




Trauma-Informed Schools

Cultivating Gritty, Resilient Students

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I Promise To ...

What I
Know

What I
Want to know

What I
Learned



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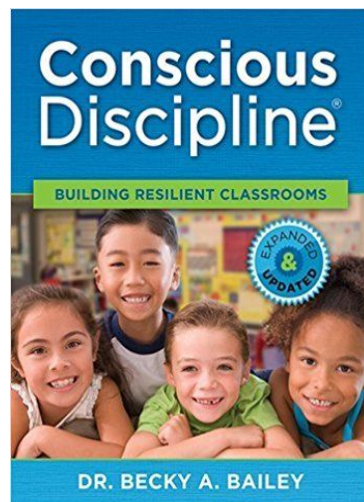
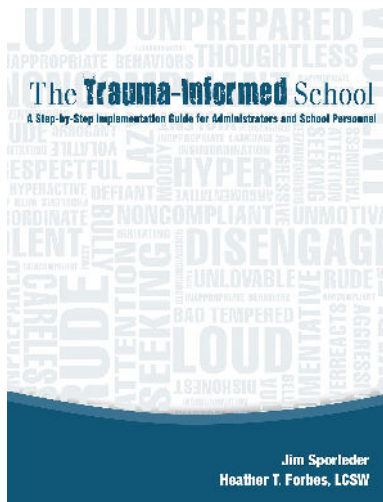
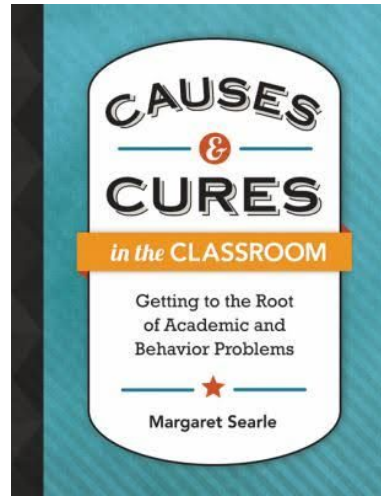
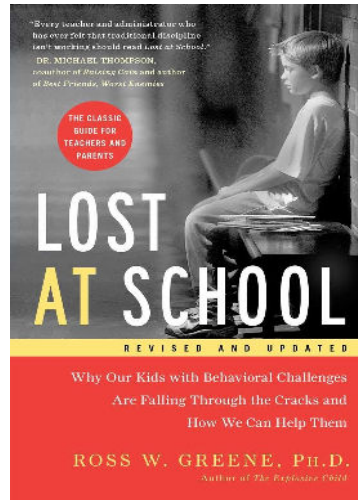
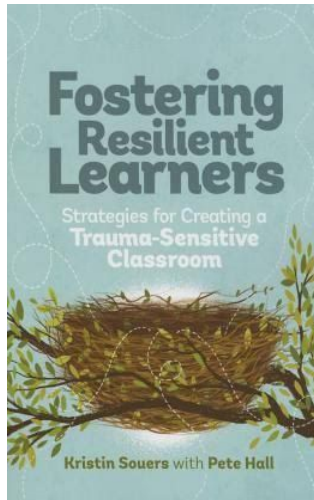
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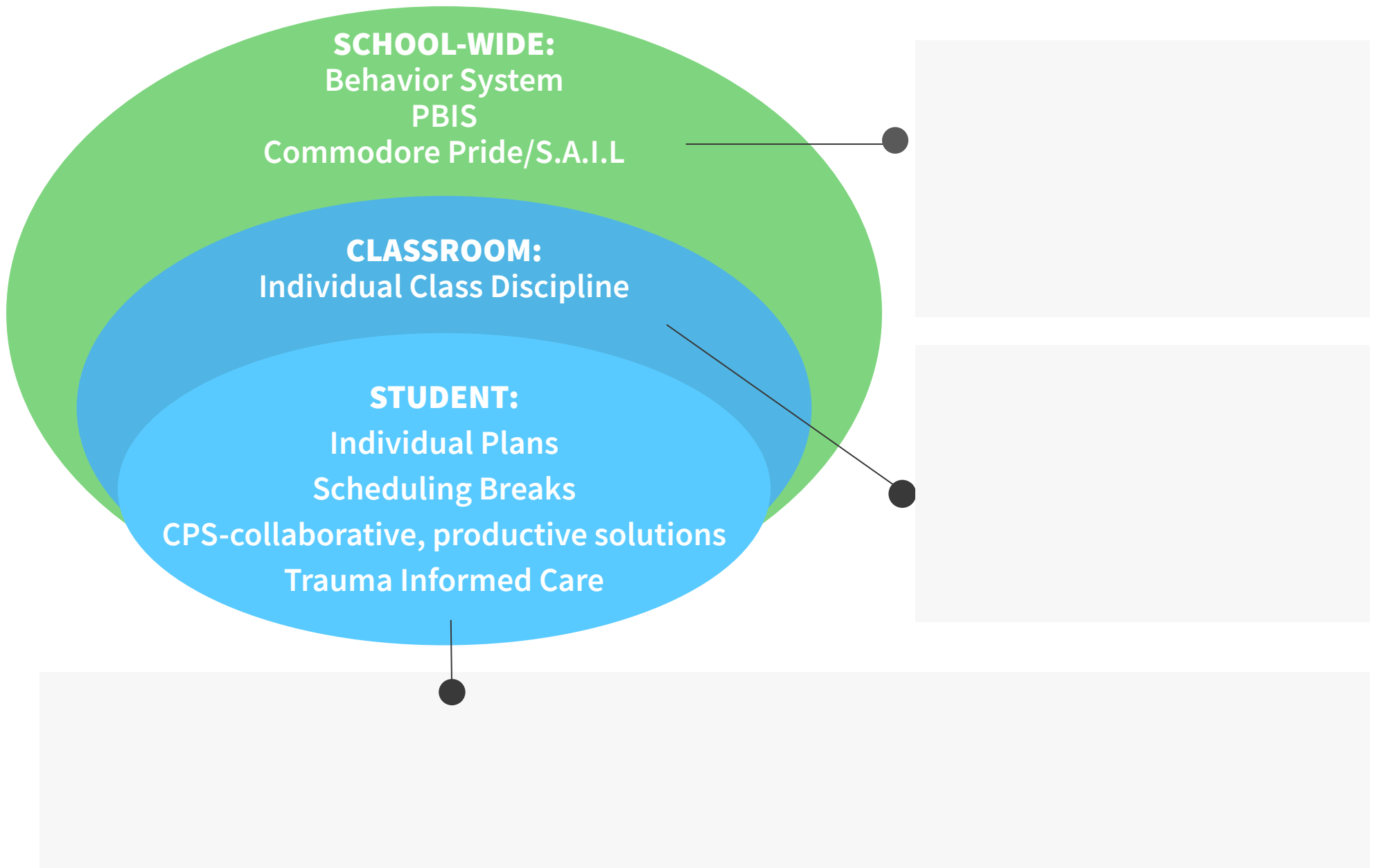
What do you need
from us to help
you make it
through the day?

