

Type of Integration	Whole-brain strategy	Applications of the strategy Infant/ Toddler (0-3)	Applications of the Strategy Preschooler (3-6)	Applications of the Strategy: Early School Age (6-9)	Applications of the Strategy: Later School Age (9-12)
Integrating the Left and Right Brain	<p>1: Connect and redirect: When your child is upset, connect first emotionally. Then once they are more in control and receptive, bring in the lessons and disciplines</p> <p>2: Name it to tame it: When big emotions are raging out of control, help your child tell the story about what's upsetting them. In doing so they will use their brain to make sense of the experience and feel more in control.</p>	<p>1: As early as possible teach your child about emotions. Mirror feelings and use nonverbals (like hugs and empathetic facial expressions) to show that you understand: <i>You're frustrated, aren't you?</i> Then once you've connected, set the boundary: <i>Biting hurts. Please be gentle.</i> Finally, focus on an appropriate alternative or move on to something else: <i>Hey, there's your bear. I haven't seen him in a long time.</i></p> <p>2: Even at a young age, make it a habit to acknowledge and name feelings: <i>You look so sad. That really hurt, didn't it?</i> Then tell the story. With small children, you'll need to be the primary narrator. Use your words and even act out the fall or the bump, possibly using humor, and watch your child's fascination. It can be helpful to make a homemade book with pictures or photos to retell an upsetting story, or to prepare your child for a transition, like a new bedtime routine or starting preschool.</p>	<p>1: First, lovingly hear what's upset your child. Hug them and repeat back to them what you've heard with nurturing nonverbal communication: <i>You're disappointed that Molly can't come over, right?</i> Then, once you've connected, help direct her/him towards problem solving and more appropriate behavior: <i>I know you're upset, but you need to be gentle with Mommy. Do you have another idea for playing? Maybe we could see if Molly can come over sometime this week.</i></p> <p>2: Whether it's a "small-t" or "big-T" trauma, you can start the storytelling process almost right away (once you've connected with your child's emotions). At this age, they'll need you to take the lead: <i>You know what I saw? I saw you running, and when your foot hit that slippery spot, you fell. Is that what happened? If they continue the story, great.</i> But if needed, you can continue: <i>So, then you started crying, and I ran over to you and...</i> It can be helpful to make a homemade book with drawings or photos to retell an upsetting story, or to prepare your child for a transition, like a new bedtime routine or starting school.</p>	<p>1: Listen first, then repeat how your child is feeling. At the same time, use your nonverbal communication to comfort. Hugs and physical touch, along with empathetic facial expressions, remain powerful tools for calming big emotions. Then redirect through problem solving and, depending on the circumstance, discipline and boundary setting.</p> <p>2: Whether it's a "small-t" or "big-t" trauma, you can start the storytelling process almost right away (once you've connected with your child's emotions). With a school-age child you need to balance taking the lead and letting them tell the story. Ask lots of questions: <i>Did you just not notice that the swing was coming toward you? Or What did your teacher do when he said that to you? What happened after that?</i> It can be helpful to make a homemade book with drawings or photos to retell an upsetting story, or to prepare your child for something they are dreading, like a visit to the dentist or a move.</p>	<p>1: Listen first, then reflect back on how your child is feeling by naming the emotion. Be careful not to condescend or talk down to them. Just echo what you hear, and use nonverbals. Even though your child is growing up, they still want to be nurtured by you. Once they feel heard, it's time to redirect to planning, and, if necessary, discipline. Show your child the respect of speaking clearly and directly. They're old enough to hear and understand a logical explanation of the situation and any resulting consequences.</p> <p>2: First, acknowledge feelings. This is no less true for a big child than it is for a small one (or an adult). Just express, explicitly, what you observe: <i>I don't blame you for being upset. I would be, too.</i> Then facilitate the storytelling. Ask questions and be present, but let them tell their own story, in their own time. Especially in painful moments, it's important that children talk about what's happened to them. We can't force them to do so; we can only be patient and present and allow them to talk when they're ready. If your child doesn't want to talk to you about it, suggest journaling, or help them find someone they will talk to.</p>

