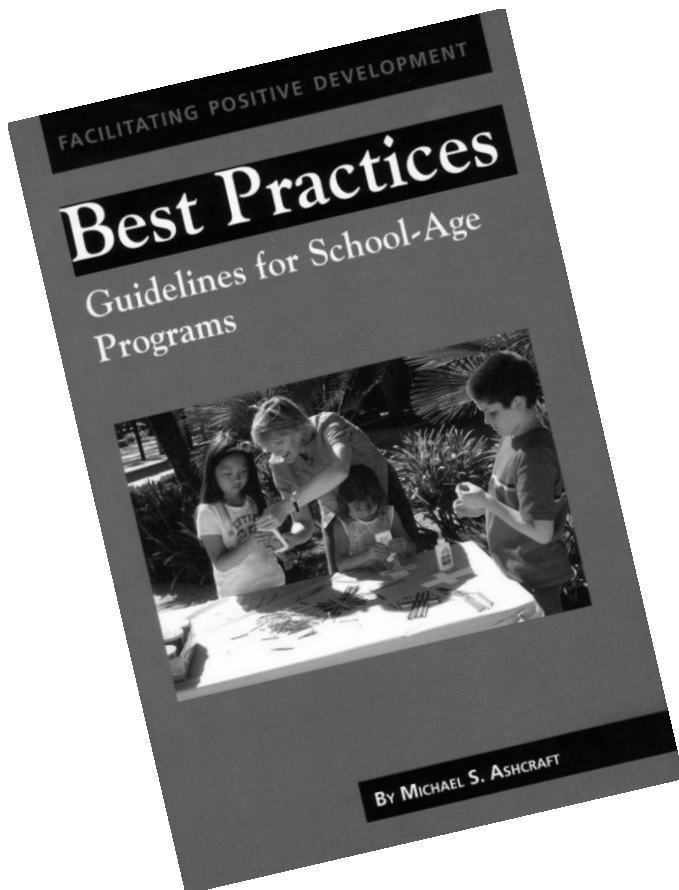




# SUPER TOOLS

Behavior Management:  
for Super Camps!  
**Presented by Mike Ashcraft,**  
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# Super Relationships

In the area of relationships, school-age care professionals work to establish and encourage realistic boundaries and high expectations for children. High expectations provide children with the appropriate challenges and feedback necessary for brain enrichment. School-age care providers can plan for interactions with fun, caring, authoritative and mature adults, who are experts in child development. They plan for interactions between children of different ages who model responsible behavior and share a sense of community. Challenging, interactive feedback is a key to brain enrichment (Jensen, 1998).

Relationships are important in the social context of the school and school-age care community. Relationships between adults, between children, and between adult and child must be positive. School-age care providers must establish and encourage realistic boundaries and high expectations for children that provide the appropriate challenge and feedback required for brain enrichment (Jensen, 1998). Research shows that children who develop a positive identity are more likely to experience academic achievement, positive peer relationships, and community service. Children who do not develop a positive identity are more likely to engage in a wide variety of negative behaviors including violence, early sexual behavior, school behavior concerns and the use of drugs (Leffert, Benson, & Roehlkepartain, 1997). Positive identity includes developing a sense of personal empowerment, a sense of purpose, a positive view of personal future and high self-esteem. It is important to provide opportunities to succeed through empowerment by the intentional programming of the adult-child relationships in school-age care programs. Self-esteem is the ability to respect oneself and to think highly or favorably of oneself, and it is very important that this ability not be squashed, but nurtured and protected.



Self-esteem, self-worth, self-image, and self-acceptance are all terms used to describe the way people think and feel about themselves -- adequate or inadequate, likable or unlikable, lovable or unlovable, valuable or worthless, smart or stupid, good looking or ugly. An adult can squash a child's self-esteem, but cannot alone build a child's esteem. Self-esteem comes from inside people and cannot be developed externally. Self-esteem is an internal asset that is built when children do things that they have a right to be proud of. Staff members facilitate the development of social competencies, decision-making, community responsibility and other skills and abilities that allow children to develop a positive image of themselves, their abilities and their personal future.

The way children feel about themselves depends largely on their response to the "feedback" they have received from the important people in their lives. If these people have helped children to feel significant, empowered, and loved, they will be inclined to have a positive self-image. If people give children a reason to feel inadequate and unneeded, they are apt to find themselves thinking they are a failure and do not have anything positive to offer, so they tend to offer negative behavior. It is important for school-age care staff to provide boundaries and high expectations for children and to value them as important people who have a role in society.

