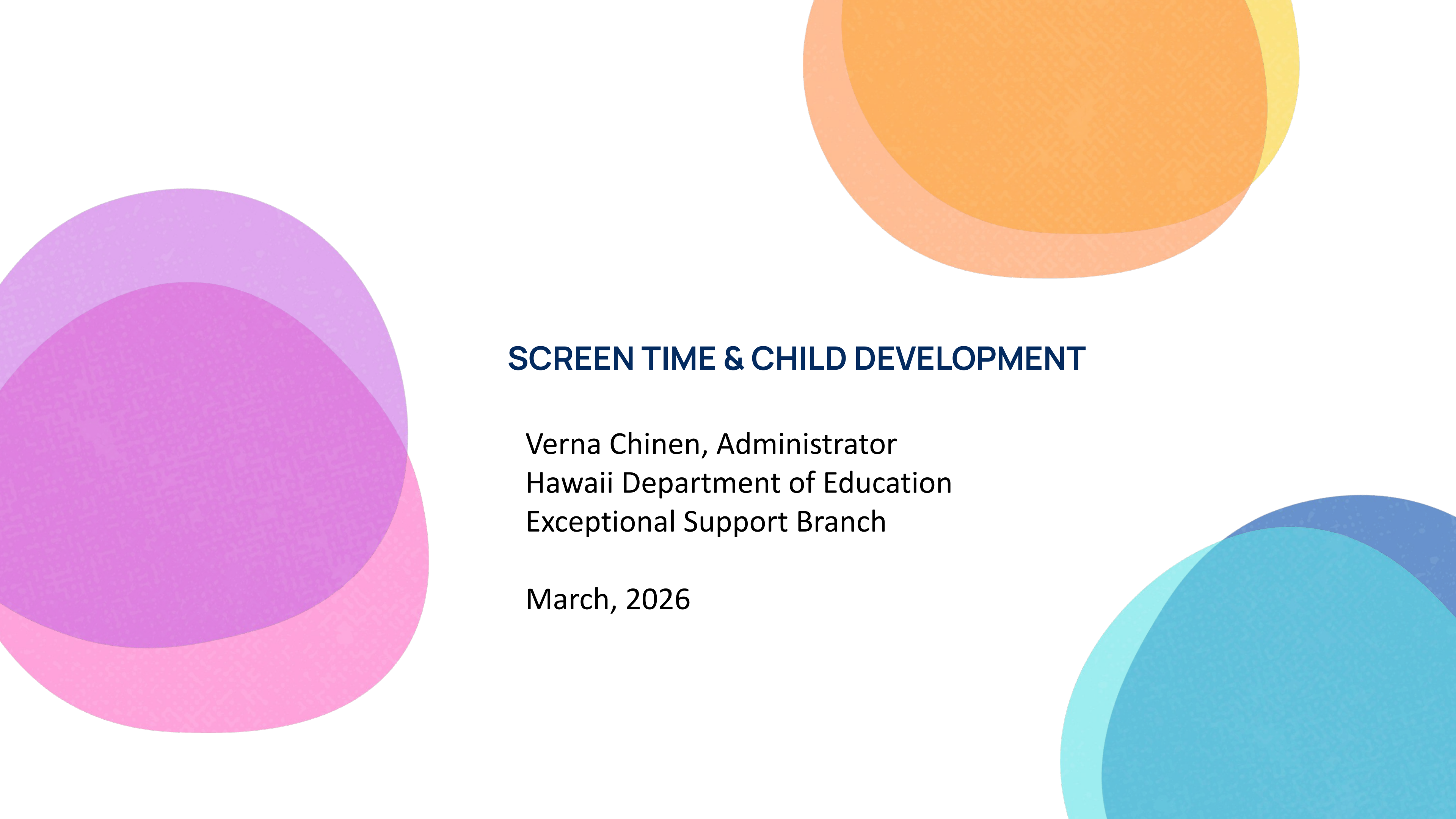




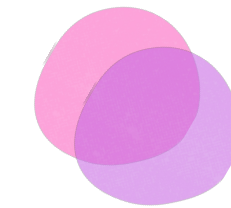
SCREEN TIME & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Verna Chinen, Administrator
Hawaii Department of Education
Exceptional Support Branch

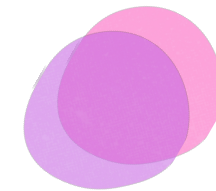
March, 2026



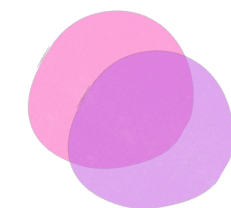
MAIN POINTS



Screen Time



Brain Development



Building language and
learning through PLAY

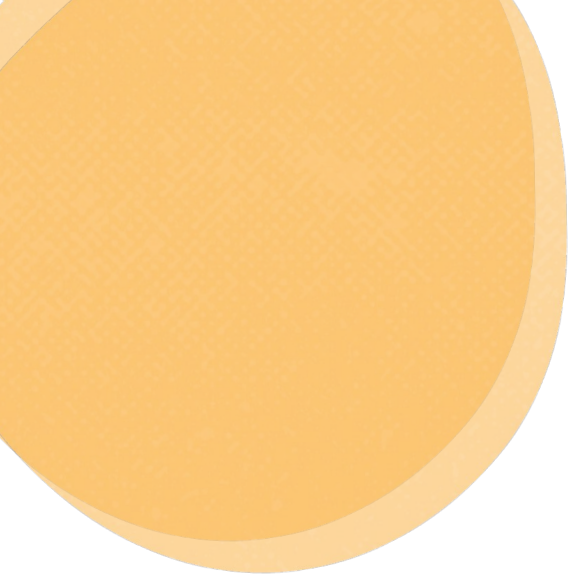


Screen time any time spent looking at digital devices.

Passive activities such as mindlessly watching videos or shows, scrolling digital content, or playing digital games that have **no positive benefits to development** and **no connection** to the real world.



