

# A Brief Look at Trauma Informed Care (Part 2)

As your Child Care Center shifts to a Trauma Informed Care (TIC) strategy and your staff learns more about trauma's effects on behavior, patterns become recognizable. Remember, it takes time, patience, and consistency to improve a child's behavior. The most common behavior situations you'll see are power struggles, junk behaviors, and vulnerability.

## Power Struggles

A sense of power is a basic social and emotional need. As children get older, they begin to develop a concept of self. Children learn a sense of power once they observe behaviors that cause parents to react. A power struggle collapses when you withdraw your energy from it. Control your own emotions.

- Redirect with two positive choices and walk away.
- Re-engage once both parties have calmed in a private conversation with the child instead of heated, loud words in public.
- Avoid sarcasm. Children don't understand sarcasm.
- Set limits but avoid ultimatums.

## Junk Behaviors

Sometimes a child engages in annoying, inappropriate behavior that is not harmful to themselves, others, pets, or property. It's always best to ignore junk behavior, and praise the child when correct behavior occurs. However, you can speed up the process with behavior interventions.

- Offer 2 positive choices.
- Redirect behaviors.
- Pivot your attention to something or someone else engaging in appropriate behavior.
- When the junk behavior stops, praise the child for the correct behavior.

## Vulnerability

There are times during a day when children are in more vulnerable behavioral states. HALT reminds us that when children are Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired, there may be negative behavior. These simple practices can minimize HALT behaviors.

- Snacks to stabilize blood sugar
- Greet a child as soon as they arrive
- Watch body language
- Get at their eye level to communicate
- Volume of voice
- Give them your full attention
- Speak positively
- Naptime

### Sources:

- Positive Parenting – Understanding Power Struggles (<https://positiveparenting.com/understanding-power-struggles>)
- Virginia Commonwealth University – Innovations and Perspectives – Teacher can use strategies to avoid power struggles in the classroom (<http://www.ttacnews.vcu.edu/2010/05/teacher-response-strategies-avoid-power-struggles-in-the-classroom>)
- Westchase Patch – Pivot from that Annoying Behavior! (<https://patch.com/florida/westchase/pivot-from-that-annoying-behavior>)
- The Art of Simple – Applying that HALT method: a checklist for proactive parenting (<https://theartofsimple.net/applying-the-halt-method-a-checklist-for-proactive-parenting>)