



## Download for Podcast 20: What Children Really Need

*Six guiding questions to determine if a child NEEDS something or “just WANTS” something*

1. **How old is the child?** *Remember, it takes years for the brain to fully develop and for the child to have conscious control over their thoughts, feelings, and actions.*
2. **Have the stressors a child is exposed to been considered as mediating factors?** *Sometimes when we reduce or remove stressors, we see a difference in a child’s thoughts, feelings, and actions.*
3. **Where, in the peak, is the child when we think they “just want” attention, to avoid a task, or to get their way?** *If the child is already on the “red train”, they are in fight, flight, or freeze mode vs. making conscious choices.*
4. **Have alternatives, as to what the child “really” needs, been considered?** *For example, are they hungry, tired, or feeling lonely or confused?*
5. **Are sufficient models and learning opportunities being provided for the child to distinguish between wants and needs?** *It’s important to intentionally model the difference between wants and needs and to provide the tools that allow the child to respond appropriately.*
6. **Have you considered your own triggers when it comes to determining if a child wants versus needs something?** *Sometimes when we’re feeling frustrated, tired, or overwhelmed, we can react versus responding with compassion, showing a readiness to problem-solve, and/or having the energy to scaffold and support the child through a difficult situation.*



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