



In this Part Two issue of the Adult/Child we will look at how the subconscious (Child) plays a role in the Dirty Dozen contributing factors to you making an error.

But let's recap about the Adult/Child model. It is a simplified means to help us understand what can cause us to make mistakes, particularly, when we know better.

Let's look at the differences between the Adult (conscious mind) and the Child (subconscious mind)

Adult

Is part of all decision making
 Slow to make a decision
 Bases decisions on learned actions it can remember
 Methodical in its decision making
 Analytical
 Enables us to think things through and consider possible consequences

Child

Is part of all decision making
 Very fast decision maker
 Bases decisions on emotions, some from ELDs and habit
 Fast and reactionary in decision making
 Intuitive
 Enables us to do repetitive things without thinking with the conscious mind.

We need both to make the best decision for the circumstances.

Lets start with **Lack of Communication - Verbal** Article #6 (DOM May 2015) and **Lack of Communication – Written** #9 (DOM October 2015). As a few of you may recall, the average message is communicated by means of verbal, tone of voice and body language. According to a study by Albert Mehrabian, body language carries 55% of the message while tone of voice carries 38% and verbal only contributes 7%. If this is even remotely true, then the Child does the majority of the communicating (93%) according to Mehrabian and at times I know 100% when you, in a moment of anger use hurtful words that you don't actually mean and wish you had never said after the fact. Most of the time we think about what we are going to say (the Adult) before speaking, but we give no thought to the tone of voice or body language. Keep this in mind when speaking and it could be a good idea to review article 6 (May 2015) for the Safety nets.

You may be surprised to know that the Child also does most of our reading. To prove it, say as fast as you can, what the

Look at the chart and say the COLOUR not the word

YELLOW BLUE ORANGE
BLACK RED GREEN
PURPLE YELLOW RED
ORANGE GREEN BLACK
BLUE RED PURPLE
GREEN BLUE ORANGE

Adult/Child Conflict

colour is of each of the following words and NOT the actual word.

The Adult can plainly see that the first word is coloured green, but the faster Child is saying the word Yellow. You will quickly notice the conflict as you struggle to keep the Adult saying the actual colour.

While the Child can read quickly, it is not always accurate as it tends to read words in clumps and has been demonstrated to skip over common words like “the, or, of,” etc. Be aware of the Child’s desire to speed and take the time on important documents to read slowly even by putting a finger under each word to help ensure your “mental picture” matches that of the writer.

Complacency #15 (DOM - June 2016) is self satisfaction with a loss of awareness of the dangers is one of the most heavily influenced by the Child. As we become more skilled, usually through repetition, the Child begins to do more and more of the task. This enables you to do it faster, but the danger lies in the Child doing what it is in the habit of doing. Thus, if you are inspecting a component for cracks that the Child is not in the habit of seeing, there is a good chance that you will not see a crack that is in plain sight. Many fatal accidents have occurred as a result of the Child seeing exactly what it expects to see. Recall the two very experienced AMTs who were found to have missed 140 cracks when they carried out a routine inspection they had done many times before on a Boeing 737 that they did not expect to see cracks on. (Aloha April 28, 1988)

Lack of Knowledge #16 (DOM - July 2016) is basically the realm of the Adult as we try to remember all that we have learned. They say the Child never forgets but certainly does not always give you the answer you need when you need it. Have you ever woke up in the middle of the night suddenly knowing the name of a person who you couldn’t, for the life of you, remember earlier? One of the Child’s many emotions is pride that could influence you not to ask for help when you need it due to lack of knowledge. We don’t work in an industry where guessing how something works is good enough. You must know or find out. Don’t let the Child make that emotional decision.

Distraction #17 (DOM - August 2016) is anything that draws attention away from the job at hand. One of the many characteristics of our model Child is it is always thinking ahead. If we are distracted for any reason, we will think we are farther ahead than we actually are unless there is a visual clue to bring us back to reality. This is how we can come to miss an important step unless we carefully use a check list. Keep in mind that “the brain (the Child part) can work faster than the hands”

Lack of Teamwork #10 (DOM - Nov./Dec 2015) is that failure to work together towards the best possible outcome. The Child can play a role in sabotaging this when there is a strong enough dislike towards a fellow worker or the management to interfere with Safety. This dislike can interfere with communication and the lack of trust will only make it worse. Two hundred and sixty one people died when dislike

and lack of trust prevented life saving communication between maintenance and the flight crew. The Child's decision making played a deadly role in this crash. Go to our website (www.system-safety.com) click on "Safety Videos" and read the case study of the first training video, "Death of an Airline."

Fatigue #18 (Dec/Jan 2017/18) is the number one contributing factor to human errors and again the Child plays a part. The Adult must sleep or it will die, but the Child never sleeps. (at least not in the model we are using) As we become more fatigued, the Child has an ever greater influence with a "don't care" attitude. Where normally the Adult would never let something slip by, the Child is influencing the decision to let it go and catch it next time. All the Adult wants to do is to sleep and thus, the Child makes the emotional decisions to "let it go," and something you would never normally do gets unchecked or left as is. The check of 1,300 rivets for cracks at Aloha was done between the hours of 0300 and 0500. The normal 8 hour inspection was done in four hours. Do you see who was beginning to lead the decision making?

In the next issue we'll look at the remaining Dirty Dozen and wrap up what may be an imperfect model, but one that works to help us understand how we can come to make so many "stupid" errors when we know better. Remembering this model and who is making the decision can help keep you out of a lot of trouble.

Hope to see you at HAI.