Caregivers must facilitate the internal development of self-esteem in every child, through self-discipline, empowerment, high expectations, and through having a role in the program. When this is done, most discipline problems fail to materialize. The personality of the teacher is a primary factor to building a relationship of trust and respect. There are few skills the teacher may consciously develop to gain the influence that will tend to result in higher self-esteem.

- Have a genuine liking for each child in the program.
- Avoid showing favoritism.
- Show sympathy and understanding.
- Employ democratic methods.
- Have faith in children to accomplish tasks and do the right thing.
- Be extremely fair in decisions.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Give sincere compliments regularly.
- Be consistent in attitude, behaviors and decisions.
- Use phrases like "Knowing you I'm sure you'll do fine," "I can see you put a lot of effort into that," "You can figure it out," "I have faith in you", and "Don't worry we all make mistakes."
- Avoid saying things like "Let me do that for you," "Better get some help," "If you can't do it right don't do it at all," "You can do better," "That looks too difficult for you," and "Don't touch it, you'll break it."

## Super Experiences

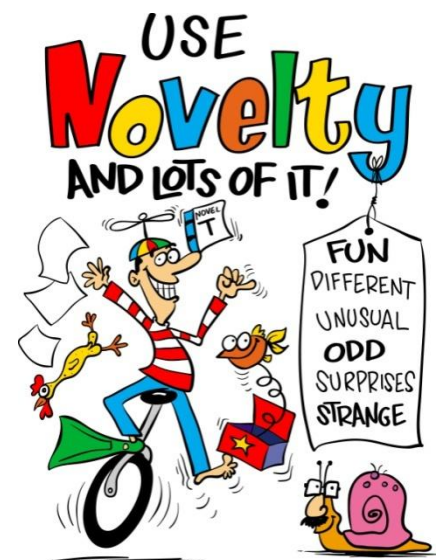
In the area of experiences, school-age care professionals can introduce variety and novelty. Novelty in the form of experiential learning is a key to brain enrichment. School-age care professionals need to provide a variety of enriching experiences such as field trips, guest speakers, computers, games, role plays and dramatic play, art activities, and long- and short-term projects.

Interactive and self-generated feedback is a key to brain enrichment. School-age care professionals need to provide a mix of child-directed and adult-directed activities. Research indicates that children can learn to play a musical instrument or speak a new language more easily before the age of ten, so school-age care professionals need to provide enriching experiences like music and language (Jensen, 1998). Knowing that motor stimulation and activities that require hand-eye coordination stimulate neural growth patterning, school-age care professionals need to provide sports and other novel sources of motor stimulation. Knowing that challenging problem solving helps grow a better brain, they need to involve children in and teach children about creative problem solving. They teach them to identify problems, redefine the problems as goals, brainstorm on possible solutions, select and implement solutions and follow through and follow up on the consequences of their actions, knowing that neural growth happens through the process of problem solving, regardless of the solution (Jensen, 1998).

In addition to real life problems children face, they also need to provide problem-solving opportunities through science, math and building projects. The brain is designed for music and art. Knowing music is a brain arouser, a carrier of words and a primer for the brain, they need to incorporate music into the experiences. Knowing how art has such a dramatic, positive, measurable, and long-lasting effect on brain development as well as social development, they need to provide creative and playful art experiences. When planning for experiences, they plan for building a sense of community and for brain enrichment rather than providing activity for the activities' sake.

### Vital Curriculum Planning Elements – NOVELTY is the key!

1. Active play and passive activity choices.
2. Opportunities to be creative: art (not packaged projects), drama, dance, music, & play.
3. Opportunities for the kids to be involved in the planning and operating of the program.
4. Diverse activity choices, which reflect on the cultures of the program and community.
5. Activities designed by older kids and with older kids in mind.



6. Opportunities for the program to be involved in helping the community.
7. Opportunities for children to develop life skills such as cooking, earning money, etc.
8. Opportunities for families to be involved in the school-age care program.
9. Long and short-term projects for children to see through to the end.
10. Have Fun! Fun, playful activities that children truly love!