Amount per day AND **how devices affect your child's developing brain and nervous system.**



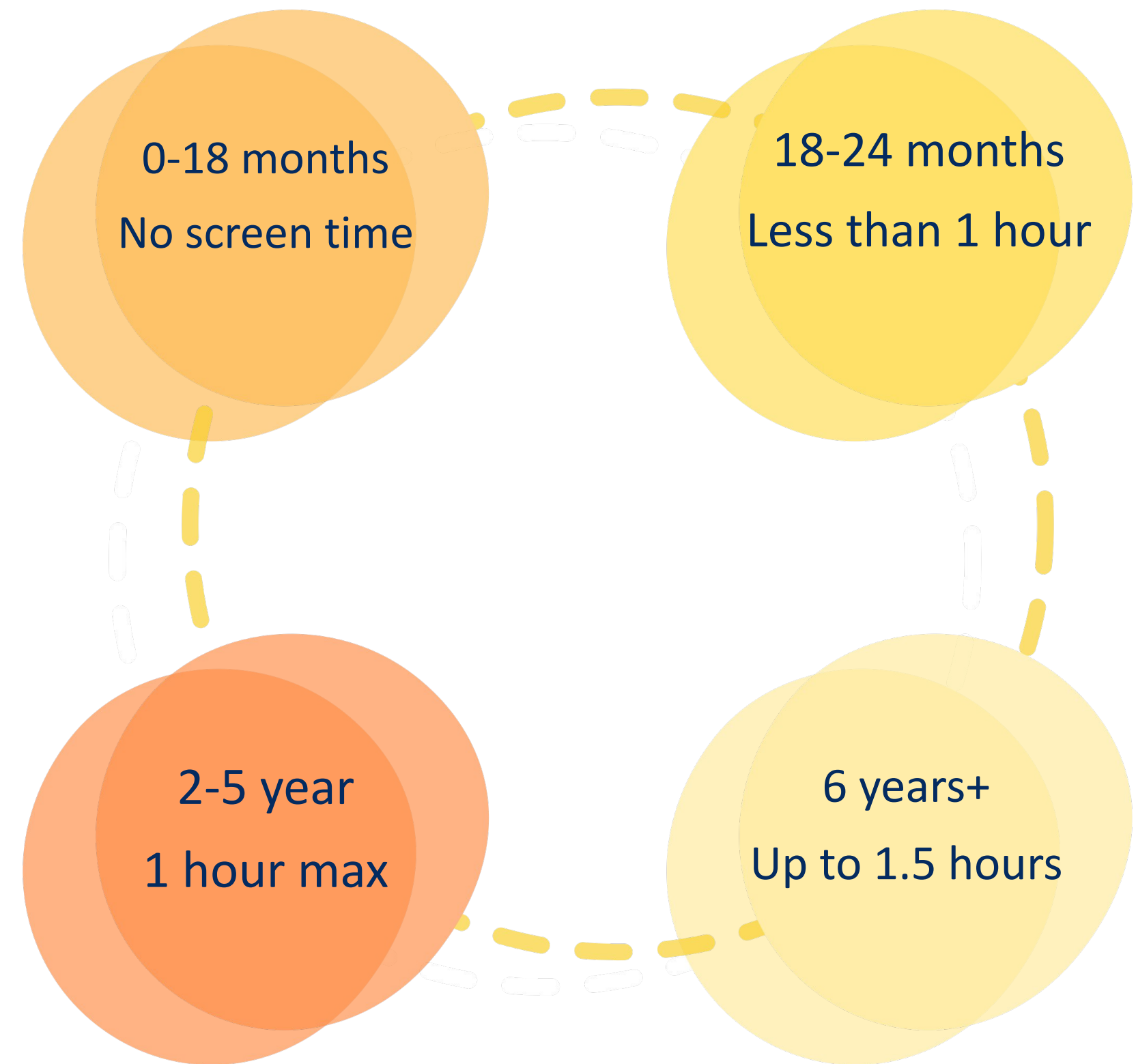
Watching videos or shows

Scrolling digital content

