

**CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR**

# Momo doesn't want to share his toys

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CALMING AND SELF-REGULATION  
TECHNIQUES FOR CHILDREN  
+ TIPS FOR ADULTS



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Eva Brlek is a professional in educational rehabilitation and psychotherapist. Following her dreams, she opened a private practice, Kabinet Nueva, where she can enable the maximum stimulation and realization of the potential, abilities, and possibilities of both children and adults. With an interdisciplinary approach and innovative therapeutic methods, she provides diagnostic, counseling, and therapy services in educational rehabilitation, psychology, and psychotherapy. Eva is mostly fulfilled in her role of a mother to a wonderful boy, with whom she grows and develops to her fullest possible extent.



**Julija Kukec, mag. psych.**

Julija Kukec has a master's degree in psychology, she is a practitioner of reality therapy and an ECHA specialist for education of the gifted. She is a professional assistant in a kindergarten, working with children to monitor their development and identify difficulties and potential giftedness. She also provides educational programs through lectures and workshops, diagnosis, and support for children and parents in the form of counseling. She is the mother of two children, who are her biggest and most important inspiration in every area of her work. In her free time, Julija enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband and children.

Eva Brlek and Julija Kukec

# Momo doesn't want to share his toys

Fear of losing valuable things as the background of challenging behaviour

Illustrations:  
Sven Nemet



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Adults often encounter with child's behaviors they don't know how to deal with, react to, solve, and what to do. That is why experts often describe them as **challenging behaviors**.

These are unacceptable behaviors because their intensity, frequency, or duration can endanger the physical safety of the child or others and interfere or pose a risk to the child's optimal learning or inclusion in social interactions with peers and adults. One such challenging behavior is shown in the following story.

We will see how challenging behaviour in a child can be triggered by **fear of losing valuable things**.



Panda Momo didn't want his friends to play with his toys, especially the ones that were very important and dear to him. When his friend took one of these toys, he got angry, snatched the toy out of her hands and pushed her away. By doing so, he violated their relationship, the physical safety of his friend, and deprived himself of fun and socializing with his friends.

But Momo, just like all children who show similar challenging behaviors, chooses such behaviors because they haven't learned better and more efficient ways of **dealing with frustration**. We cannot simply label such children as naughty or poorly raised. At the core of every challenging behaviour are a child's unsatisfied needs, a bad self-image, and low self-confidence. Sometimes, behavior can be a reaction to traumatic experiences. Behind every child's behavior, there is a specific reason that adults often do not recognize when looking from their perspective.

