

Simply THE BEST

BARKING ABBEY
PARENTAL NEWSLETTER 6

Parental involvement is consistently associated with pupils' success at school

Your Role Matters...

Every 2 weeks your child is introduced to a **BEST Learning Habit** at school, please ensure that you:

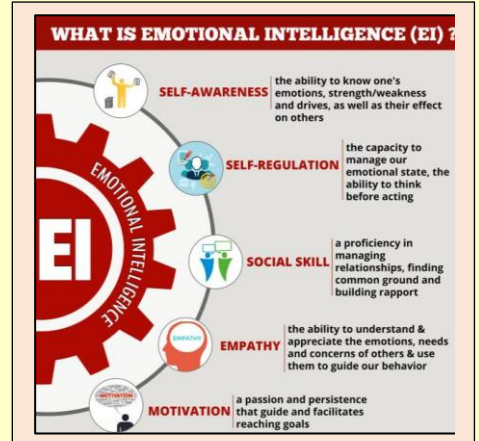
1. Explain what it means
2. Show your child how to model the behaviour
3. Offer plenty of examples of how other members of the family have modelled the behaviour

(Please use the resource for tips to help you, or find out more from:

<http://www.barkingabbeyschool.co.uk/assets/Uploads/Documents/The-Best-Learning-Habits-for-Parental-guidance.pdf>

Are some people born with better self-control?

Psychologists have studied why children excel at self-control: The "[marshmallow test](#)" by Mischel at Stanford University in the 1960's: 4-year-old children were presented with a marshmallow and told they could either eat it now, or wait 15 minutes and receive two. Some children ate it immediately, and some waited the full 15 minutes and received the reward of a second one. When he followed up later, **he found that the 4-year-olds who waited for two marshmallows turned into adults who were better adjusted, were less likely to abuse drugs, had higher self-esteem, had better relationships, were better at handling stress, obtained higher degrees and earned more money.**



Here is our fortnightly learning habit and some tips to guide you:

Self-Regulation

Being able to understand and know yourself, control your actions, work out what is the most appropriate response or course of action; know your impact on others.

Self-Control

1. STOP
2. Think
3. What could happen?
4. Is that what I want?

Behaviours that you can develop:

Stopping and thinking before acting, being rational, having control over your emotions and actions, doing the right thing, following the rules and values of a community or society

Top Tips Students

- Ensure that you follow the established school routines and expectations without being asked to e.g. line up, using an indoor voice in the corridors
- Research the punishments/sanctions given to people in society who break rules/laws. Consider why self-regulation is so important in society.

Parents

- Encourage your child to self-regulate, discuss the expectations at home and at BA and routines to achieve these and the reasons behind them.
- Look at examples of people in the news or from history who have not been able to self-regulate their behaviour and discuss the impact of this on their lives and on others.

Remember

What is rewarded is repeated

At the core of successful and lifelong learning, is self-regulation.

Are some people born with better self-control? Far from it....

The researchers continued to conduct a lot of variations on the test. In some of their studies, more children were able to resist — **because the researchers taught them how**, self-control and delayed gratification are essential **life skills that can be learned**.

The part of the brain for reasoning, problem solving, comprehension, impulse-control, creativity and perseverance is **the prefrontal cortex**. These functions are needed when we have to focus and think, mentally play with ideas, use our short-term working memory, and think before reacting in any situation; a well-developed prefrontal cortex can improve academic and life outcomes.

10 EXERCISES FOR YOUR PREFRONTAL CORTEX



1 Put on your rose coloured glasses.



Create a positive future story; optimism is associated with rising levels of dopamine which engages the brain.

6 Offer and receive physical contact.



Give and take hugs to literally soothe the brain with calming inhibitory peptides.

2 Follow a sleep routine.



At the end of the day, choose a pleasant activity that brings your day to a peaceful end. Getting adequate sleep is connected with memory function.

7 Create mnemonics and cartoons to help remember.



These skills call on the prefrontal cortex and Executive Functions to access working memory. By integrating jokes, riddles and puns you can also learn to think flexibly by shifting between different meanings and associations of words.

3 Deny the drama.



Avoid getting caught up in gossip, what-if's and theatrical reactions (other people's too). Drama fires up the amygdala that gets the prefrontal cortex off its game.

8 Play!



Make-belief play, in particular strengthens Executive Functions.

4 Move your body.



With sports, dance, martial arts, yoga or other active pursuits

9 Be of service and volunteer.



The social and mental activity required sends blood rushing to the prefrontal cortex.

5 Find ways to express your gratitude.



Gratitude activities increase positive emotions which then activates the prefrontal cortex.

10 Learn to juggle.



Learning any new and engaging activity fires off neurons in a positive way. Other activities that require focus and practice such as dancing, circus arts, music, theatre and sports are predicted to significantly strengthen Executive Function.

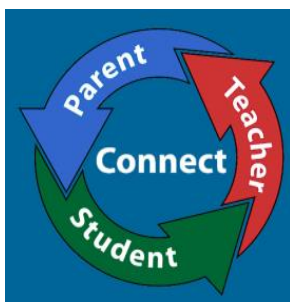
An example of dysregulation and suggested strategies for dealing with it

Child demonstrating 'controlling' behaviour, such as passively refusing to do what you ask, or using delaying tactics

Remember that they are often not consciously trying to control or frustrate you. Their desire for control may be a learned survival technique which they continue to use because it served them well early in their lives. Because control is linked to the child's concept of survival, they will often initiate control battles unnecessarily. Restate the request i.e. "When you have finished xx, come and see me so we can xx", "Thanks for putting your clothes away, you are a great help" (even though they haven't started the task!). This explicitly voices your belief that your request will occur. A home life that has clearly articulated routines eliminates some battles. For example, a jobs list with ticks or stars for completion and consequences for non-completion gives choice back to the child.

Additional strategies and tools to help you support your child to self-regulate

- Accept your child's emotional outbursts as a form of communication, recognising that the behaviours are not intentional nor a deliberate attempt to make parenting hard for you.
- Provide stability and consistency as much as possible, such as predictable routines and clear household rules.
- Model self-control and self-regulation in your words and actions.
- Try to learn what the triggers are for your child, for example, parent being late; aggressive voices; particular smells; being told "No"; chaotic environments. This will help you to be prepared and find alternatives and also help your child to understand their triggers.



To check whether your child has received BEST points you can use SIMS Parent <https://www.sims-parent.co.uk> or download the SIMS Parent App for your smartphone. Invites to SIMS parent have already been sent to all parents, if you have not received one or need further help please email itsupport@barkingabbey.school.co.uk