<p>Integrating the Upstairs and Downstairs</p>	<p>3: Engage, don't enrage: In high-stress situations, engage your child's upstairs brain by asking them to consider, plan and choose; rather than triggering their downstairs brain, which is less about thinking and more about reacting.</p> <p>4: Use it or lose it: Provide lots of opportunities to exercise the upstairs brain so it can be strong and integrated with the downstairs brain and the body.</p>	<p>3: Nobody likes to be told "no", and it's an especially ineffective strategy to use too often with toddlers. When possible, avoid outright power struggles with your little one. Save your no for when you really need it. The next time you hear yourself beginning to forbid them from hitting the mirror with the stick, stop. Instead, engage their brain: <i>Let's go outside. What could you do with that stick in the yard?</i></p> <p>4: As often as possible, find ways to let your child use their upstairs brain and make decisions for themselves. <i>Do you want to wear your blue or red shirt today? Would you like milk or water with dinner?</i> When you read together, ask brain-growing questions: <i>How do you think the kitty will get down from the tree? Why does the girl look sad?</i></p>	<p>3: Setting clear boundaries is important, but we often say no more than we need to. When your child is upset, be creative. Instead of saying, <i>We don't act that way.</i> What's another way you could handle that? Instead of <i>I don't like the way you're talking</i>, try, <i>can you think of another way to say that, one that will be more polite?</i> Then praise them when they use their upstairs brain to come up with alternatives. A great question to help avoid power struggles is, <i>Can you come up with an idea for how we can both get what we want?</i></p> <p>4: In addition to introducing your child to shapes, letters and numbers, play "What would you do?" games that present them with hypothetical dilemmas. <i>What would you do if you were at the park and found a toy that you really wanted, but you knew it belonged to someone else?</i> Read together and ask your child to predict how the story will end. Also, give them lots of opportunities to make decisions for themselves, even (and especially) when it's difficult.</p>	<p>3: As always, connect first. Avoid immediately playing the "Because I said so!" card. Your child's upstairs brain is blossoming right now, so let it do its job. Explain your reasons, invite questions, ask for alternative solutions, and even negotiate. You're the authority in the relationship, and there's no place for disrespect, but you can encourage your child to come up with different approaches to discipline or learning a lesson. When we expect and facilitate more sophisticated thinking, we're less likely to get a reactive, fighting response.</p> <p>4: Play "What would you do?" games and present your child with dilemmas: <i>If a bully was picking on someone at school and there were no adults around, what would you do?</i> Encourage empathy and self-understanding through reflective dialogues about how others feel, and about their own intentions, desires, and beliefs. Also, let your child struggle with difficult decisions and situations. Whenever you can do so responsibly, avoid solving and resist rescuing, even when they make minor mistakes or not-so-great choices. After all, your goal here isn't perfection on every decision right now, but an optimally developed conscious brain down the road.</p>	<p>3: This is one of the worst ages to play "Because I said so!" card. Instead, encourage your child's blossoming upstairs brain by appealing to it whenever you can. Maintain your authority in the relationship, but as much as possible, discuss alternatives and negotiate with them when it comes to rules and discipline. Be respectful and creative as you help them improve their higher-order thinking questions by asking them to participate with you in making decisions and coming up with solutions.</p> <p>4: Hypothetical situations become more and more fun as a child's brain develops. Play "What would you do?" games and present your child with dilemmas. These games can be purchased, but you can come up with your own situations: <i>If your friends mother had been drinking before she was supposed to drive you home, how would you handle it?</i> Encourage empathy and self-understanding through reflective dialogues about how others feel, and your child's own intentions, desires, and beliefs. Also, let them struggle with difficult decisions and situations, even when they make minor mistakes or not-so-great choices. After all, your goal here isn't perfection on every decision right now, but an optimally developed upstairs brain down the road.</p>
<p>Integrating the Upstairs</p>	<p>5: Move it or lose it: A powerful way to help a child regain upstairs-</p>	<p>5: When your child is upset, make sure to acknowledge their</p>	<p>5: Kids this age love to move. So, when your child is upset, and after you've</p>	<p>5: Connect with your child when they're upset, then find ways to get them moving. Get on your</p>	<p>5: Be direct about how moving their body can help shift your child's mood. Especially when they're</p>

and Downstairs	downstairs balance is to have them move his/her body.	feelings. This should always be your first move. But then, as quickly as possible, get them moving. Play follow the leader. Race them to their bedroom and back. Get them to move and you'll change their mood.	acknowledged their feelings, give them reasons to move their body. Play "keep it up" with a balloon. Toss a ball back and forth while they're telling you why they're upset. Moving the body is a powerful way to change a mood.	bikes together. Play "keep it up" with a balloon or try some yoga poses. Depending on your particular child, you may need to be more direct about what you're doing. Don't feel that you need to "trick" them or hide your strategy. Be direct and explain to them the "move it or lose it" concept, then use the lesson to teach them that we can actually control our moods to a significant extent.	upset, explain how helpful it is to take a break and get up and move. Suggest a bike ride or a walk, or do something physically active with them, such as playing Ping-Pong. Even taking a break to stretch or play with a yo-yo can help.
