

# COUNSELING CONNECTION

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## Connections

---MAKING CONNECTIONS IS KEY---

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It might seem like a never-ending battle. Figuring out how to respond to the whining, tantrums, tears, and what can feel like deliberate disrespect of your parenting wishes.

Often times, a child who is acting out by screaming or hitting is trying to communicate that something doesn't feel right. They might feel disconnected and need something from **you**. This is why responding with anger, yelling, grounding, or timeout sometimes may not work the way you had hoped, especially in the long-term; it may not meet their true need.

Offering connection can open up the door for communication about their feelings, which can lead to more understanding for both of you. When the connection has been made, it will be easier to go over the rules again, setting clear limits and consequences.

**REMEMBER! A CHILD WHO FEELS CONNECTED TO YOU HAS LESS OF A NEED TO ACT OUT BECAUSE ONE OF THEIR MOST IMPORTANT NEEDS IS ALREADY BEING MET.**

### Ideas for Connecting:

EVERY CHILD AND PARENT CRAVES AND RESPONDS TO CONNECTION IN DIFFERENT WAYS, SO IT'S IMPORTANT TO FIND WHAT WORKS FOR YOUR FAMILY.

- SCHEDULE A REGULAR HANG OUT TIME (PLAY A GAME, READ A BOOK, GO TO THE PARK, DO SOMETHING THAT YOU BOTH ENJOY TOGETHER).
- COME UP WITH A SPECIAL GOODBYE RITUAL (HANDSHAKE, SONG, CERTAIN WORDS, ETC)
- OFFER A HUG, HIGH FIVE, FIST BUMP, SOMETHING THAT REQUIRES TOUCH!
- PLAY IN THEIR WORLD-GET DOWN TO THEIR LEVEL, USE THEIR TOYS WITH THEM, GET SILLY, USE YOUR IMAGINATION!
- SHARE YOUR FAVORITE GAME, TOY, OR MOVIE FROM WHEN YOU WERE A KID.
- RECOGNIZE THEIR FEELINGS AND BE WITH THEM WHILE THEY ARE SAD/ANGRY/SCARED/EXCITED.
- ASK DETAILED QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR DAY AND **JUST LISTEN!**



**"A melting down, acting-out child is one that is longing for connection."**