## SuperVision

1. **FOCUS** your attention on the supervision of the children when you are with a group.
2. **TALK LATER** with other staff during staff meetings, lunch and after work. Do not spend time talking unnecessarily when you are supervising children.
3. **SPREAD OUT** when there's more than one staff person in an area so that you can supervise the entire activity area well.
4. **SEE EVERYONE** when you are talking to or playing with one child or a small group. Sit or stand so that the whole group is in your field of vision and keep your eyes moving.
5. **KEEP TRACK** of children who go from one area to another and children who go to the bathroom. Make sure the child gets to the supervised area or back from the bathroom in a reasonable time.
6. **STAY AHEAD** of the group when going from one area to another, so the group or individual children should never get into a new unsupervised area ahead of you. You must survey the area you are entering for safety hazards before entering. Don't let children run ahead of you even to the playground or activity room.
7. **PREVENT** trouble before it starts. Watch for potential trouble. If you think the kids are going something which is dangerous, **STOP** them. If they argue that someone else lets them do it, tell them that may be so, but you are in charge of safety now and you don't think it is safe. Discuss this conflict with the rest of the staff and develop consistent rules later, but for the moment go with your "gut" feeling.
8. **USE EQUIPMENT CORRECTLY.** Use all equipment and playground structures the way the equipment was meant to be used. For example, do not let children climb up the outside of slides. Do not allow children to walk tight-rope-style across the monkey bars. Do not allow children to jump off of swings. Do not help children onto equipment that they cannot climb onto and off of by themselves.
9. **PLAN AHEAD** for plenty of positive activity choices. Busy kids are easier to supervise than bored kids. Be sure that the children in your group have plenty of acceptable behavior options to choose.

### Discussion Questions:

1. How well are children supervised at your site?
2. Do children get into unsupervised areas?
3. Are they checked up on when they go to the bathroom?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your site in terms of supervision?
5. What are your individual strengths and weaknesses?
6. What can be done to improve the supervision of the team?

## Super Rituals

Children need an established routine that is consistent yet flexible, a routine that offers enough safety, autonomy and stimulation to meet the developmental needs of school-age children. A very stable routine without novelty and variety is boring, while a lot of novelty without the stability of routine is chaotic. The high amount of variety and novelty that is part of a good curriculum must be balanced by a stable routine and predictable rituals in order to improve the overall behavior of a school-age care program. The routine needs to provide stability without being rigid, so children can know the daily routine and follow it without many reminders.

Rituals are an integral part of a routine. Rituals are events and interactions that children enjoy and anticipate. Examples of rituals: a morning “huddle” before dismissing the morning program to school, music that signals clean up time, a welcome greeting from the whole program for new children, announcements before the field trip, being called by name every day, high fives as a common acknowledgement, etc.

# Super Powers

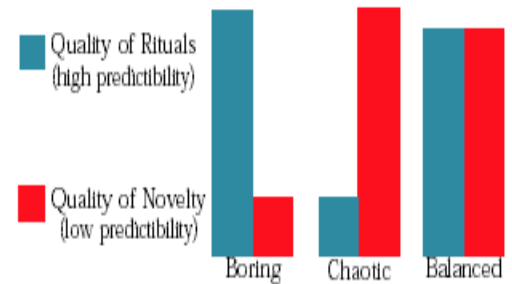
Think back to when you were a child. What did you do right after school? Did you go straight to the refrigerator for a snack? Did you get on your bike and ride around the neighborhood? Did you go straight to the phone or club house to talk with friends? Did you go straight to the couch and rest up for a while? If you could sit and watch children choose what they want to do right after school, you would notice that children today have the same needs as children did in your day. Some of them go straight for snacks; some run laps/burn off some energy; some rap with friends, and some go relax and nap.

In most school-age care programs, when the school bell rings, the children come to an activity area where they must wait quietly for attendance and announcements. Then they are "herded" to an area where they must sit and wait quietly for snack, and then to a staff directed activity or homework time or outdoor play. The staff programs with this routine become angry at the kids because the children won't follow the routine and stay quiet. It is common for staff in programs like these to experience heaviness, stress and burnout, while the children experience boredom and exhibit misbehavior. Staff in programs like this feel they must be "in charge" or "in control" of the children at all times which robs children of the opportunity to develop self-discipline and decision making skills. It's a bad way to start a day. The fact is some kids need to relax quietly right after school and some kids need a snack (naps and snacks). Some kids need to run off some energy and some kids need to talk to their friends (laps and raps).

