buckets, one called 'ATTENTION' (I want to
belong) and one called 'POWER', (I want to feel
significant).



Engage, don't enrage -

In high-stress situations, engage your child's
upstairs brain, rather than triggering the
downstairs brain. This will give you the
opportunity to avoid a meltdown and teach your
child skills like negotiation, communication and
good decision-making.



My Frustration Chart -

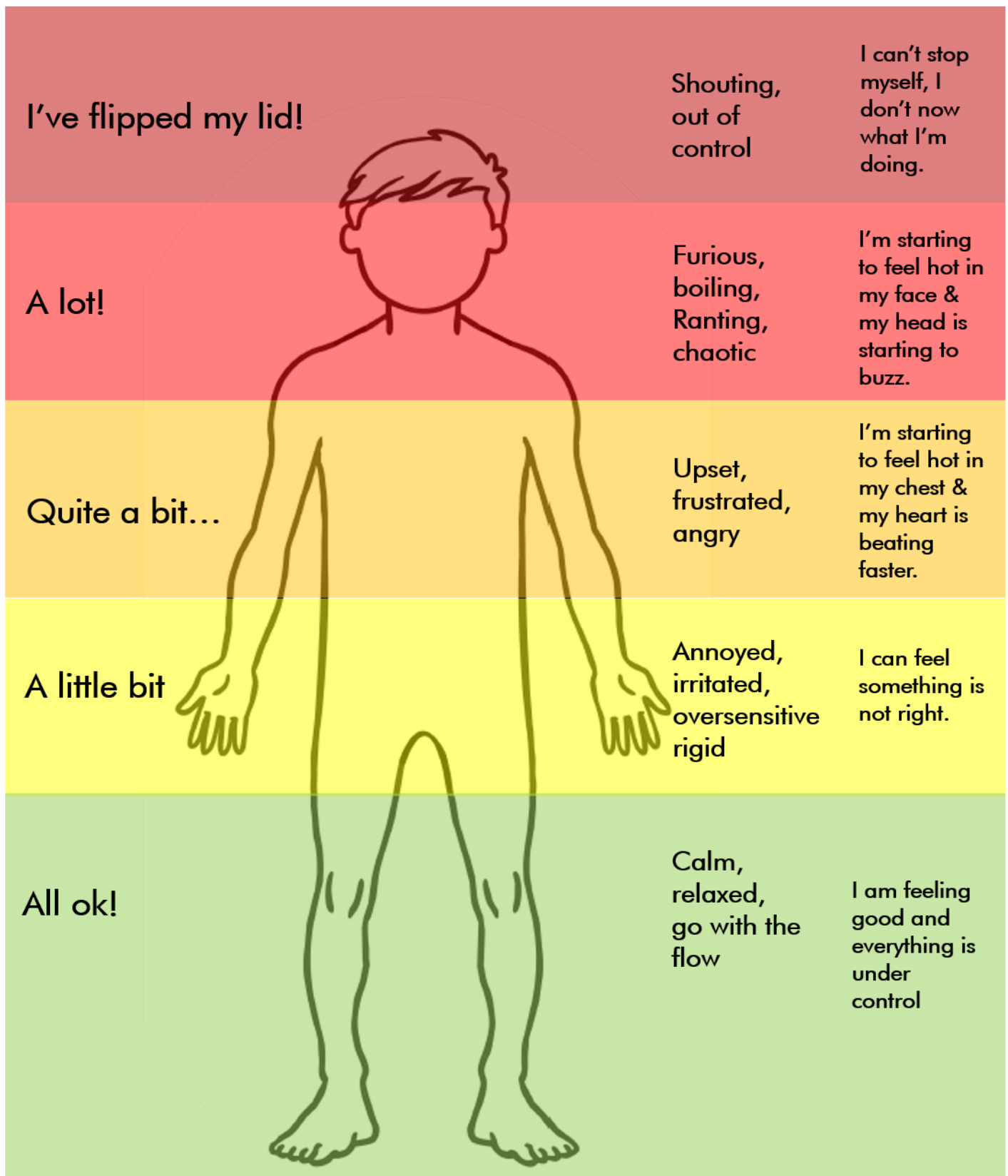
After an incident, when everyone is calm, it will be
helpful to use a 'frustration' chart to explore with
your child how their body starts to feel when
getting upset and angry. By exploring these
bodily sensations at the different stages, your
child will be able to identify where on the chart
they are, and think of strategies to avoid 'flipping
the lid' and instead make good decisions.



Delving Deeper -

A powerful tool when we need to figure out step-
by-step in order to find solutions that empower
our children and teach them the skills they are still
developing. By allowing our children to be part of
the solution process, we are not only helping
them focus on any skills that might be lagging, but
we're teaching them how to be accountable &
problem-solve for themselves.

My **FRUSTRATION** CHART



Delving Deeper

WHY DID MY CHILD ACT THIS WAY? Which skills are lacking?



Thinking about WHY the behaviour is happening, brings insight and the ability to address it in a way so that it doesn't happen over and over. Which skills might be lacking? E.g. perspective, empathy, accountability, problem-solving, decision-making, resilience, self-acceptance, tolerance, self-control, reflection, honesty, confidence, self-calming, flexibility, sense of humour, etc.

Define the problem



Leave your feelings and theories out of it for now. Don't think of their behaviours and don't think about the solutions either. Simply define the problem by starting with: Difficulty with....

Approach your child with empathy



"I've noticed that sometimes, when What do you think about it / how do you feel about it/ What's up?"

This way you're not simply reminding them of their bad behaviour, you are however showing your concern for them feeling out of control.

Explain your concerns



The big picture

"I'm worried that if you do this / behave like this, then Do you understand my concerns?"

Decide on a solution - TOGETHER



"Do you think we can find a way so that next time"

Putting it all into practice

**Just spend a few minutes to think how you can use
these 4 strategies TOMORROW!**

Mind, Body and Soul time:

Engage, don't Enrage:

Frustration Chart:

Delving deeper:

*I want my children to do more, learn more
and become more!*