Integrating Memory	<p>6: Use the remote of the mind: After an upsetting event, the internal remote lets a child pause, rewind, and fast-forward a story as they tell it, so they can maintain control over how much of it they view.</p> <p>7: Remember to remember: Help your kids exercise their memory by giving them lots of practices at remembering.</p>	<p>6: Children this small may not know about a remote, but they know the power of a story. Enjoy this time when your child wants to tell (and retell) stories. Rather than pausing and fast-forwarding, you may end up simply pressing play repeatedly as you tell the same story multiple times. Even if you feel annoyed at having to go over the account again and again, remember the storytelling produces understanding, healing and integration.</p> <p>7: At this age, ask simple questions, focusing on returning your child's attention to the details of their day. <i>We went to Carrie's house today, didn't we? And do you remember what we did there?</i> Questions like these are the building blocks for an integrated memory system.</p>	<p>6: Most likely, your preschooler loves telling stories. Encourage this. Tell stories about anything that happens: good, bad, and in-between. And when a significant event occurs, be willing to narrate and re-narrate the story. Even if your child may not know much about remote controls. They may be able to "go back" and "pause" their story. They'll be delighted to hear you tell, and help you tell and retell, the story of any big moment in their life. So be prepared to "press play" over and over again- and know that when you do, you're promoting and healing the integration.</p> <p>7: Ask questions that exercise the memory: <i>What did Ms. Alvarez think of the robot you took in for sharing today? Remember when Uncle Chris took you to get a snow cone?</i> Play memory game that ask your child to match up pairs or find like items, maybe pictures of friends and family</p>	<p>6: A child this age may shy away from retelling difficult stories or recalling painful memories. Help them understand the importance of looking at what's happening to them. Be gentle, nurturing, and give them the power to pause the story at any point, and even to fast-forward past unpleasant details. But make sure that at some point, even if it's later on, you rewind and tell the entire story, including even the painful parts.</p> <p>7: In the car, at the dinner table, wherever, help your child talk about her/his experiences, so s/he can integrate her/his implicit and explicit memories. This is especially important when it comes to the most important moments of their life, like family experiences, important friendships, and rites of passage. Simply by asking questions and encouraging recollection, you can help them remember and understand important events from the past,</p>	<p>6: As they approach adolescence, your child may become more reluctant to talk with you about painful experiences. Explain the importance of implicit memory, and how the associations of a past experience can still affect them. Teach them that they can gain control over an experience by retelling the story. Be gentle and nurturing and give them the power to pause the story at any point, and even to fast-forward past unpleasant details. But make sure that at some point, even if it's later on, you rewind and tell the entire story, including the painful parts.</p> <p>7: In the car and at the dinner table, in scrapbooks or journals, help your child think about their experiences, so they can integrate their implicit and explicit memories. This is especially important when it comes to the most important moments of their life, like family experiences, important friendships, and rites of passage. Simply by asking questions and encouraging recollection, you can help them remember and understand important events from the past, which will help them</p>

			with specific stories or memories. Especially on important events you want them to remember, take turns talking about the details that stood out for each of you.	which will help them better understand what's happening to them in the present.	better understand what's happening to them in the present.