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Professional Reading



The Big Picture of Student Behavior Supports



The Big Picture of Student Behavior Supports

Let's Dig a Little Deeper

P.B.I.S

- Set clear expectations and guidelines
- Model with videos and lesson plans

Classroom Discipline

- Clearly teach expectations
- Establish routines and procedures
- Reteach expectations as necessary
- Acknowledge successes

Individual Student Management Techniques

Tried and True Actions

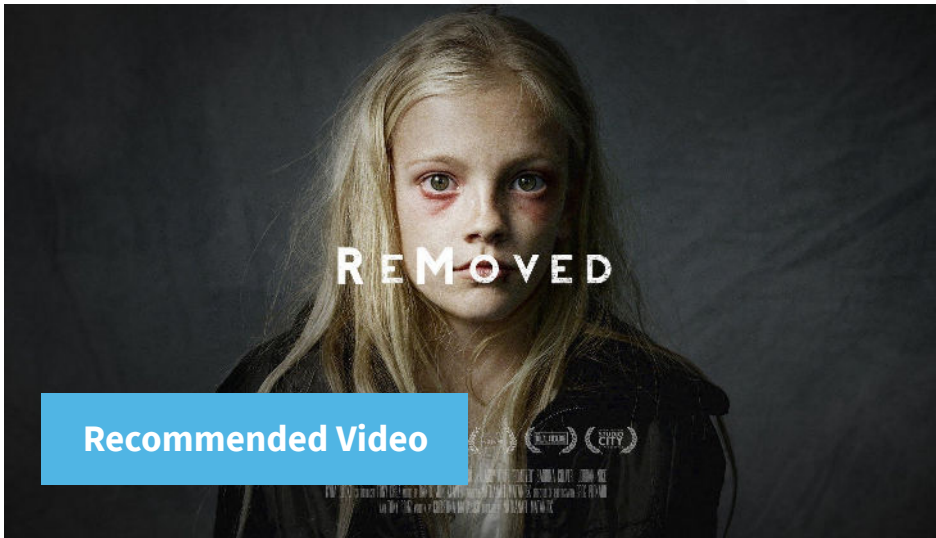
- Give respect, every day, all day!
- Avoid strong directives, give options when possible
- Model adult thinking of acting responsibly & making good choices
- Discipline with dignity—goal of discipline is to change negative behavior
- Embed social skills as much as you can
- Be inclusive—invest in them and they will invest in the school
- Celebrate effort and achievements
- Help them navigate difficult experiences and activities
- Meet them where they are, shed pre-determined ideas about them
- BELIEVE THEY CAN!



TRAUMA

Trauma Defined

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the functioning or physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being of an individual.



ReMoved - Can you experience more than one type of trauma? Watch at:
tinyurl.com/TSC-ReMoved

Trauma Types

ACUTE TRAUMA - A single traumatic event that is limited in time. Serious accidents, community violence, natural disasters, sudden or violent loss, physical or sexual assault.

CHRONIC TRAUMA - Multiple traumatic events

Multiple and varied events, such as exposure to domestic violence, involvement in a serious car accident that has lasting effects, long-standing physical abuse or neglect.

COMPLEX TRAUMA - Refers to traumatic stressors that are interpersonal (caused by other humans). *Can be acute or chronic.* Violation and/or exploitation of another person

Prevalence of Trauma

- 26% of children in the US will witness or experience a traumatic event before the age of four.
- Four of every 10 children in America say they experienced a physical assault during the past year, with one in 10 receiving an assault-related injury.
- Nearly 14% of children repeatedly experienced maltreatment by a caregiver, including nearly 4% who experienced physical abuse.
- More than 13% of children reported being physically bullied, while more than 1 in 3 said they had been emotionally bullied.
- More than 60% of youth age 17 or younger have been exposed to crime, violence, and abuse either directly or indirectly.

ACES & Toxic Stress



Stressors Related to Trauma

Trauma looks different to all individuals depending on their experiences. Some stressors suffered by children or families that we commonly see in our schools:

- Poverty
- Discrimination
- Separation from parents/siblings
- Frequent moves
- School problems
- Traumatic grief and loss
- Ambient Trauma (immediate surroundings)
- Ongoing or repeated episodes of maltreatment

Common Diagnoses of Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Mood Disorders
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Conduct Disorder
- Adjustment Disorder
- Sensory Processing Disorder



Trauma Summarized

TRAUMA = EVENT

- No control over it
- Scary or stressful
- Experience of event is unique to each individual
- Pirates vs. Knife fight

EVENT → EXPERIENCE → EFFECT

- Effects are what we deal with
- Trust issues
- Attachment issues
- Relationship issues
- Anxiety
- etc.

What Does Being Trauma Informed Mean?

To Us, Trauma Informed Care Means:

- Understanding how the brain works
- Understanding that the brain is the BOSS of BEHAVIOR
- Understanding that a dysregulated brain CANNOT learn; it is stuck in fight, flight, freeze mode
- Shifting from asking *“What is wrong with you?”* to *“What has happened to you?”*

Break

- What are your reactions to the trauma information thus far?
- What are your “aha” moments?
- What do you still wonder about?
- Think of a student you currently have or previously had. Does this information relate to him/her?

