

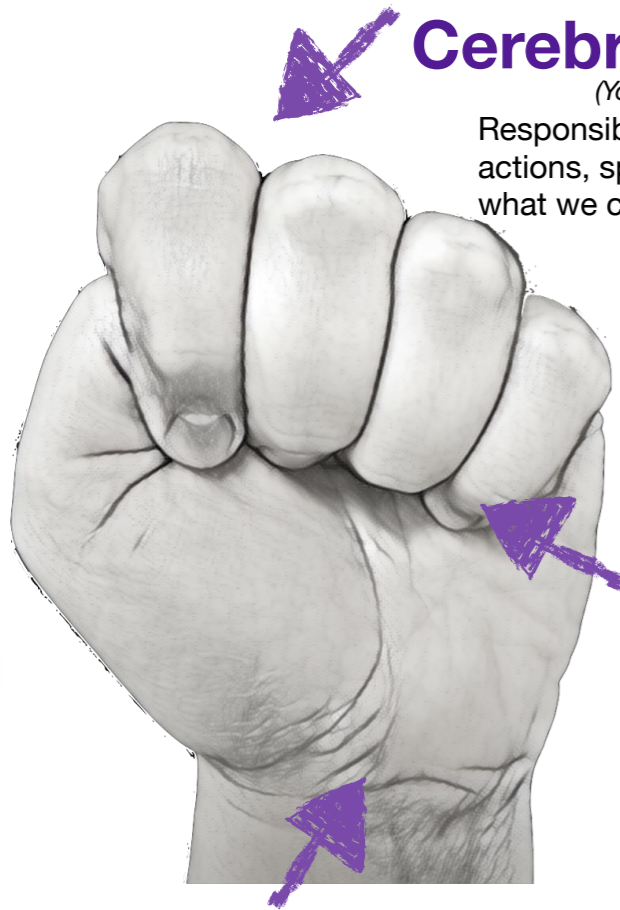


HAND MODEL OF THE BRAIN

**Adapted from Dan Siegel and Mary Hartzell's "Parenting from the Inside Out"*

integrative function

When regulated, you have access to the higher brain structures. This allows for processing information, access to motor and speech functions, as well as rational, reflective processing. The Prefrontal cortex and its functions are critical to this process! These higher brain structures are hugging those limbic regions, making us feel safe.



Cerebral Cortex

(Your fingers)

Responsible for perception, motor actions, speech, higher processing and what we call "thinking".

Prefrontal Cortex

(Your fingernails)

Primary Integration Center for the brain. Responsible for planning complex behavior, decision making, moderating social behavior, regulating emotions, sense of self-awareness, sense of morality, and operating without fears.

Brainstem

(Base of your palm)

Responsible for survival instincts (fight/flight/freeze), automatic autonomic functions, reflexes.



flip your lid

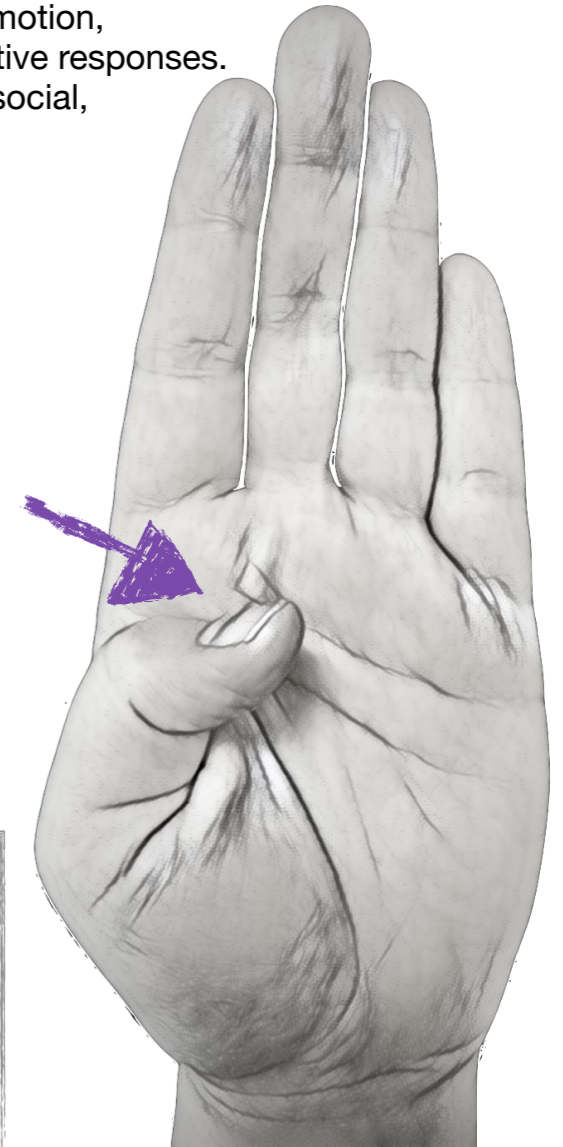
When you are stressed, overwhelmed or trying to deal with painful or traumatic memories, your prefrontal cortex shuts down and you lose access to its functions. You have flipped your lid. Your brain's safety alarm is going off. You are operating from a state of high emotion, impulsive reactions, and rigid and repetitive responses. You do not have access to the rational, social, "thinking" part of your brain.

STRESS, OVERWHELMED, TRAUMA, PAINFUL MEMORIES

Limbic Regions: Hippocampus and Amygdala

(Your thumb)

The brain's safety alarm system. Responsible for processing and storing emotions and memories.



KEY POINT TO REMEMBER:

If your child has flipped their lid, it is critical that you remain calm. Your child will do their best to get you to flip your lid too. If you do, you will not have access to your prefrontal cortex either!