Playing digital games

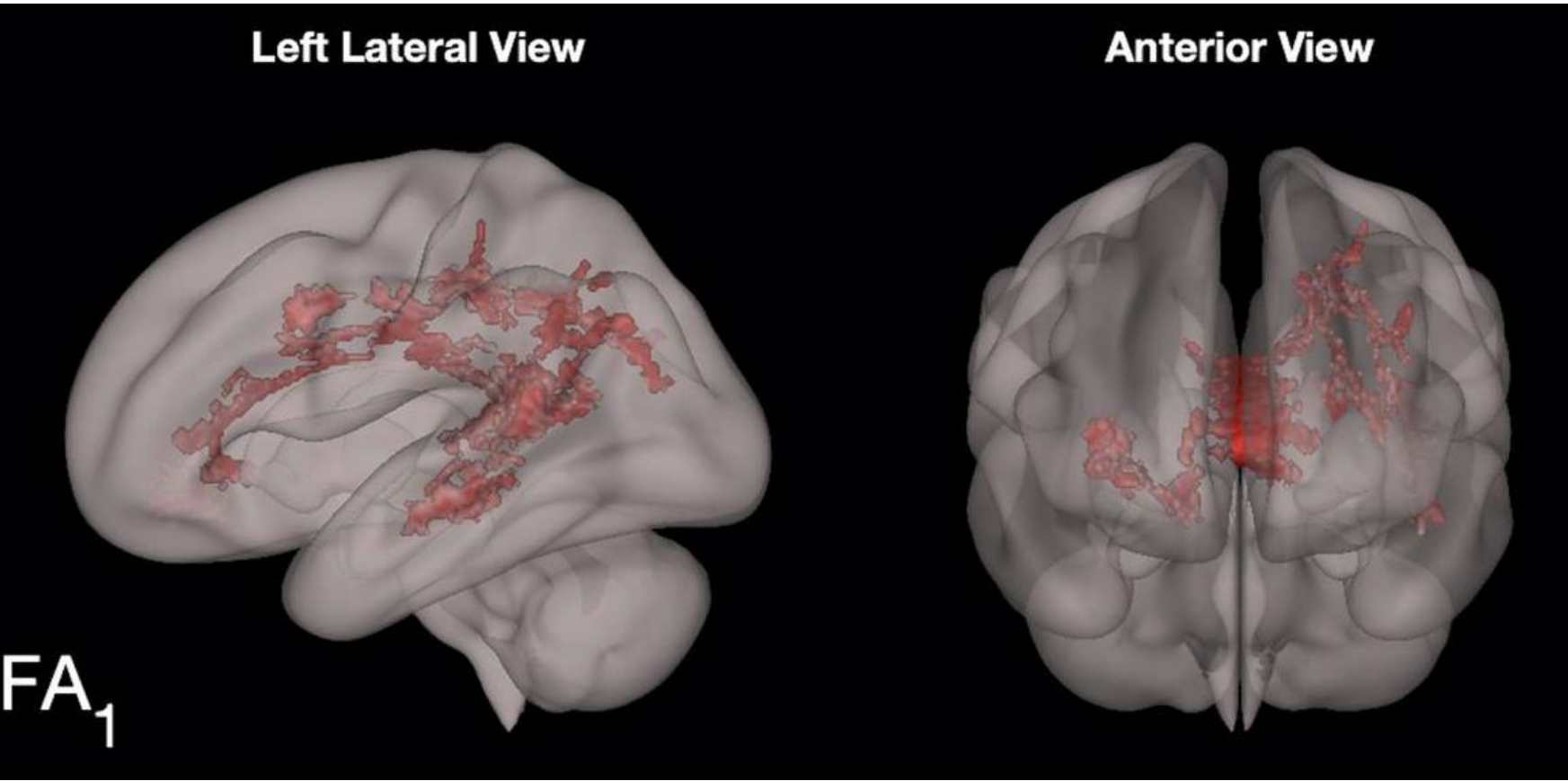
Screen Time Recommendations

American Academy of Pediatrics

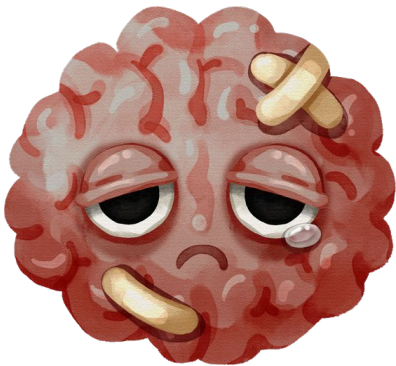
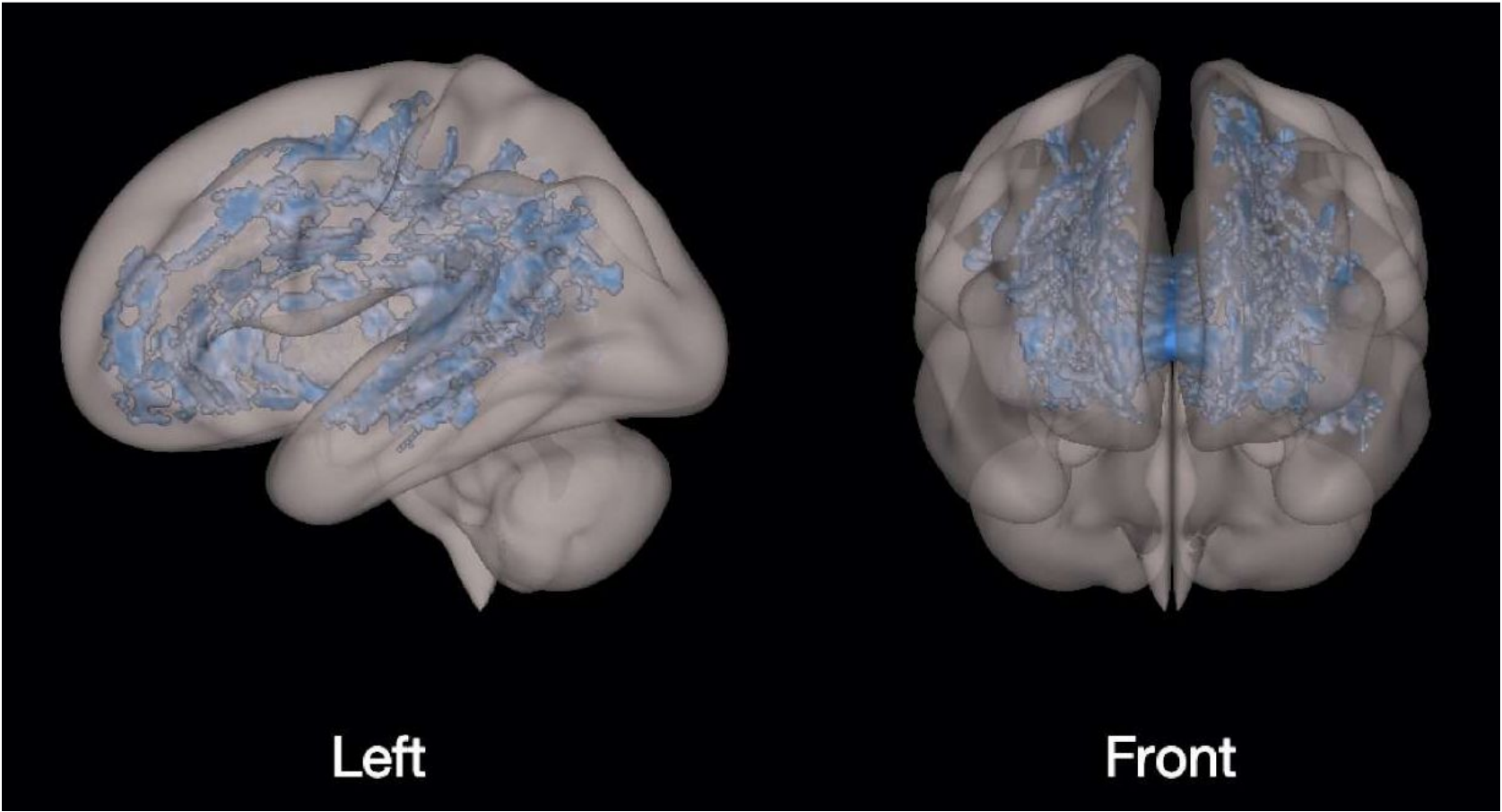


NEUROBIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

BENEFIT

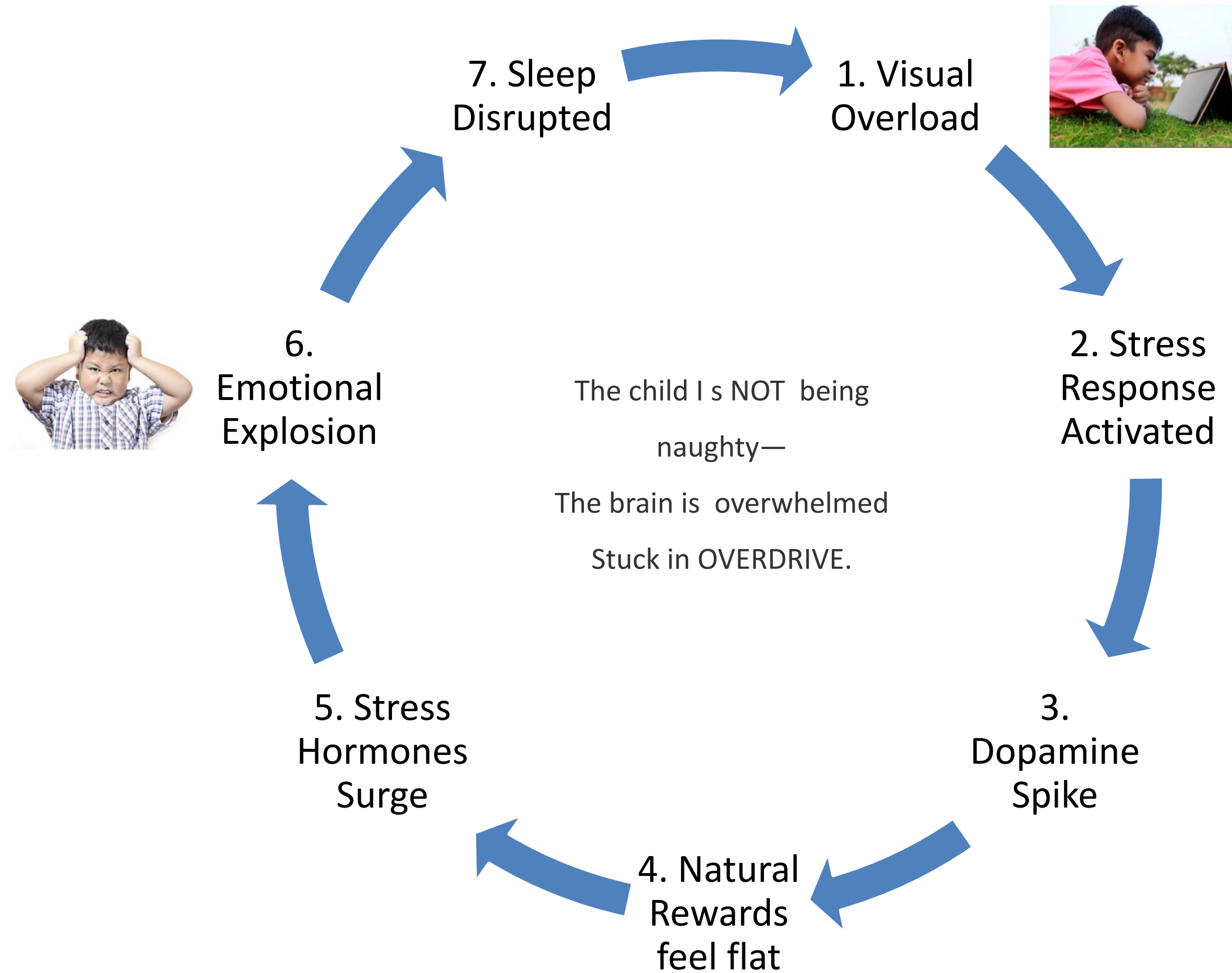


DETRIMENT



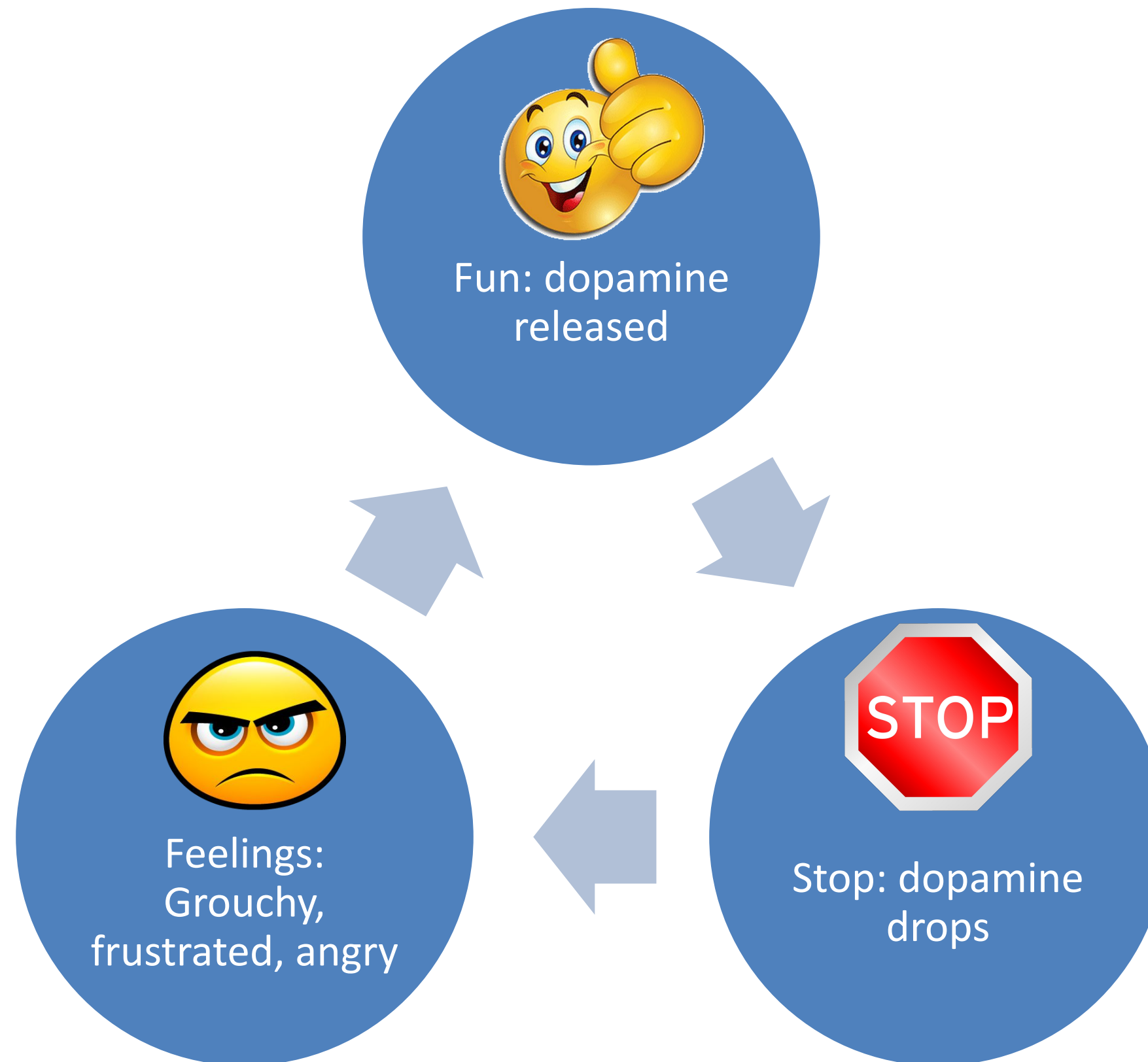
A dysregulated brain

Healthychildren.org



DOPAMINE LOOP

Healthychildren.org



SIGNS

Getting angry when the screen is taken away

Unable to calm down without a screen

Increasingly poor behavior, social interactions, and irritability when not on a screen.

