

How the Brain Deals with Stress

(fear, danger, emotional stress...)

(Adapted from Bruce Perry & Helen Benedict)

<i>Child's attempt at adaptive response</i>	Rest	Vigilance/Caution	Freeze	Flight	Fight
<i>Condition when child first experiences some degree of perceived threat</i>	Calm	Arousal (elevated heart rate)	Alarm	Meltdown (fear)	Meltdown (terror)
<i>Ability to think</i>	Abstract	Concrete	Emotional	Reacts	Reflex
<i>Regulating brain region</i>	Neocortex (cortex)	Cortex (limbic)	Limbic (midbrain)	Midbrain (brainstem)	Brainstem (autonomic)
<i>Predictable ESCALATING behaviors</i> <i>(Responses to avoid)</i>	Talking, Poking, Noise, Television	Communicating from a distance, Complicated directions, Ultimatums, Caregiver's frustration or anxiety, TIME-OUTS	Raised voice, Raised hand, Shaking finger, Yelling or threatening voice, Chaos in setting	Louder yelling, More frustration, Caregiver's fear or dysregulation	Grabbing, Shaking, Screaming, Inappropriate physical restraint
<i>Predictable DE-ESCALATING behaviors</i> <i>(Responses to use)</i>	Being present, Quiet, Rocking	Eye contact, Quiet voice, Simple & clear directions, TIME-INS	Touch (slow, sure, invited), Singing, Humming, Quiet melodic words	Presence of a self-regulated caregiver, Quiet confidence that the child can get through this, Non-confrontation	Withdrawal from problematic situation, Appropriate physical restraint