Chances are you, the SAC professional, are still primarily a snacks, laps, raps or naps kid. What do you prefer to do when the work whistle blows? Now imagine - when you get off work someone meets you on your way out and says "Sit down and be quiet while we take attendance and talk to you." When they are finished someone says "Now you may eat, here's one graham cracker and a cup of red drink." Chances are these people would not have an easy job getting you to obey them.

Empowerment as part of the established routine allows kids to choose snacks, laps, raps or naps as soon as the school bell rings. Give them some time to settle in when they arrive and then begin the staff directed activities. It is much easier guiding children into appropriate activities of their own choosing (which meet their individual needs), than to force children into activities that they do not want (which do not meet their individual needs). When transition times happen, staff should clearly explain how the transition will happen. Supervision during transition times should be sufficient to ensure safety. Children should not move or wait in large groups or lines or wait a long time for an activity to start. Children should be able to meet their physical needs in a relaxed way – get drinks, go to the bathroom, and eat snacks as an activity choice without having to wait for the entire group. When moving as a group is required, children should not be forced to wait in silence. Prior planning to reduce unnecessary waiting results in fewer behavior problems resulting from boredom. Children should not be rushed to finish an activity, and children who finish an activity early should have a new activity choice to make. An empowering routine like this one provides the consistency that children need to anticipate what they need to do and how they need to behave.

## Reduce Discipline Problems: Alternate Between the Safety of Predictability and the Excitement of Novelty



# Super Strategies

- **Proximity:**

When you see or hear something taking place that you think might erupt into undesirable behavior, get closer! This serves as a visual reminder of the expectations and prevents misbehavior without adult interference.

- **Non-Verbal Cues**

Whenever possible, use non-verbal cues. Communicating positive or negative things non-verbally lessens a sense of embarrassment children may feel when they are publically praised or chastised.

- **Redirection**

When you see behaviors that are not so undesirable that the behavior should be punished or so desirable that the behavior should be reinforced, a possibility might be to redirect the behavior. For example, running inside might be redirected outside; throwing blocks might be redirected to throwing Frisbees.

- **Warnings**

When you see a behavior that isn't blatant disregard for the rules or disrespect of another person, the child may only need to be taught the expectation. For example, a child who takes the science equipment outside, may not know that the rule is to keep it in the science area, so a warning might be the appropriate response.

- **Novelty, Relevance & Feedback instead of Extrinsic Rewards**

Extrinsic rewards (prizes) are only effective for reinforcing simple physical behaviors. Complex social behaviors are only reinforced if the reward continues to be given indefinitely, and only if the value of the reward increases. We know that the brain is intrinsically rewarded through novelty, relevance, and feedback – these can lead to an increase in pro-social behavior in the long term and are much more rewarding than a prize out of a prize box.

- **Reinforcement**

Praise can be used ineffectively as a manipulative reward, but genuine acknowledgement and feedback about behaviors that are effective for the development of life skills is appropriate. Success is often reinforced and acknowledged, but even more importantly is to acknowledge EFFORT!

- **Positive Mental Images**

Our brains form mental images of words that it hears. If I say, "Do NOT visualize a big, pink gorilla" your brain makes an image of a big pink gorilla even though I told you not to imagine it. If I say, "Do not spill that milk" what image do I create? Right – spilled milk. I should have said, "Hold the milk carefully with both hands" to create a positive mental image. When we say, "Don't run!" – the brain sees an image of running. Choose language and post rules that elicit the mental image that we want to see such as, "Walk Slowly In the Multi-Purpose Room."



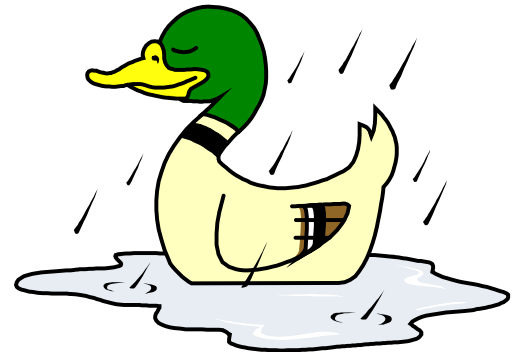
## Utilize Imaginations

### Visualize

Visioning is a common and effective strategy proven useful in many endeavors. Olympic athletes visualize themselves performing their specific feats, and this visualization is effective in helping them to perform better. Albert Einstein imagined himself traveling through the universe as a "man in a box" on a ray of light. This vision helped him develop the theory of general relativity. You can use this technique to help children manage their emotions or improve their behavior. During down times, come up with a place or behavior that they can visualize that is meaningful for them. For example, visualize a big open field to relax in or being a galloping horse that is slowing herself down by pulling on the reins. Then help kids to use their imaginations to visualize the place or behavior, so that they can calm themselves or improve their performance in real life.