Spending time off screens thinking about how and when they will get back on a screen.

Negative impacts on sleep, eating, developmental milestones, or education



What is being impacted?

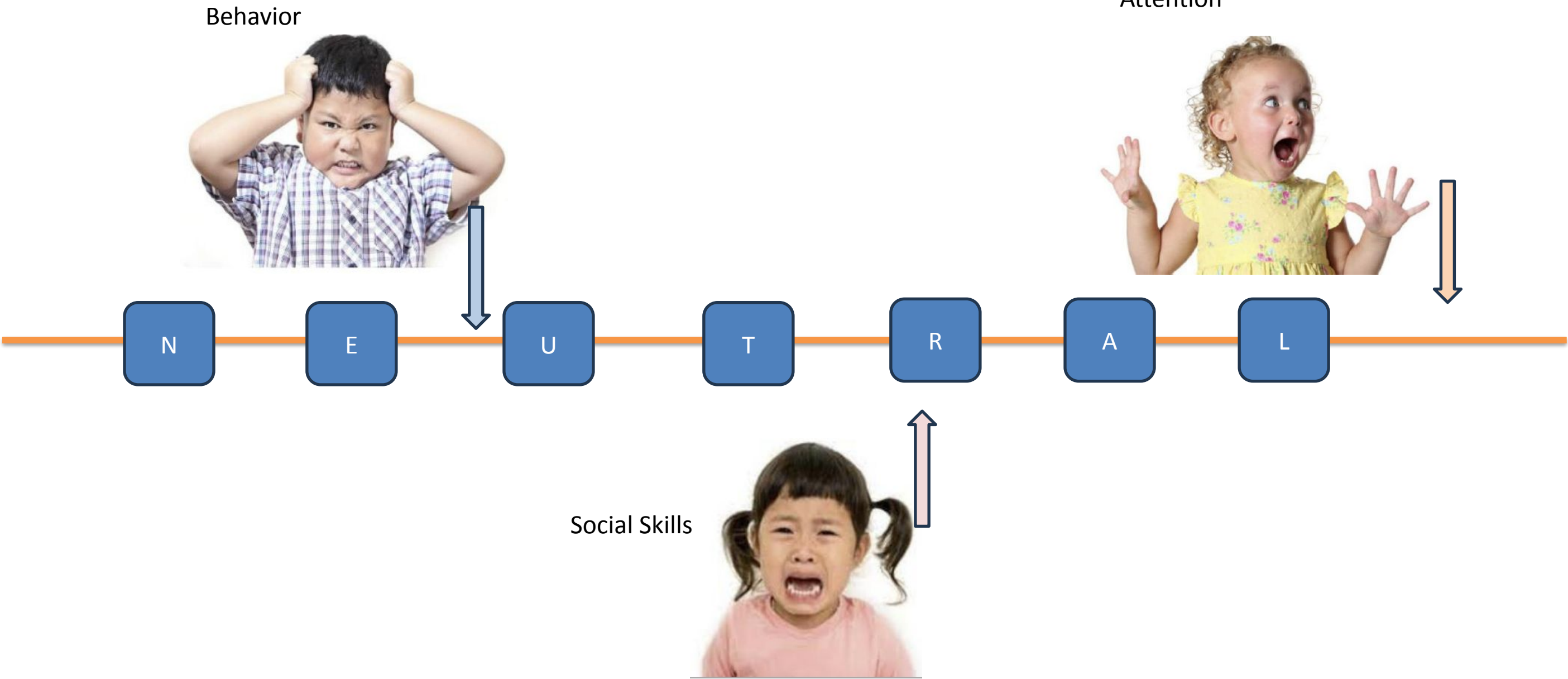
Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics, Ramkumaretal., 2022)

