

# Solving Power Struggles

## What does Power-Seeking behavior look and feel like?

### Active:

- Fighting
- Rebellion
- Push Back
- Active Defiance

### Passive:

- Stubbornness
- Refusing to take your suggestions
- Low Grades
- Passive Defiance

Power Seeking behavior will make you feel challenged, angry, or defeated and want to fight back, take control, boss, or give in, and think, *"Who do they think they are? I'm in charge here."*

## Why do children power-seek?

- Needs drive feelings which drive behavior. Always.
- Power-Seeking behavior is the natural reaction to feeling micromanaged, bossed, controlled, incapable, or powerless so are literally fighting for autonomy, independence, control, and to feel capable.
- They want to do things on their own to show themselves (and you) that they are capable which builds confidence. They want to do it, so let them!

## How can you share more power? Be a navigator, not a driver.

### Step Aside

- Change your mindset- you are on the same team, supporting them as they travel their educational path. Yes, even in kindergarten, adopt a guide-on-the-side mentality. Let grades, mistakes, failures, and consequences be THEIRS.

### Give Choices and Ask Questions

- Give lots of choices (limited for younger, open for older)
- Go from a telling parent to an asking parent (but NOT an interrogating parent!)

### Have Conversations

- Let your child know you may have been thinking they were less capable than they are and you're sorry. You'd like to give them more choice and power- ask how.
- Set up goals, supportive routines, and connected consequences TOGETHER.

## HOMEWORK!

1. How might your own need for control or perfection be taking away from their need for autonomy?

2. What might you need to work on in yourself? (Children are not there to meet your needs and goals! Promoting independence for their future is more important than seeing perfection now.)