The Brain

- The brain is not just made of genes. It's sculpted by a lifetime of experiences.
- The brain develops roughly up to 20 years, with the first 3 years (including the womb) the most rapid.
- Experiences alter brain activity, which changes the development of the brain.
- The brain is plastic throughout life and will continue to develop.

Anything that changes your brain, changes who you will be!

Parts of the Brain

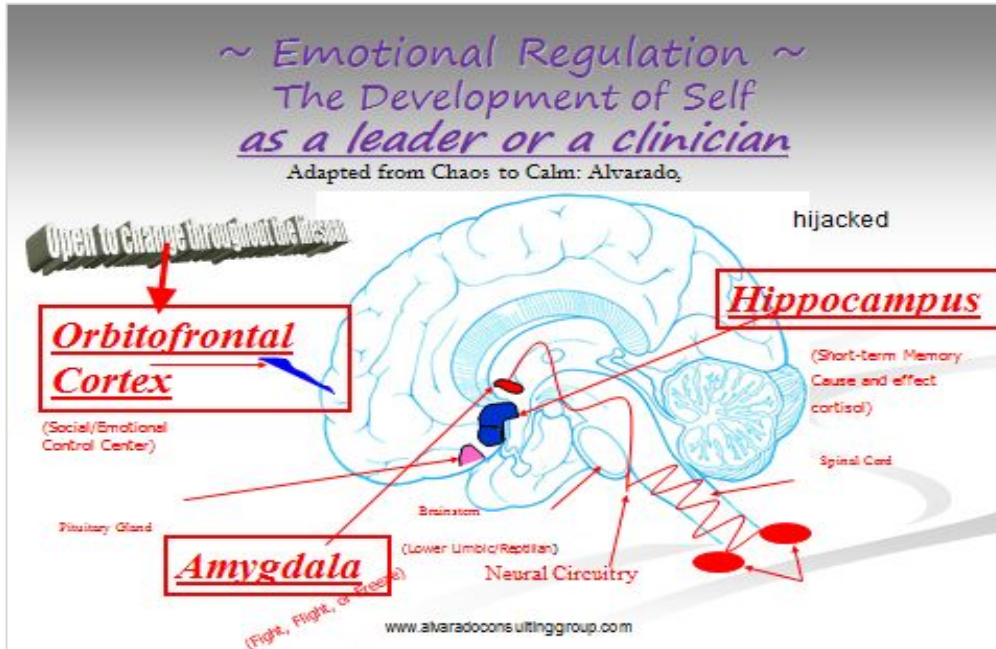
Brainstem - Home of fight, flight, or freeze. It is reactionary and does not access the "thinking" part of the brain.

- This is the part of the brain where children with trauma histories have the largest part of their electrical activity (showing that they are reactionary to sensory stimulation).

Limbic system - This is where emotions are stored and is the home of the amygdala and hippocampus

Cerebral cortex - Home of the prefrontal cortex, which allows us to make good choices despite being upset, scared, overwhelmed, etc.