Goal: Get to neutral

- Ready to learn
- Attentive
- Engaged

Behavior

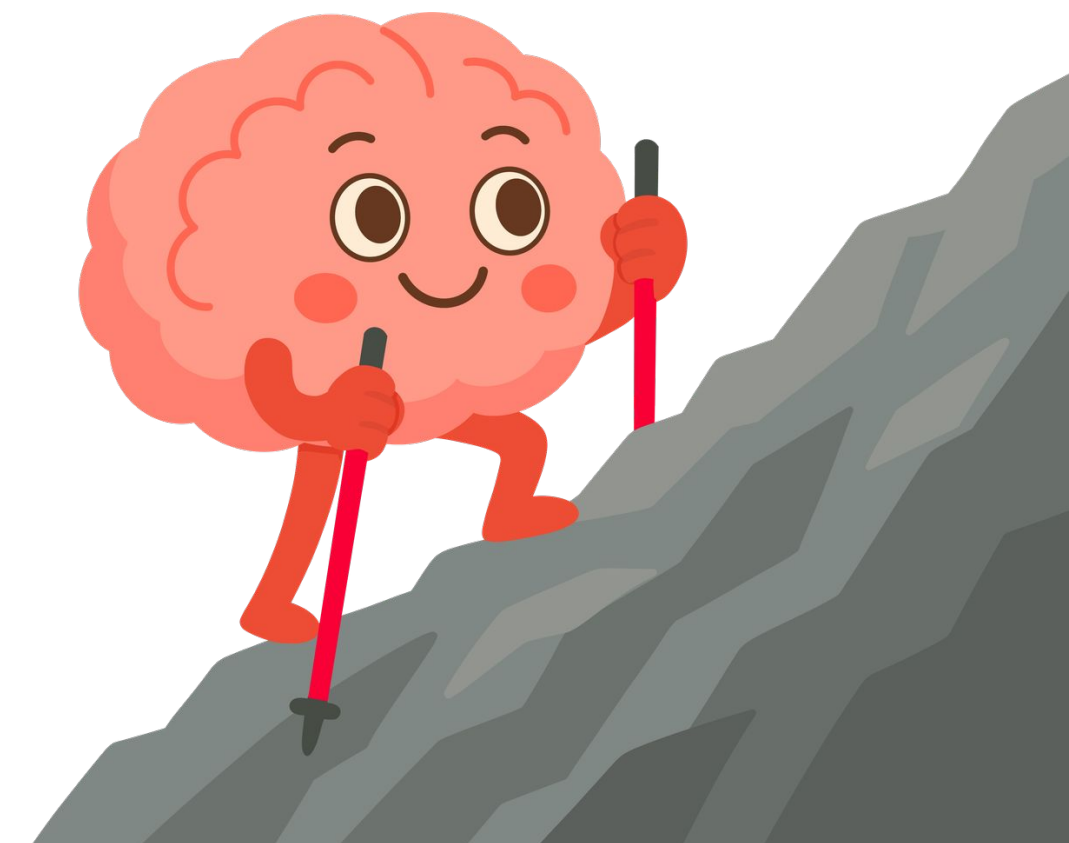
Attention





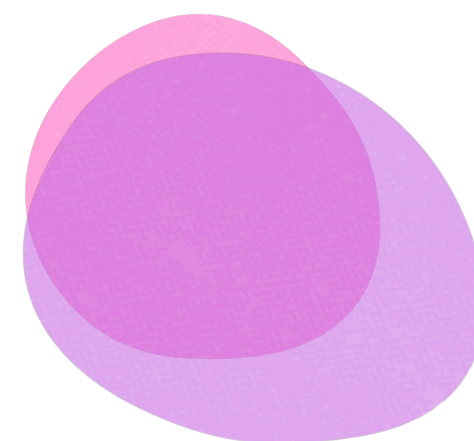
How to...

- **Strategically use interactive programs**
- **Be involved during screen time** (co-view or engage in screen time activities with the child)
- **Identify “zero screens” zones**
 - family mealtimes
 - other times that are ripe for more personal connection time
- **Keep Screens Out Of Bedrooms And Bedtime Routines**
- **Be Emotionally Available And Connected At Bedtime**





“play-based” childhood



“phone-based” childhood



(Haidt, 2024).

Key takeaways

- Caring, distraction-free, serve and responsive back-and-forth interactions
- Real-life “traditional” play
- Avoid any screen time for a child under 18 months or even two years old, except for video chatting.



Interacting with the young child

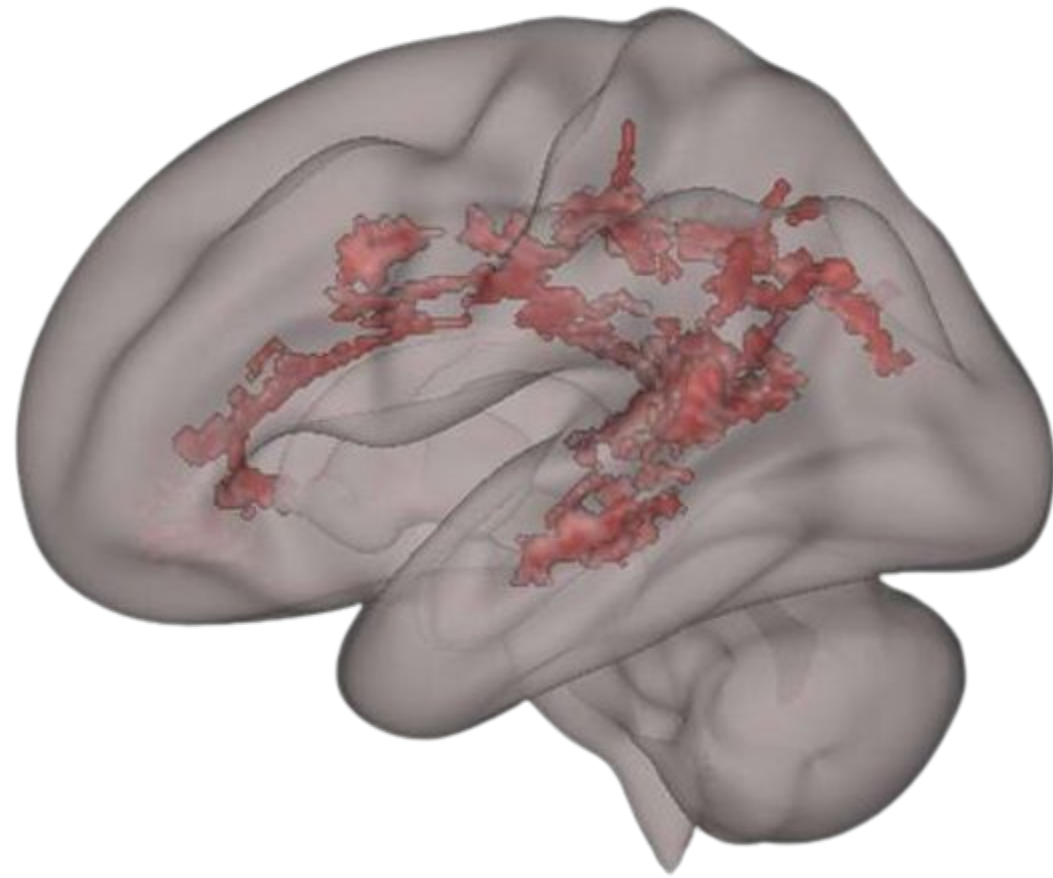


Excessive amounts of screen use by the child and/or the parent
has a negative impact on play-based and other activities that enhance cognitive and
social-emotional skills

necessary for kindergarten readiness

(Sigman, A., 2017; Pagani et al., 2010).

A BRAIN READY TO LEARN



Language

Children who had more conversations with their caregivers had stronger development in the areas of the brain that support comprehension.

Between birth and age three all learning is placed in a social context, through our relationships with others; it cannot be replicated any other way.



Literacy-play link

reasoning and creativity, problem
solving, vocabulary development



language carries the connection between the
literacy-play link



The background features several overlapping circles in various shades of purple and pink. A dark grey speech bubble with a white interior is positioned on the right side of the image.