### Code Words

When kids are in "fight, flight, or freeze" mode, their limbic system is controlling their brain and their behavior. Their emotions are high and it is difficult to reason and think. This is not the time to lecture them on appropriate strategies and behavior, but a code word might be able to make it through the "white noise" caused by the strong emotions. In quiet times talk to them about a metaphor (such as shrugging of stress like a duck shrugs off water, or pulling your head into your shell like a turtle, or shoveling less coal into your steam engine). Then during stressful times, you can use a code word like, "Make like a duck/turtle/train" to remind them of the strategy you discussed in your quiet down time.



### Role Play

Role playing can provide a non-threatening way to practice an interaction or developing social skill. Imagine that a child rattles to you about another child who takes his toy. You can give the child strategies and vocabulary to use to get their toy back. Teach them to use strong body language and strong verbal skills to communicate to the other child. Role play the situation with the child pretending you are the person who took his toy. When the child becomes confident role playing the scenario with you, support the child in solving his own problem by being close by (having his back) when he confronts the child who took his toy.

## Loss of Privileges instead of "Time Out."

I define "time out" as when a child breaks a rule, the adult forces him to sit and "think about what you did wrong" for a predetermined time, say one minute per year the child is old (a nine year old gets nine minutes of time out). This is a classic cop out and does not teach the child anything. If a child breaks a rule or does not meet his expectations in an activity that he is responsible for, it is OK to remove that privilege. For example, if a rule of the swimming pool is "No dunking" and the child dunks another child it is OK for the child to lose their privilege of swimming. The difference is that the child does not get his privilege back when the "big hand gets on the 5" but when they show a change in attitude or change in behavior – they agree that they will not dunk anyone else.

## Peace Out instead of "Time Out"

As mentioned earlier, when kids are in "fight, flight, or freeze" mode, their limbic system is controlling their brain and their behavior. Their emotions are high and it is difficult to reason and think. They need time to get control of their emotions before thinking about more effective behaviors. Don't say, "Go take a "time out" because children have learned that this is a punishment, so they get more stressed out! Say something like, "I can see you are upset, I don't know what happened, I don't want to know right now. Go be by yourself (make like a duck), breathe slowly and deeply, relax. When YOU are ready, we can talk about it."

## Logical Consequences

Logical consequences are consequences that an adult imposes on a child who breaks a rule. The child must complete his consequence in order to earn back his privileges. Natural consequences are imposed by nature – when you put your hand on a hot stove, you get burned – EVERY TIME. Logical consequences should mimic natural consequences in their consistency. In our programs, the kids help predetermine the logical consequences for specified misbehaviors in

advance, so the adult merely points out the necessity of performing a logical consequence that the community of kids predetermined. One important point is that logical consequences must be related to the offense (doing something constructive to pay for doing something destructive); they must be reasonable (completed in a sensible amount of time – developmentally appropriate); and they must be respectful (considerate to the child as a human being).

## Feedback

Feedback is important to the brain and learning. Feedback can be delivered by peers, adults, or from the child's own internal speech. When you give feedback to a child to help him learn and understand, it should be immediate, specific and objective. Immediate – at the point of performance, not when his mom arrives to take him home at the end of the day. Specific and objective – not how YOU feel about his actions, but exactly what his actions looked like or sounded like; for example, today you interrupted the teacher making announcements 4 times.

## Challenge

Children learn best when they are challenged.

Developmentally a child might be at a level in relation to the ability to do a task or elicit a behavior where he can do the task easily – no problem – no challenge. Or a task might be so difficult that he cannot do it even with help from a peer or an adult – not developmentally appropriate even with help. Children learn best when they are in between these two levels – where they can do the task, but it is challenging and they need a little instruction, a little help, a little guidance. When we challenge kids at this level, we have the most leverage, the most ability to help them to grow, learn, and develop.

