



BRAIN RULES APPLICATION: Twelve key ideas to help mentors during their one hour mentoring session!

- Remember that every brain is wired differently. Tune into a child's non-verbal clues and use this to create the optimal learning setting.
- Exercise improves overall brain function. Some ideas on how to optimize brain function using exercise are to walk and talk, use games that include body motion, or sit on an exercise ball for part of the mentoring session. If your child has the wiggles don't ignore them or try to get rid of them, but instead see them as an opportunity to use movement to help more learning take place.
- Brief periods of physical activity can be a great tool to break up longer periods of sitting.
- Be calm! Have calm reactions even when your child has intense emotions. Mr. Rodgers is a perfect example!
- Listen empathetically to all your child's feelings and help them to verbalize these feelings by labeling them. By giving intense feelings a name you are helping a child to feel more in control which helps them to begin to regulate their own behavior.
- Set expectations and rules for your child. Setting consistent limits actually decreases anxiety for a child because they know what to expect.
- If possible, schedule mentoring at a time that your child is at their best. There are certain nap zones during the day that would be best to avoid in order to make the best use of both your time.
- Use pictures more than words or alternatively pictures with words. Vision helps one to remember up to 50% more.
- We are powerful and natural explorers. Humans thrive on curiosity. Let the kids ask questions.
- Do one thing at a time. The arousal system in the brain cannot multi-task.

- One of the greatest predictors of academic success is the emotional stability of the home. Keep this in mind as you learn more about the child's home situation.
- Repeat in order to remember. Not only is it important to review last week's activities, but this is also the reason to continue being a good mentor. A child will remember that you care if you continue to repeat. Once a week, every week, once a month, for at least a year can help a child to remember that he or she is special.