



Relational Inclusion blog #59: Kevin and Perry

Those of you who are old like me will remember Harry Enfield's Kevin and Perry (for those of you younger- Google it!) Harry showed us how adolescence hits children. What he didn't tell us, although it probably seems like it at the time, is that it doesn't happen overnight. I almost wish it did.

If you are lucky enough to share your living space with a ten-year-old you will know exactly where I am going. What you get are very clear flashes and glimpses of both a beautiful long-term future and a more painful glimpse of the more recent short-term (I hope) future.

Today daughter number one provided both. In bundles.

As things go, our morning routine isn't too stressful. I've worked hard to make time to get three kids and myself ready without feeling rushed or panicked or going full tiger.

Daughter number one does not like to rush herself — especially as far as getting dressed is concerned. It's a painfully slow routine which I try my best to ignore — you know, PJs off. Have a little chat. One sock on, play with a toy, knickers on, fidget with something that's just caught her attention.

Some days it washes over me — some days it does my box in. This morning I don't know if it's me or her or both of us, but I find myself in the kitchen trying to feel the floor with my feet whilst taking deep breaths.

It doesn't work because the next minute, I'm back in the living room.

"Can you just hurry up and stop messing about. Please?" The please is less polite and more of a hiss than it should be.

This is always the worst thing to say as it has the opposite effect.

And now I get a mouthful as well.

"Don't talk to me like that. You tell me not to talk to you like that. Mummy doesn't talk to me like that, and we manage to be out on time."

I stop myself correcting her.

Flash forward a few hours. After school it's straight to gymnastics. When we do get home, I do spellings with daughter number two. When it's daughter number one's turn, she somehow manages to turn back into a five-year-old. She cries, she throws her book on the floor, she gets even the simplest spelling patterns wrong and both my wife and I get a mouthful.

In fairness I should know better. She is ALWAYS tired after gymnastics. She's probably a million miles away from being able to access her social engagement. We probably need to have a bit of space and maybe some grounding, but you know how these things are — it feels like there is never enough time.

I smile wryly as I write this because I know this version of using time just wastes it.

By the time the arguments and crying have finished, and all of our nervous systems are re-regulated, I might as well have taken my own advice and paused and done something different in that space to get to the same place in a much easier way.

We manage to repair and to get the spellings done.

It actually turns out they were the wrong spellings anyway. That's a whole different story and does sort of put things in perspective (but I don't find this out until the next day).

At bedtime, as I'm putting her to bed, I nip into my bedroom and there is something on my pillow.

It is a note:

To mummy and daddy
A rainbow heart
I hope you like it

I have no idea when she did this.

And I am amazed by the different world we inhabit in exactly the same space.

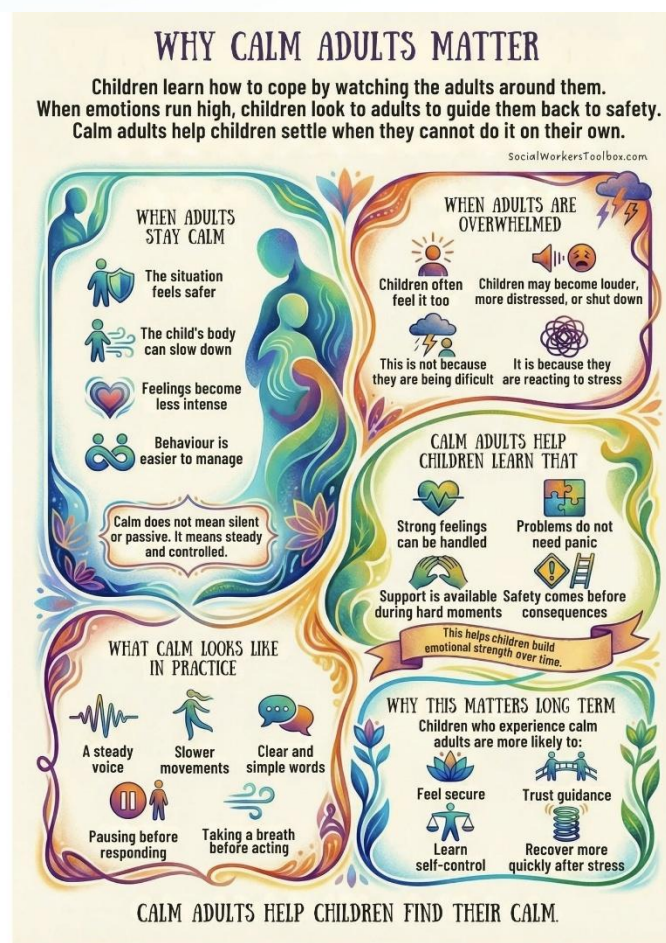
My one a day quotes for this week are:



1. *Can you imagine what the world would be like if we treated children like people we respect and admire?* (J. Milburn)
2. *The world is loud with criticism and quiet with appreciation. Be the exception.* (Vex King)
3. *When children are praised for intelligence, they become more likely to avoid challenge. When praised for effort, they are significantly more likely to seek it out.* (Claudia Mueller and Carol Dweck)
4. *People need to be encouraged. People need to be reminded of how wonderful they are. People need to be believed in — told that they are brave and smart and capable of accomplishing all the dreams they dream and more. Remind each other of this.* (Stacey Jean Spear)
5. *Compliance is the thief of felt-safety.* (Kelly Mahler)
6. *Not everything stuck needs more force. Some things need a different direction.* (unknown)
7. *I wish more people understood that unhealed childhood trauma doesn't just disappear. It shows up decades later as autoimmune disease, heart issues, chronic pain, and fatigue. What happened to you at 4, 10, or 15 may still be shaping your health today.* (@healwithalex)

My two print and stick to the wall images this week are:



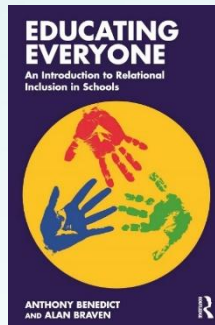


My recommende
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If you find the Relational Inclusion blog useful, feel free to share with your networks.

Our book, *Educating Everyone: An Introduction to relational Inclusion in Schools* is out now and you must buy it and tell everyone else to buy it. It is available pretty much everywhere that sells books or you can get it here:



Finally, I'd like to share a quote which has really stuck in my mind:

Your entire life is controlled by your relationship with yourself. Your relationships with others is just a reflection of your own internal rules! (unknown)

Thanks for reading
Anthony Benedict

CEO Ambition Community Trust