Integrating the Many Parts of Myself	8: Let the clouds of emotion roll by: Remind kids that feelings come and go. Fear, frustration, and loneliness are temporary states, not enduring traits.	8: Lay the foundation for an awareness of the difference between "feel" and "am". When young children feel sad (or angry or afraid), they have a hard time understanding that they won't always feel that way. So help them say, <i>"I feel sad right now, but I know I'll be happy later."</i> Be careful, though, that you don't dismiss the actual feelings. Acknowledge the present emotion and provide comfort, then help your child understand that they won't feel sad forever, that they will feel better soon.	8: One reason big feelings can be so uncomfortable for small children is that they don't view those emotions as temporary. So, while you comfort your child when they upset, teach them that feelings come and go. Help them see that it's good to acknowledge their emotions, but it's also good to realize that even though they're sad (or angry or scared) right now, they'll probably be happy again in a few minutes. You can even "lead the witness" and ask, <i>When do you think you'll feel better?</i>	8: Help your child pay attention to the words they use when they talk about their feelings. There's nothing wrong with saying, "I'm scared." But help them understand that another way to say it is, "I feel scared". This minor shift in vocabulary can help them understand the subtle but important distinction between "feel" and "am". They may feel afraid in the moment, but that experience is temporary, not permanent. To give them perspective, ask them how they expect to feel in five minutes, five hours, five days, five months, and five years.	8: Your child is old enough to understand this point on a conscious level, but be sure to hear their feelings before you teach this information. Then, once you've validated their feeling, help them understand that the feeling won't last forever. Highlight the subtle but important distinction between "I feel sad" and "I am sad." To give them perspective, ask them how they expect to feel in five minutes, five hours, five days, five months and five years.
Integrating the Many Parts of Myself	9: SIFT: Help your child notice and understand the Sensations, Images, Feelings, and Thoughts within them. 10: Exercise mindfulness: Mindfulness practices teach children to calm themselves and focus	9: Help your child become aware of and talk about their internal world. Ask questions that guide them toward noticing bodily sensations (Are you hungry?), mental images (What do you picture when you think about Grandma's house?), feelings (It's frustrating when the blocks fall, isn't it?), and thoughts (What do you think will happen when Jill comes over tomorrow?)	9: Talk to your child about their inner world. Help them understand that they can notice and talk about what's going on in their mind and body. They probably won't be ready for the acronym SIFT yet, but you can help them ask questions that guide them toward noticing bodily sensations (<i>Are you hungry?</i>), mental images (<i>What do you picture when you think about Grandmas house</i>), feelings (<i>It's frustrating when friends don't share, isn't it?</i>) and	9: Introduce the wheel of awareness. Also, play the SIFT game in the car or at dinner and actually teach your child the acronym. Help them understand that we need to notice what's going on within ourselves if we want to control the way we feel and act. Ask questions that guide them toward noticing bodily sensations (Are you hungry?), mental images (What do you picture when you think about Grandma's house?), feelings (It's not fun to feel left out, is it?), and thoughts (What	9: Some kids this age may actually be interested in the concept of SIFTing to see what's going on inside themselves. Understanding these categories can give them some measures of control over their lives, which, as they move toward being teenagers, will increasingly feel more and more chaotic. Also, this is a great age to regularly use the wheel of awareness to help understand and respond to issues that arise. 10: Explain to your child the significant benefits of getting calm

	<p>their attention where they want.</p>	<p>10: Even small children can learn to be still and take calm breaths, if only for a few seconds. Have your child lie on their back and place a toy on their stomach. Show them how to take slow, big breaths to make the toy go up and down. Keep this exercise very short since they're so young. Just let them experience the feeling of being still, quiet, and peaceful.</p>	<p>thoughts (<i>What do you think will happen at school tomorrow?</i>)</p> <p>10: At this age, kids can practice taking calm breaths, especially if you keep the exercises brief. Have your child lie on their back, and place a toy on the stomach. Show them how to take slow big breaths to make the toy go up and down. You can also tap into your child's vivid imagination at this age to give them practice focusing attention and shifting their emotional state: <i>Imagine that you are resting on the warm sand at the beach and you are feeling calm and happy.</i></p>	<p>do you think will happen at school tomorrow?).