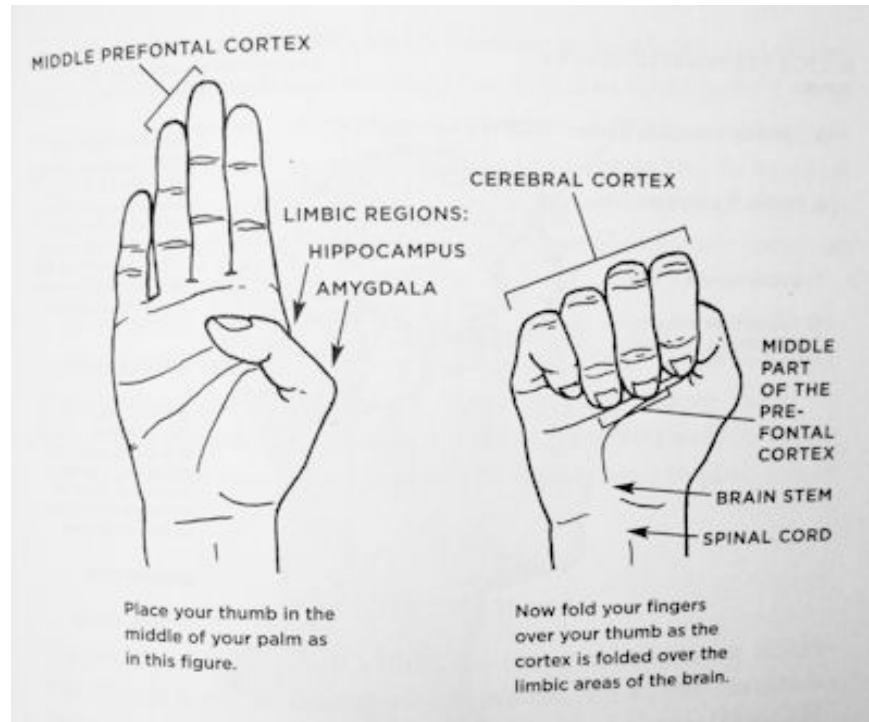
The Brain is the Boss of Behavior



Why Our Traumatized Children Are Reactionary: Downstairs Brain, Upstairs Brain

- Trauma shapes not only how we interact in the world, but also how we physically and developmentally grow.
- The brain functions the way it is programmed to function.
 - Due to the difference in how traumatized brains work, children are triggered and functioning from the brainstem quite often.
 - Children's brains are not fully developed and they lack the ability to think from their "upstairs brain," ie., the *higher functioning part*.

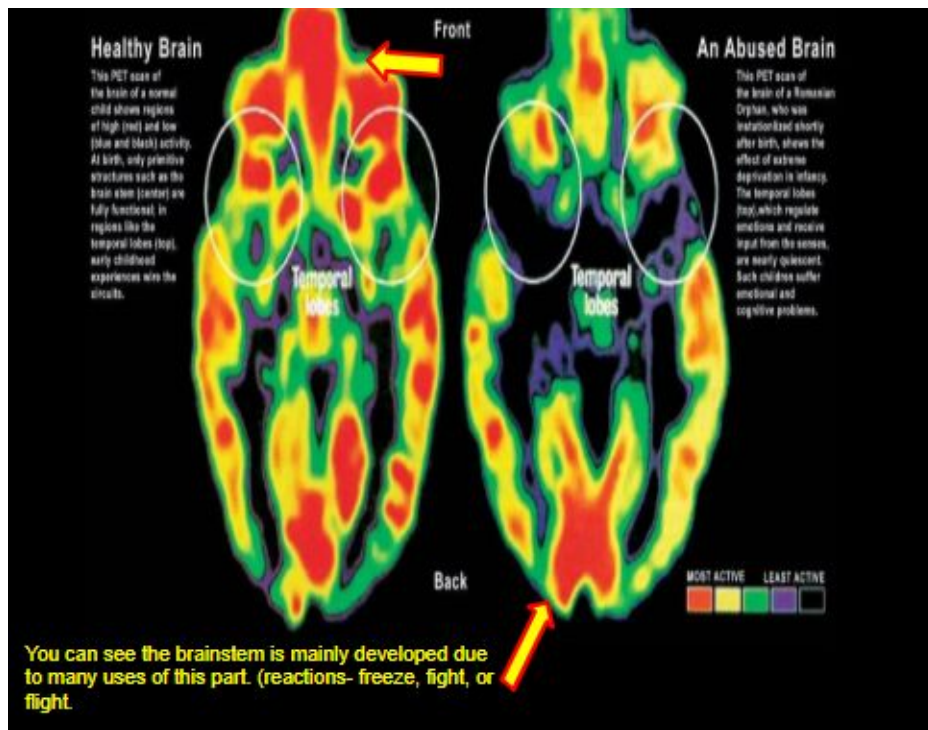
Dan Siegel's Model - “Flipping Your Lid”



