



John Hunter
Children's Hospital
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES



Health
Hunter New England
Local Health District

Strategies to manage procedural and acute pain in children

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Child Life Therapy

Supporting children and young people through the use of play, preparation, and individualised refocusing strategies to help build resilience and coping skills



Goal

To feel safe in the presence of perceived threat



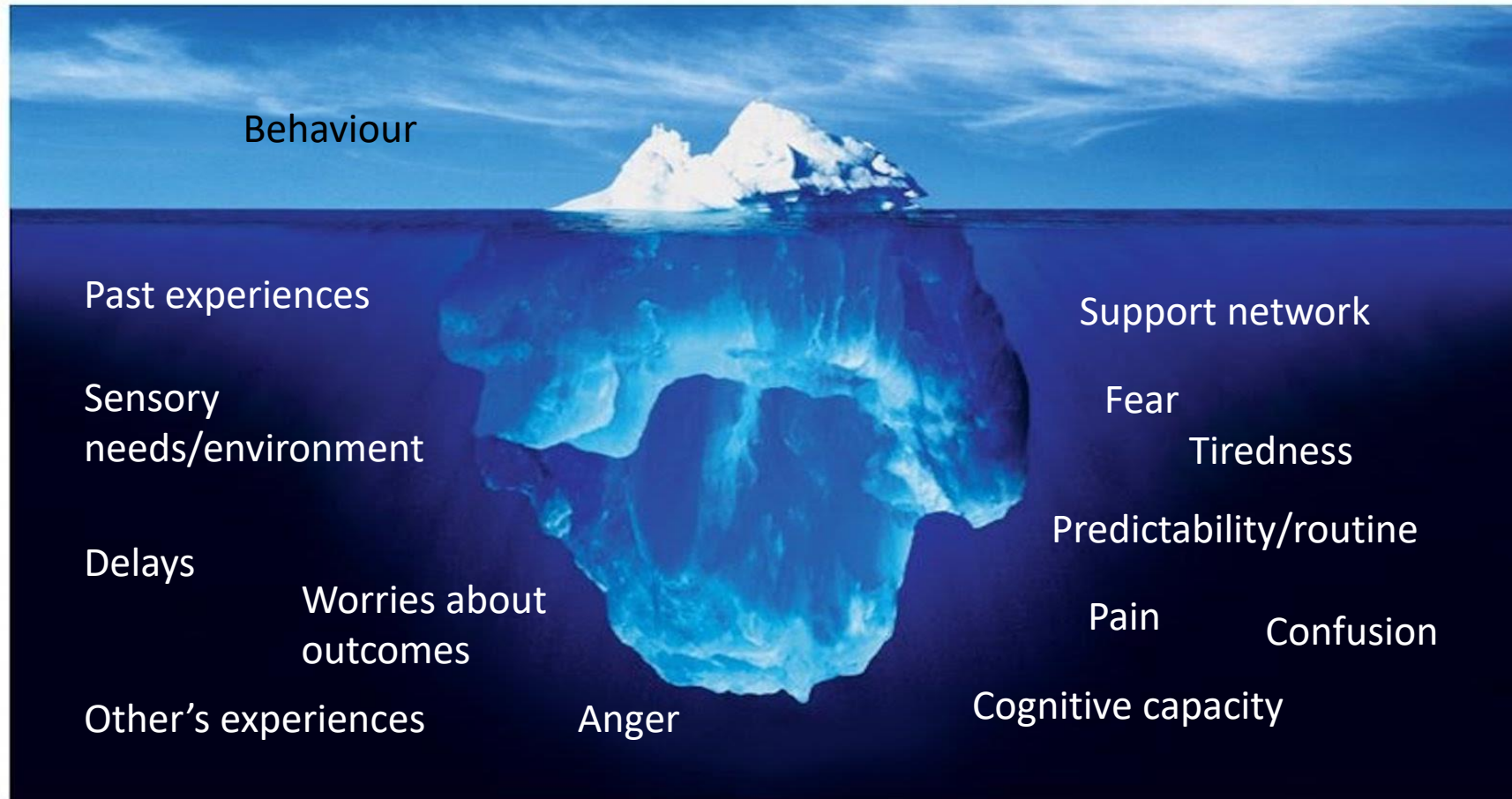
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The Haemophilia treating team

- Medical
- Nursing
- Social Work
- Child Life Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Psychology
- Others on referral



What lies beneath?



What the child can not do, even with assistance

ZPD

What the child can do with some help

ZPD

What the child can already do

General principles

- Trust – safe relationship
- Acknowledgement
- Meaningful participation
- Control
- Predictability
- Needs will change over time

Practical strategies

- One voice
- Routine
- Safe spaces
- Positions of comfort
- Positive language



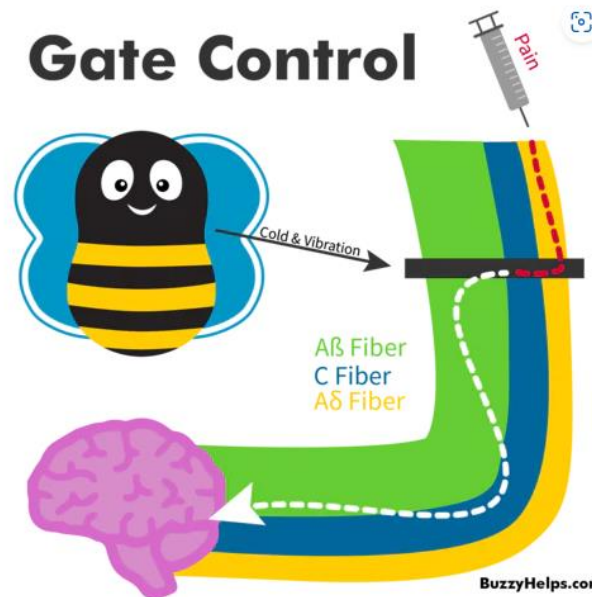
Image credit: Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne