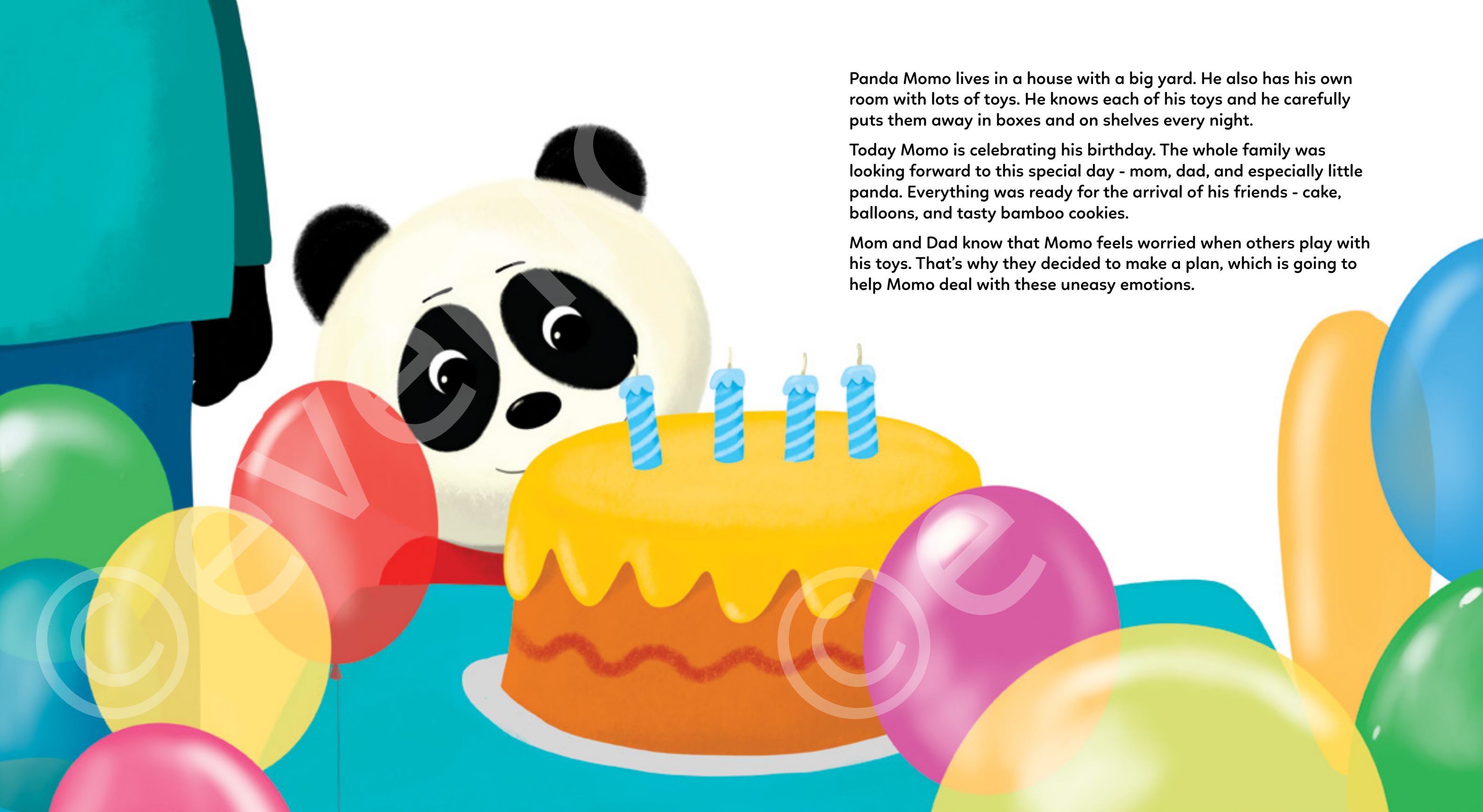
For a child to learn how to choose better and more efficient behaviors, it is necessary to adopt the ability to self-regulate. Self-regulation is an adaptation process, and it includes a child's ability to face challenges and stresses.

**Self-regulation includes: managing emotional reactions, thinking about what triggered the emotions, choosing an appropriate reaction, and the child's ability to satisfy their own individual desires and needs.**

When we help a child to learn self-regulation, we are building better and less stressful relationships with them, and we will also help them have more positive relationships with peers. That means more self-esteem, self-confidence, empathy, better socio-emotional competencies, and better overall mental health.

Find out how Momo succeeded to self-regulate in the story that follows.





Panda Momo lives in a house with a big yard. He also has his own room with lots of toys. He knows each of his toys and he carefully puts them away in boxes and on shelves every night.

Today Momo is celebrating his birthday. The whole family was looking forward to this special day - mom, dad, and especially little panda. Everything was ready for the arrival of his friends - cake, balloons, and tasty bamboo cookies.

Mom and Dad know that Momo feels worried when others play with his toys. That's why they decided to make a plan, which is going to help Momo deal with these uneasy emotions.



– Momo, you know that a lot of your friends are coming to your birthday party. They can't wait to play with your toys. Remember how you like to play with their toys when you visit them. New toys are interesting and exciting to you too - Dad said carefully.

– Yes, I like Lana's puzzles so much - Momo was excited, but then he got a little worried. –But I'm afraid that someone might take my toys or break them apart.

– I understand your concern. It's not easy to share things, especially if they are important and dear to us. I have an idea. Before the guests arrive, let's go and choose and put away your most important and favourite toys in a safe place - Dad suggested.

– Okay! Let's put them in a closet, they will be safe there – Momo agreed and immediately started stuffing the toys into the large closet.

– Your friends can play with all the other toys, do you agree?  
– Dad asked. Momo didn't say anything, so dad suggested another thing: – If you're going to feel worried, scared or sad because others are playing with your toys, you can go and play in your tent for a while. You know that there are a lots of things in there that help you deal with unpleasant feelings more easily.



Guests started to arrive at the party - Momo's friends from kindergarten, neighbours and relatives. Little animals were very happy to see him and finally be able to play together. They went to Momo's room and started playing with his toys.



At one point, Momo saw Lana playing with his favourite teddy bear. He forgot to put it in a safe place in the closet. Momo suddenly started breathing fast and ran to Lana in distress. He snatched the teddy bear out of her hand and pushed her so hard that she fell on the floor.

Lana started to cry, and then Momo did too.