## Restitution

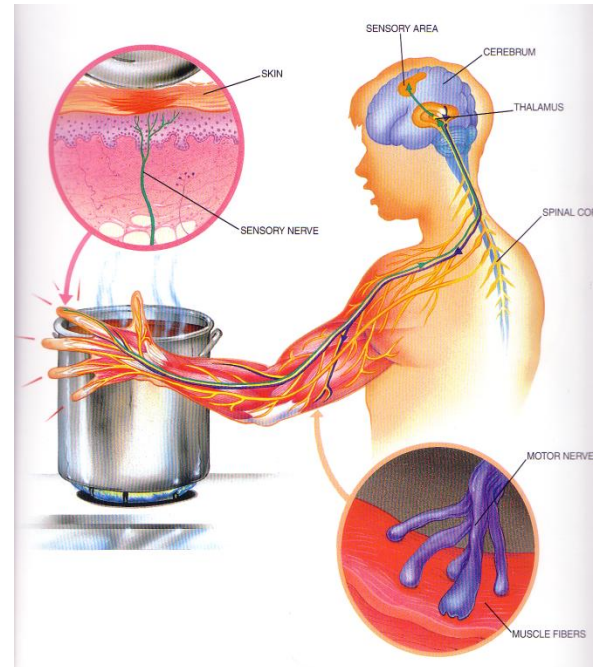
We talked earlier about logical consequences. Restitution is a step beyond logical consequences. It is only developmentally appropriate for children who have some knowledge, experience, or ability to understand how you can pay for a mistake by doing something to make it right. Restitution as a response to severe disruptions is a brain-based approach because the brain learns best with feedback that's immediate and specific.

Interestingly, the word discipline is derived from the Latin word "disciplus" which means "to learn." Over the years, most educators have equated the word discipline with something harsh or evil. The truth is, the more discipline people have the greater the mastery they have in their own lives.

Specifically, restitution is the act of repairing the damage or "making right" the wrong. You can not undo the damage, but you can provide compensation for anyone who was wronged. The concept is not new. Restitution is not for every single infraction, just the more severe ones. It is certainly not the only answer, but it does provide a better framework than making children feel guilty or like a criminal.

The basics of restitution are as follows:

- It is all right to make a mistake.
- You are not a bad person.
- You may not even have intended for this to happen.
- Nevertheless, someone was harmed or wronged.
- Now, how are you going to right the wrong?



IF YOU ONLY HAVE A  
HAMMER, EVERY PROBLEM  
LOOKS LIKE A NAIL



- Restitution takes into consideration amends to the victim and self-reparation of the offender.
- Restitution is self-discipline, not teacher-punished.
- Self-restitution allows offender to heal self; this is positive development.
- Forgiveness by the victim is not restitution. It may offer relief, but does not set the stage for positive growth by an act of compensation. "It's OK to say you are sorry, NOW what are you going to do to fix it?"
- Consequences do not allow reparation to the person wronged. When a child is given a consequence, and completes it – he/she is returned to a neutral state. When a child makes restitution he/she grows and learns.

## Restitution is most effective when these critical qualities are present:

1. It is seen by both victim and offender as adequate.
2. Requires effort by the offender.
3. It leaves no residual bad feelings.
4. It requires enough compensation that it is less likely to be repeated in the future.
5. It is relevant to the general area of the offense.
6. The offender sees and experiences the long-term value of developing their self-discipline.
7. It is tied to values – how we treat people.
8. It is always offered as a choice, never imposed. If a child does not choose restitution, use an alternative consequence.

## Examples of restitution:

### Inappropriate Action

Name-calling/verbal abuse  
 Damage clothing of another  
 Waste classroom time  
 Treat teacher abusively  
 Deface/damage property  
 Stealing Apology  
 Making a mess  
 Other infractions

### Appropriate Restitution

Apology or give compliments  
 Repair or Replace clothing  
 Provide special contribution to class  
 Letter of apology  
 Clean it/Repair it/Replace it  
 Ask owner what would make it right  
 Clean up, plus extra  
 Ask child, "How will you fix this?"

Restitution should not replace a set of rules and consequences that the caregiver and children co-create. It is not for every child, every time. It is an optional way that some children, who wrong others, can make things right. In the process, a great deal of social responsibility can be learned. But the process has to be optional. Let us say a child is asked the question, "How do you plan to repair the wrong?" If the child wants to make it right, but does not know how, provide some direction. If the child simply refuses, that is acceptable. Some children are not yet ready for this level of accountability. Move them towards self-responsibility so that over time, they will be more prepared.



