

Connection Before Correction

Keep the relationship available while holding a limit.

A limit may still be necessary when a young person is upset. A brief acknowledgment can help them stay engaged long enough to hear it. Connection is a way to preserve influence and dignity while taking the next safe step.

FOUR MOVES TO TRY

01 Notice the need

Consider what the person may be protecting, seeking, or struggling to do.

02 Acknowledge without agreeing

Show that you heard the feeling or goal.

03 State one clear limit

Use a calm tone and avoid a long debate.

04 Offer a next step

Give an appropriate choice and return later for repair.

TWO WAYS TO APPLY IT

YOUNGER CHILD

A child wants more playtime. Name the disappointment, keep bedtime, and offer a choice of two closing activities.

TEENAGER

A teen disputes a phone limit. Hear the concern, state tonight's boundary, and set a time to revisit the rule.

COACH THE CAREGIVER

Rehearse one connecting sentence, one limit, and one realistic choice with the caregiver.

TRY IT THIS WEEK

Choose one recurring power struggle and practice those three lines before the next difficult moment.

REFLECTION

Am I trying to win this moment, or keep enough connection for the next step?

SAFETY AND PRACTICE

Connection never replaces protective action, crisis procedures, or accountability.

AUTHORSHIP AND CONTEXT

Dr. Charles Pemberton, Ed.D., developed the original Clinical Perspectives materials for the FITT team while serving as Clinical Program Director at Omni Family of Services. This website adaptation is for general education; it does not state current Omni or FITT policy. Publication rights review is pending.