</p> <p>10: Children this age can understand and feel the benefits of getting calm and focusing the mind. Give them practice at being still and quiet and let them enjoy the calm within. By guiding their mind through visualization and imagination, show them that they have the ability to focus their attention on thoughts and feelings that bring them happiness and peace. Show them that anytime they need to calm themselves, they can simply slow down and pay attention to their breathing.</p>	<p>and focusing the mind. Give them practice at being still and quiet and let them enjoy the calm within. Show them that she has the ability to focus their attention on thoughts and feelings that bring them happiness and peace. Introduce them to some of the practices, such as guided visualizations and focusing on their breath, or look at some of the infinite resources you'll find at the library or online.</p>
Integrating Self and Others	<p>11: Increase the family fun factor: Build fun into the family, so that your kids enjoy positive and satisfying experiences with the people they're with the most.</p> <p>12: Connect through conflict: Rather than an obstacle to avoid, view conflict as an opportunity to teach your kids essential relationship skills.</p>	<p>11: Follow your child's lead and just play. Tickle them, laugh with them, love them. Stack things up, knock them down. Bang on pots and pans, go to the park, roll the ball. With every interaction in which you focus on and attune to your child, you can create positive expectations in their mind about what it means to love and be in a relationship.</p> <p>12: Talk with your child about sharing and taking turns, but don't expect too much from them. In the coming years you will have many opportunities to teach social skills and discipline. Right now, if</p>	<p>11: You don't have to try too hard to have fun with your preschooler. Just being with you is paradise for them. Spend time with them, play games, and laugh together. Facilitate fun with siblings and grandparents. Be silly and turn potential power struggles into playful and funny moments of joining. When you are intentional about having fun and creating enjoyable family rituals, you're making an investment in your relationship that will pay off for years to come.</p> <p>12: Use conflict your preschooler faces- with their siblings, with their classmates, even with you – to teach them lessons about how to get along with others.</p>	<p>11: Do what you love doing together. Have a family movie night with popcorn. Play a board game. Ride bikes. Make up a story together. Sing and dance. Just spend time together being happy and silly, and it will create a strong relational foundation for the future. Be intentional about having fun and creating enjoyable rituals and memories.</p> <p>12: Your child is old enough now for more relational sophistication. Explicitly teach a skill, then practice it. Teach how to see other people's perspectives. Practice picking out random people in store or restaurant and trying to guess what's important to them and where they're coming from. Teach about reading nonverbal cues, then play a game to see</p>	<p>11: The cliché is that as kids move toward their teenage years, the less they enjoy being with their parents. To some extent this is true. But the more meaningful and enjoyable experiences you give your child now, the more they'll want to be with you in the years to come. Kids this age still love silliness and play, so don't underestimate the power of a game of charades or an interactive board game when it comes to strengthening family relationships. Go camping, cook together, visit a theme park. Just find ways to appreciate being together, creating fun rituals you can enjoy for years to come.</p> <p>12: All the relational and conflict resolution skills you've been trying to give your child since they were learning to talk- seeing other people's perspectives, reading non-</p>

		<p>there's conflict between them and another child, help them express how they feel and how the other child might feel, and help them problem-solve if possible. Then redirect them both so they can transition into a different activity they can each enjoy.</p>	<p>Sharing, taking turns, and asking for and granting forgiveness are important concepts they're ready to learn. Model these for them and take the time to kneel down and help them understand what it means to be in a relationship and how to be considerate and respectful of others, even during times of conflict.</p>	<p>how many examples (frowning, shrugging, lifting eyebrows etc.) you can come up with. Teach about going beyond apologizing when we've messed up, then come up with a timely example where your child can put it into practice by writing a letter or replacing something important.</p>	<p>verbal cues, sharing, apologizing- are the same lessons you're teaching as s/he moves toward adolescence. Keep talking about these skills explicitly and practice them. Whether you're asking your child to see the world through someone else's eyes, or write a note of apology, teach them that conflict is something not to avoid but to resolve, and that doing so often improves a relationship.</p>
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