Quality
conversations

```
graph TD; A[Language & Literacy & Play] -.-> B[Quantity]; A -.-> C[Quality Play]; B -.-> D[Access to Books]; B -.-> E[Reading Frequency]; C -.-> F[Story Format]; C -.-> G[Child Interest]; C -.-> H[Interactions];
```

Language & Literacy & Play

Quantity

Access to Books

Reading Frequency

Quality
Play

Story Format

Child Interest

Interactions

SHARED BOOK READING STRATEGIES

Evidence Based Practice

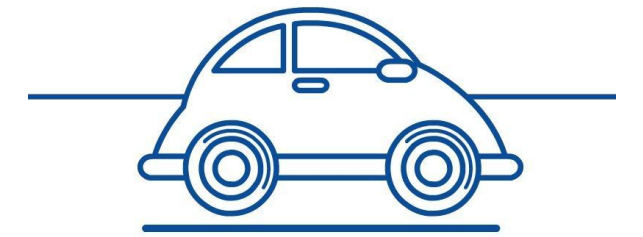
- Visual attention to the book
- Coordinated attention with the parent
- Having a conversation about the book content
 - Develop a vocabulary of talking about the book
 - Extend beyond the book through play



Time to play learn
and have some fun!



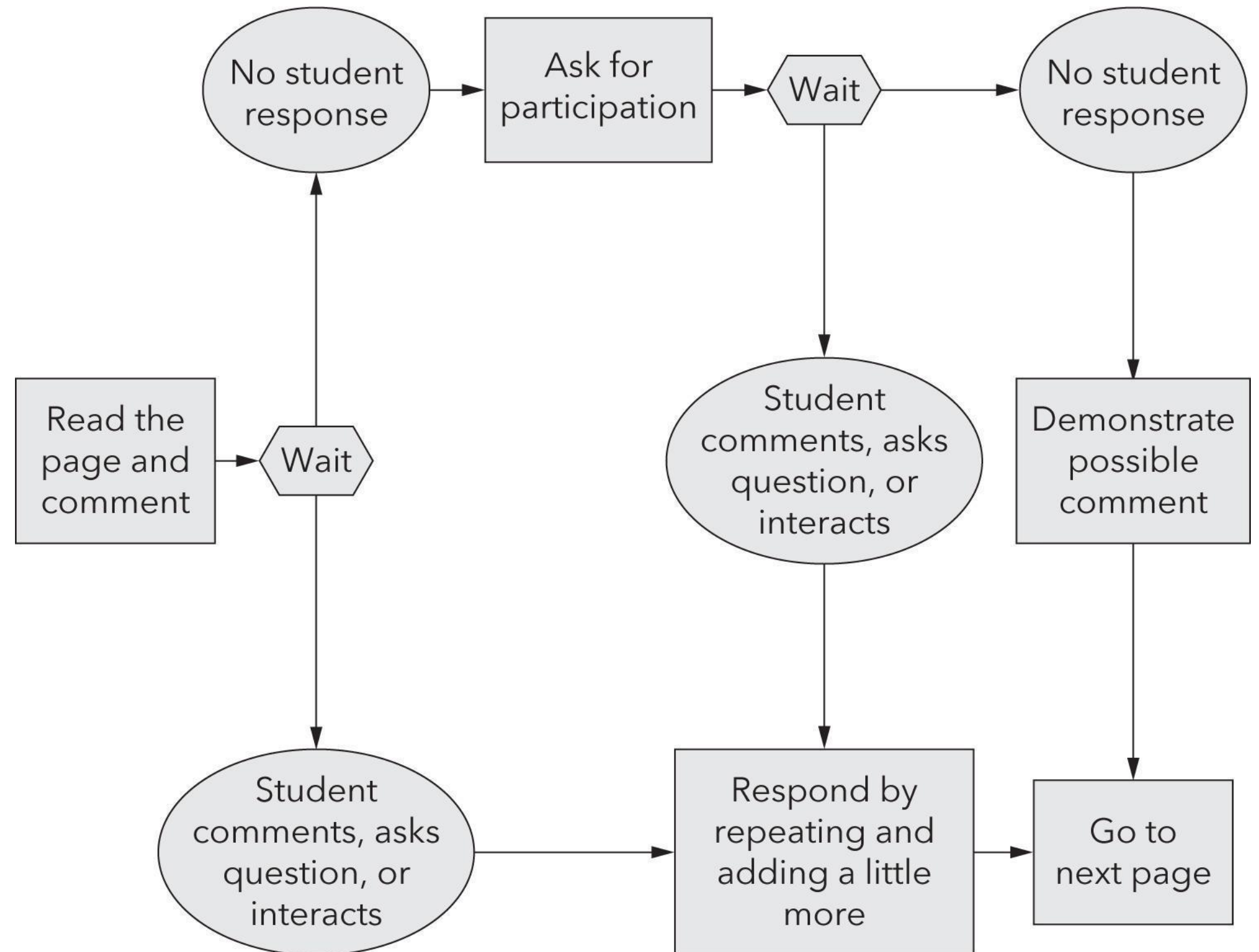
SHARED BOOK READING STRATEGIES



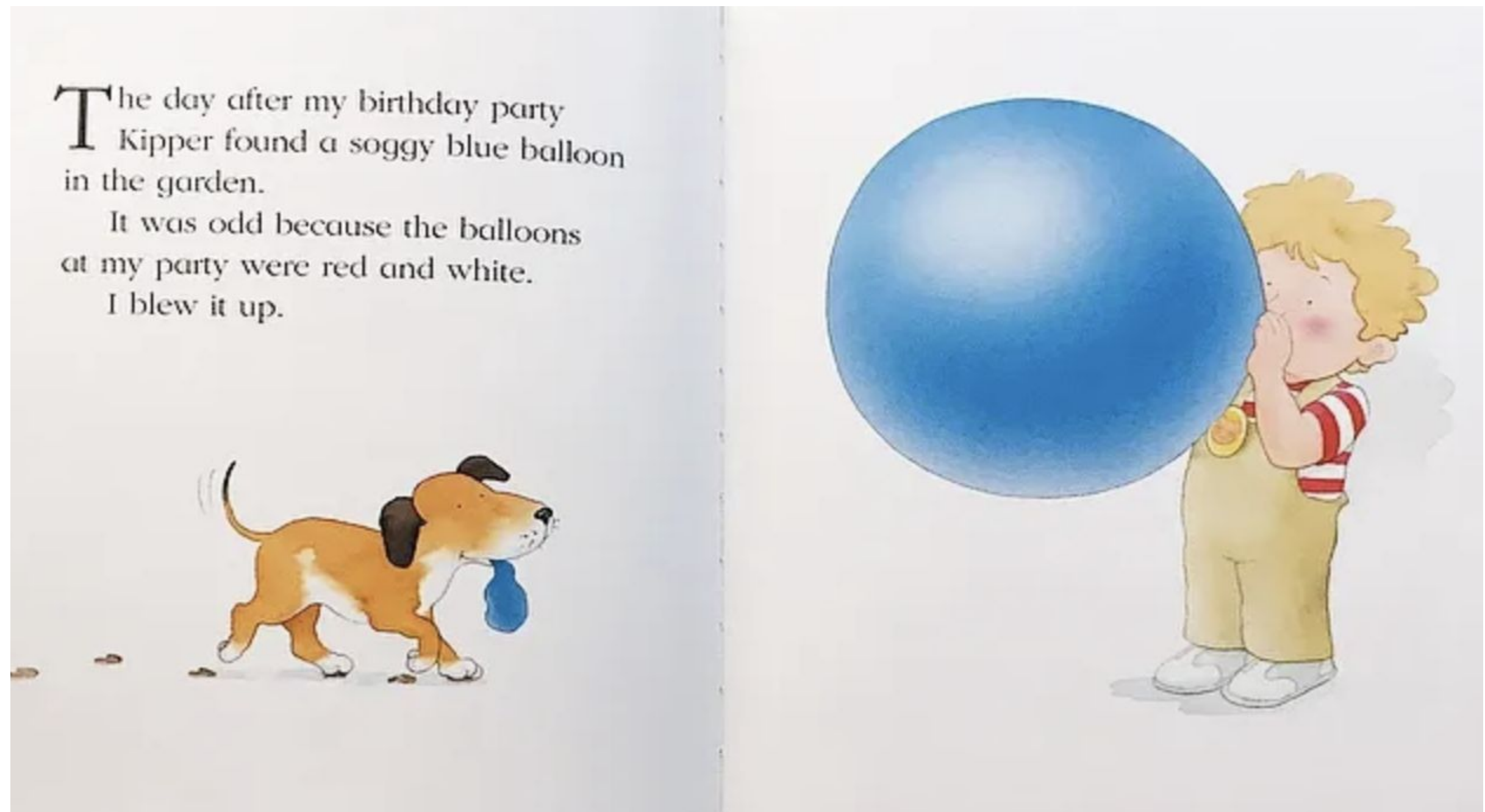
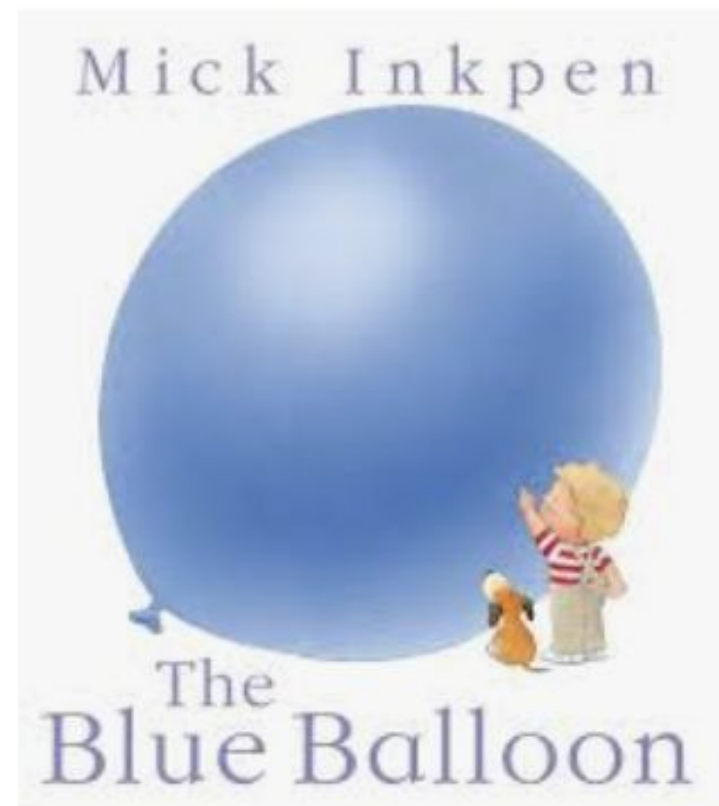
Comment and wait

Ask for participation and wait

Respond by adding a little more



Time to PLAY!



You see it never ever bursts. Never ever.



I have squeezed it . . .



squashed it . . .



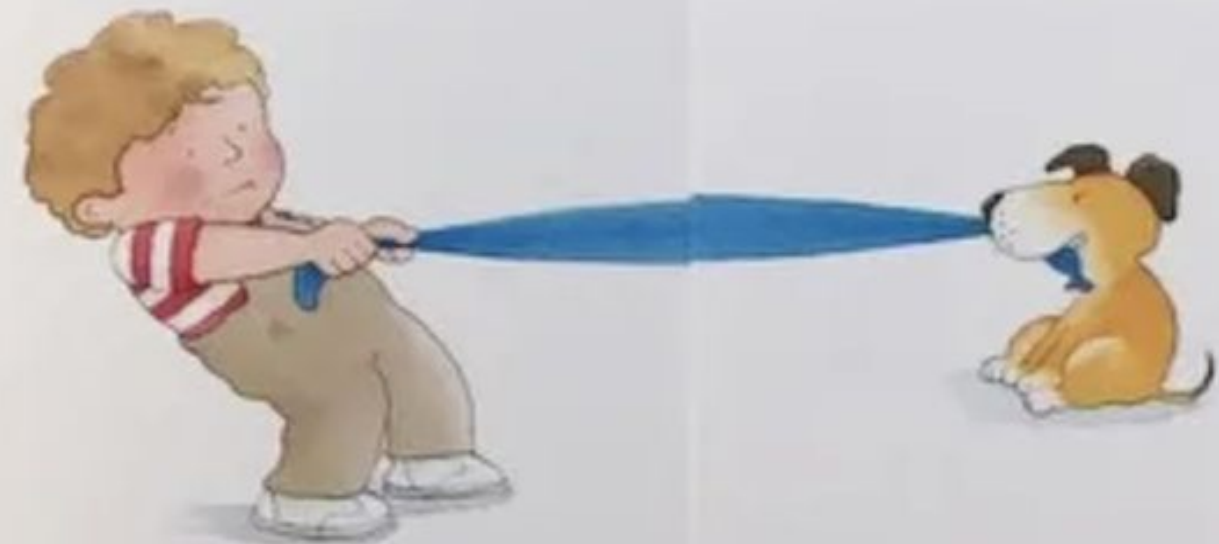
. . . and whacked it with a stick.



I have kicked it . . .



run it over . . .



. . . and stretched it!



Mahalo

verna.chinen@k12.hi.us