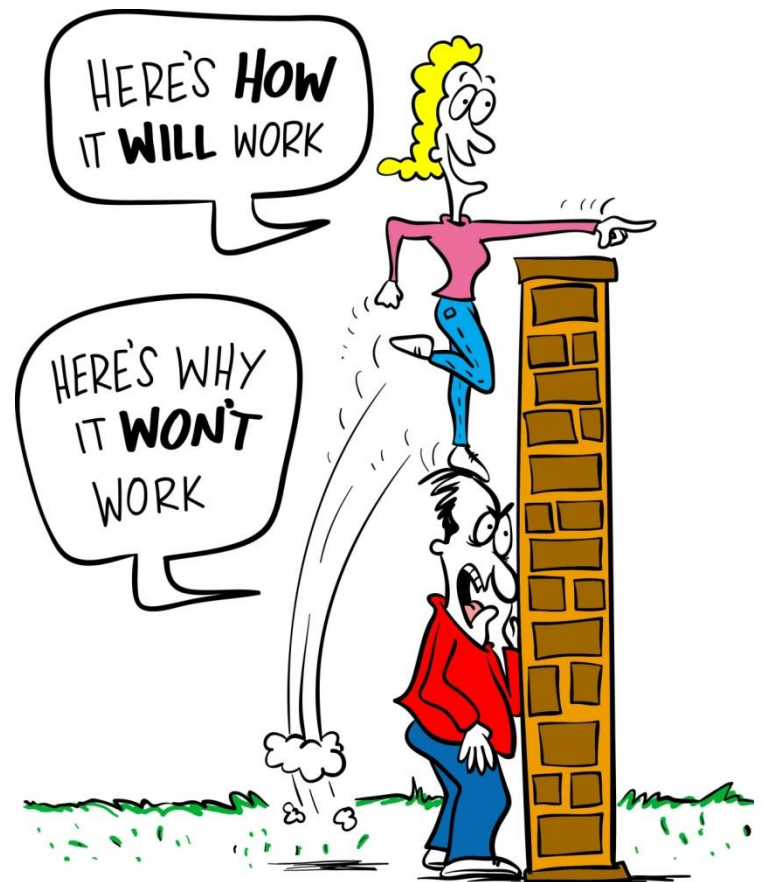
## Request Help

### Suggestion Circles

Sometimes you may be hitting a wall, but a colleague can see another way you can succeed. Diversity of ideas is a powerful resource. It leads to better problem solving. The next time someone on your team asks for some help with ideas to solve a problem or a suggestion, try a suggestion circle to maximize the diversity of thought.

Here's how it works.

- Everyone stands up. This keeps people from expounding endlessly on their suggestions.
- Designate one person to write down all of the suggestions, so the person asking for help can pay attention, and still have a record of ideas.
- Instruct the person asking for help to again rephrase the problem or the request for ideas, so that everyone understands the issue.
- Tell the person that asked for help that because the quantity of ideas is the goal, they may only respond to suggestions offered with **ONLY** two words – “Thank You.”
- By only saying only, “Thank you.” The person asking for help will not run the risk of “fire-hosing” people’s ideas and unintentionally limiting creativity. Even if the person has already tried the suggestion or knows it won’t work – “Thank You.”
- When the brainstorming is complete. Give the person requesting help the list of suggestions, so he can decide what if any suggestions to take.



## Conclusion

The goal of a brain-based discipline approach is to support the child to develop greater self-discipline. Caregivers deal with three primary types of discipline problems: (1) Severe problems —harming people or property, including severe disrespect, defacing or destroying property, profanity, threats, unprovoked violence, evading supervision; (2) Minor problems—showing disrespect, throwing harmless objects, being in a prohibited area, taking or moving others’ things, noise disruptions; (3) Group behavior problems —involving many or most of the children in the program; 50-90% of the class out of control with inappropriateness, but no harm is eminent.

The two primary responses to misbehavior, depending on whether the problem is severe or minor, individual or group, are: handle the problem on the spot with immediate action and feedback, or use more "invisible discipline" which allows you to deal with the issue without the child being aware of it (redirection or changing the environment). Reducing adult imposed threat is important so that you're not encouraging a "prison warden" atmosphere; you're not linking up negative states with the program, causing kids to learn to hate school-age care, and you're making school more true to the real-world.