

## BUILDER SERIES: THE BRAIN PT 4

# “MIDBRAIN AND THE DANGERS OF REWARDS & CONSEQUENCES”

### **Midbrain (“The Puppy Brain”)**

- Emotional brain
- Where our guilt lives
- Always looks for connection, attachment, and attunement
- Wants to know if they are safe and if they are truly loved
- When the child shows remorse

We don’t punish the midbrain. When children are in their midbrain demonstrating remorse and guilt, our job is to love them and assure them of love and safety.

The decisions children make do not define them. Give the freedom to change and not be defined by the labels of their behaviors.

### **The dangers of rewards & consequences:**

1. Rewards focus solely on the midbrain
2. Rewards teach children to act a certain way to please someone. They are not acting this way because their prefrontal cortex knows how to utilize impulse control and problem solving. They are acting this way because the puppy brain seeks to please and receive love
3. Behavior is based on other people’s emotions, how they feel perceived by that person, and how the child has pleased that person
4. Can teach children to seek out approval of peers for acceptance



### **How to always incorporate the Prefrontal Cortex:**

1. Problem Solve. Examples might include: “What made you do that?” or “What else could you have done instead?”
2. Label them with their own feelings instead of yours. Examples might include: “How do you feel when you make a good decision?” or “Don’t you feel proud of yourself?”

*\*This information is a compilation of Grow and Guide Kids, Becky Bailey, Dan Siegel, and Tina Bryson.*