Practical strategies

- Sensory supports
 - Buzzy
 - Tapping
 - Fidget toys
 - Ice

Gate Control Theory of Pain

The gate control theory is the basis for the design of Buzzy®. The premise is that when nerves receive non-painful signals such as vibration or cold, the brain closes the gate on pain signals. For example, if you hit your finger with a hammer, you might instinctively begin to rub it, shake it, or run it under cold water. You are sending non-pain signals through your nerves to close the gate on the pain signals.





Joy
Child
CHILD

Practical strategies

- Environmental considerations
- Individualised coping plans
- Diversion or focussed attention
- Coached breathing - balloon, hand, bubbles, counted breaths, box breathing
- Describe and praise coping
- Plan for post procedure
- Record positive experiences



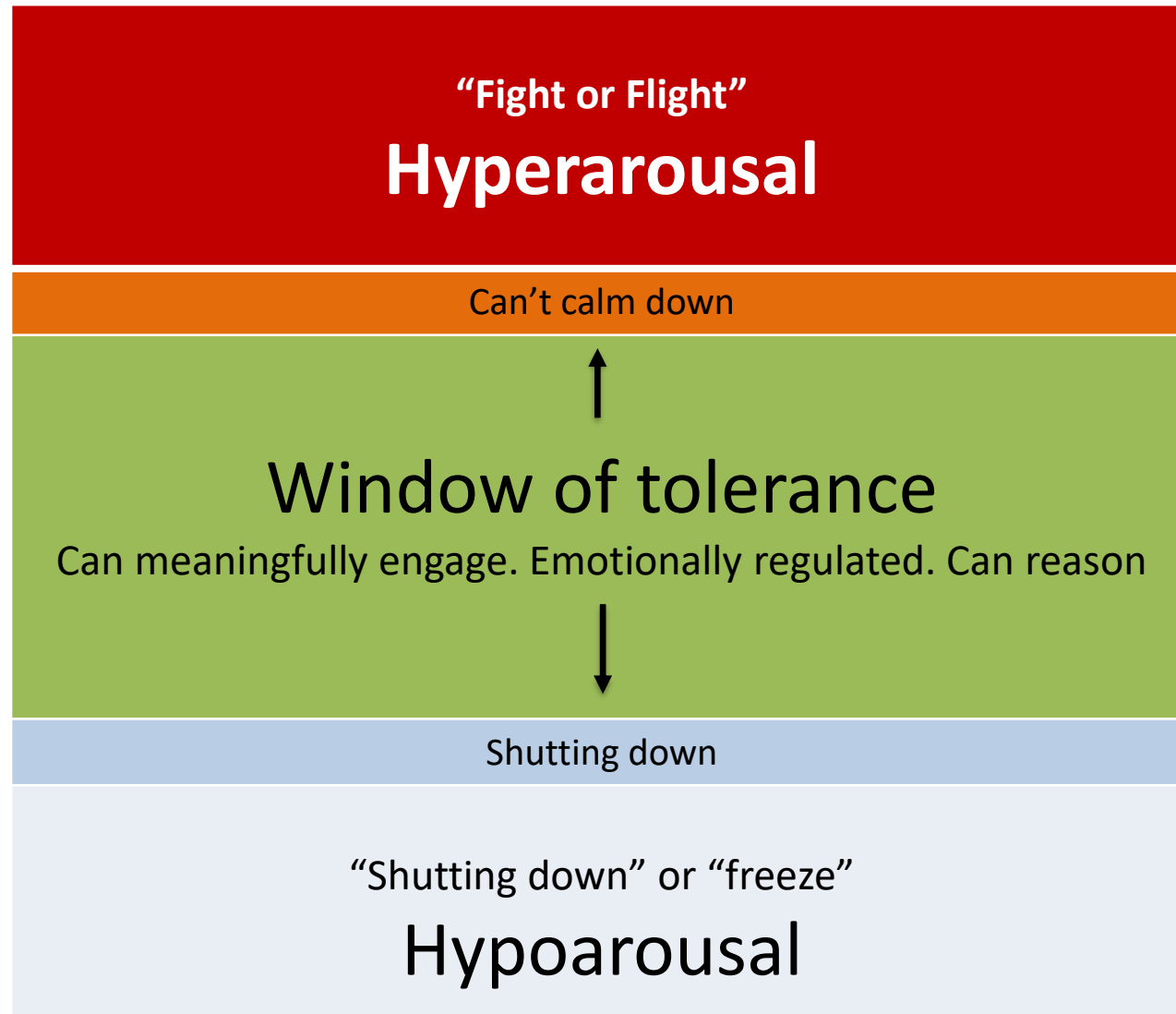
Note to parents

- Needs will change as the child develops
- Be your advocate or seek support for this
- Medical play – have some fun!
- Dear me...
- Seek support for yourself and your child when needed



Note to healthcare workers

- Listen
- Be flexible (still have boundaries)
- Debrief with the family, and with others
- Safe relationship
 - Acknowledge, validate, reassure





Job
Corps
CHILDREN