



INTEGRATED HEALTH PROGRAM

# ORCHARD PLACE

NEWSLETTER  
May 2019

## Has Your Kid "Flipped Their Lid?"

"He always wants things his way." "She can't stand the word 'no'!" "Why does he have major tantrums over the littlest things?" "She's doing this to manipulate us." "He has such a short fuse."  
Children's behaviors have been baffling adults for generations. Dr. Daniel Siegel has a simple model he calls "flip your lid" to explain what happens when a child becomes upset.

By Kerby Hanson LISW  
Orchard Place IHP Clinical Director

Summarized from *The Whole Brain Child* by Dr. Daniel Siegel & Tina Payne Bryson

The brain basically has two main parts, the upstairs brain and the downstairs brain. Fold your thumb into the palm of your hand. This represents the downstairs part of your brain, otherwise known as the limbic system. Then fold the four other fingers down, covering the thumb. Those four fingers represent the upstairs brain, otherwise known as the cortex. When a child becomes dysregulated, they have "flipped their lid." He illustrates this by flipping the four fingers up, exposing the thumb, the visual representation of the part of the brain that the child is functioning with when angry. When a child becomes upset, in essence, the cortex is not functioning, and the lower part, a more primitive part of the brain, is acting out flight, fight, or freeze.

**Taken over by the lower-brain!**  
The lower brain does have an important survival function. It is the first part of the brain that develops in the growing fetus and its function is to keep the body alive. It does not have a "think before you act" component, because its function is to respond at lightning speed to immediate danger. For example, if you touch a pan that has been on the hot stove, you don't have to think first before pulling your hand away. It's an automatic reflex – a survival mechanism our brain has that keeps us safe from danger. If a Caveman heard soft footsteps in the leaves in the dark, he would likely freeze in hopes the Saber-toothed tiger hadn't noticed him, or he might run super-fast to get away.

Either way, the Caveman's blood vessels constricted, the stomach started to shut down so that more energy would be directed to the legs and arms. The legs and arms gained extra strength as adrenaline was pumped to the extremities to get away quick, and fight off danger.

**Anger and fear go hand-in-hand, and the downstairs brain often can't tell the difference. When a child hears "no" or is told they need to turn off their video game, the brain may likely go in to fight, flight, or freeze mode. If the child "flips their lid," the downstairs part of the brain does not know if it is a real danger or not, but it responds in the same way: blood vessels constrict, breathing changes, the stomach shuts down, and adrenaline flows to the extremities, ready for fight or flight. When your arms and legs are pumped full of adrenaline, the urge to hit, kick, and run intensify.**

The next time you see a kid yelling and screaming in rage, consider for a moment that they have "flipped their lid." You can assume that their upstairs brain is dark as night, and their downstairs brain is a fiercely roaring ball of fire, ready to consume anything that gets in its way without thinking first.

**So, as the caring adult, how do you respond?**

Add fuel to the fire? Probably not... We know that playful engagement disarms fear. We also know that children often welcome a trusted adult to help them co-regulate.

**Go low –**  
When kids "go high" with their emotional outbursts, we need to "go low" (stay calm) with ours.

**Talk slow – or maybe not at all.**  
When kids' minds are racing a million miles a minute, we need to take a step back and slow down. They can't really hear what is being said to them anyway – they only hear the tone of your voice.

**Soften your face –**  
When the lower brain is in charge, the child goes in to hyper vigilance mode, becoming extra sensitive to threats around them. Because the upstairs brain is not working, the only thing the child sees is the danger in your face and may begin to attack.

**Pay close attention and become the helper –**  
When children have flipped their lid, they often won't attack someone who they perceive is there to help them feel safe.

Don't worry, being kind to an angry child isn't letting them get away with anything. **When their lid is back down, and they are thinking with their upstairs brain, it will be time to talk to them.** Beware, however, hearing upsetting news may quickly cause them to flip their lid again. Make sure the child, and yourself, are adequately calm before talking about things that may upset them.

Flip the page for the "Flip Your Lid" Hand Exercise



## FAMILY FUN CALENDAR

### Mommy & Me Boutique

**Where:** Altoona Public Library  
**When:** Saturday, May 11th, 1:00 PM  
**Cost:** FREE. Registration is required for adults & children.

Wish your mother a Happy Mother's Day! Give your mom, grandmother, or guardian a day of fun. You will make crafts, do nail art, play games, and more!  
Treats will be served!

<https://altoona.libcal.com/event/4761753>

### Kids in Parks/Butterfly Garden:

#### Plant, Grow, Fly

**Where:** Gray's Lake

**When:** Saturday, May 18th

10:00 AM – 8:00 PM : \$1 bike and boat rentals  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM : Help create the new Butterfly Garden. You will also decorate and fill a butterfly friendly planter to take home with you.  
8:30 PM : Free movie

[http://dsm4kids.com/event/kids-in-parks/?instance\\_id=117438](http://dsm4kids.com/event/kids-in-parks/?instance_id=117438)

### Public Skate

**Where:** Metro Ice Sports Facility

**When:** Friday, May 24th, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM  
& Saturday, May 25th, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Cost:** Adult/\$7, Student/\$6 (ID required), Child/\$5 (12 & under), Senior/\$5 (55 & above). Skate Rental \$3.00

Public skate is open to all ages and skill levels.

<https://metroicesports.com/public-skate>

### Bison on the Prairie

**Where:** Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge

**When:** Saturday, May 25th, 1:30 PM

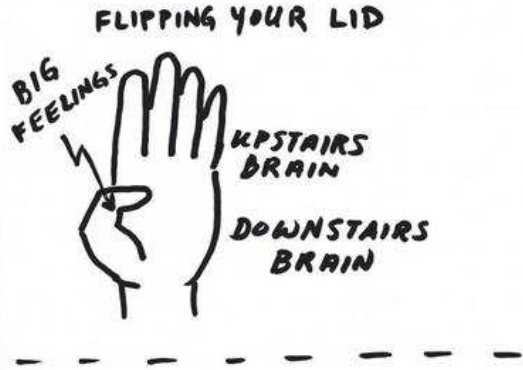
**Cost:** FREE. Call to pre-register at 515-994-3400 or email

[Doreen\\_vanrswyck@fws.gov](mailto:Doreen_vanrswyck@fws.gov)

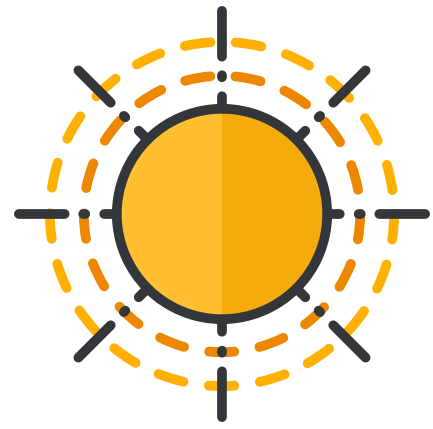
Participate in a short presentation on the history and management of the American Bison. Then take a guided walk for some exercise and to search for bison and elk herds.

[http://dsm4kids.com/event/bison-on-the-prairie/?instance\\_id=113166](http://dsm4kids.com/event/bison-on-the-prairie/?instance_id=113166)

# Teach Your Child How to "Hug" Their Big Feelings!



USING YOUR UPSTAIRS BRAIN TO GENTLY HUG BIG FEELINGS



## SUN SAFETY

### Cover Up

If it is understandably sweltering, wearing clothing can be difficult, but when possible covering up can help protect against UV rays.

STEP 1



STEP 2

### Shade

While it is tempting to soak up the sun, seeking shade under an umbrella, tree, or shelter can help reduce exposure to harmful UV rays.

### Sunscreen

Sunny, partly cloudy, no matter what level of sun, it's important to apply sunscreen. And don't forget to reapply when you're spending a lot of time outside!

STEP 3



STEP 4

### Hydrate

When you're in the sun and heat, it is critical to keep hydrated by drinking lots of water!



### Shades

Your skin isn't the only thing that needs protection from the sun, wear sunglasses to protect your eyes against UVA and UVB.

STEP 5

TEMPTRAQ™



For More Sun Safety Tips & Tricks Please Visit:  
<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/sun-safety.html>

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