Recommended Video



Watch at:
tinyurl.com/TSC-Dan-Siegel



Impacts of Trauma on the Brain

Repeated or significant trauma can make the amygdala overly sensitive

- The amygdala is the fear receptor
- When overly sensitized, the amygdala will trigger the same response to a *perceived* trauma or *perceived* sense of being unsafe
- When it is triggered, it sends signals to the hippocampus (which is the home of short-term memory and rational decision making. Also, home to explicit memories)

Impacts of Trauma on the Brain

The amygdala responds by releasing a little cortisol (stress hormone)

- A little cortisol is soothing
- However, when the amygdala is over-sensitized, it sends signal after signal
- The hippocampus continues to release the stress hormone, cortisol
- Too much cortisol blocks the ability to access the cerebral cortex (the thinking part of the brain) because it pools there
 - Cortisol pooling leads to changes in attention, impulse control, sleep, fine motor control, dysregulation in many functions (social & emotional)

CHANGE: The only way to change behaviors is by relationships

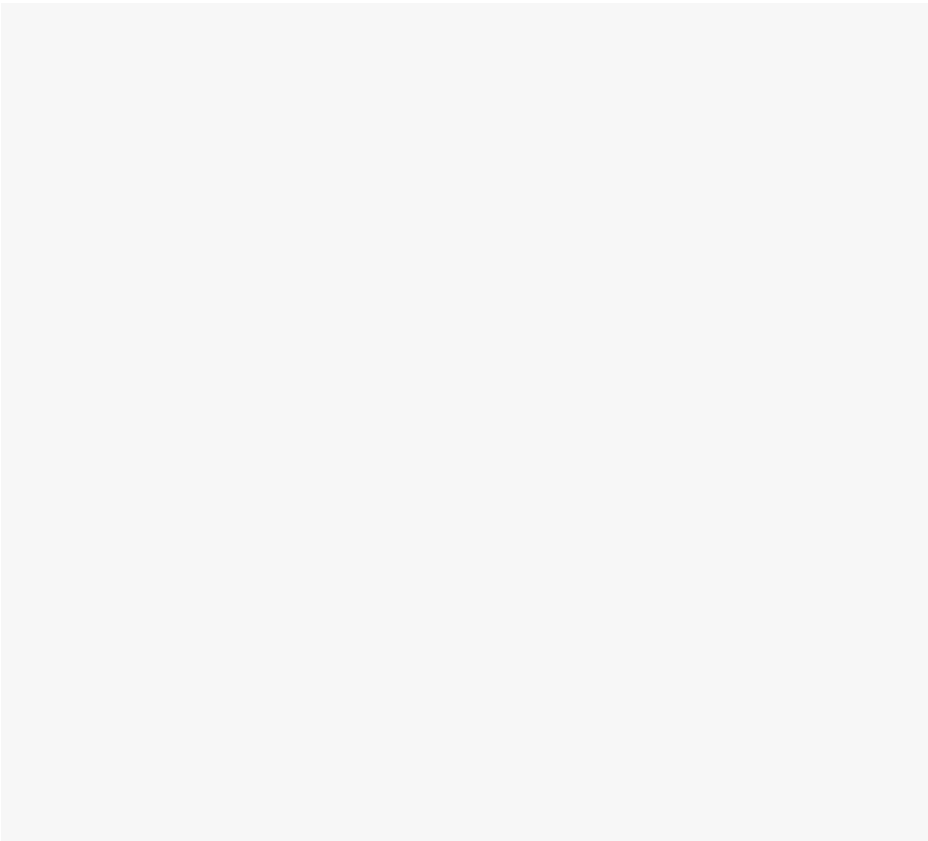
- This means talking *at* them when they are triggered does not work well.
- It is a reaction and something that they cannot control, so expecting a reward/behavioral system to make changes is not feasible.
- To deescalate, the adult needs to provide calm sensory input to help soothe the child.
 - Sensory - Sights, Sounds, Taste, Touch, Smells, and Movements

Heal first, then you can work to address the behaviors!
You never know when you will be that healing person for someone.

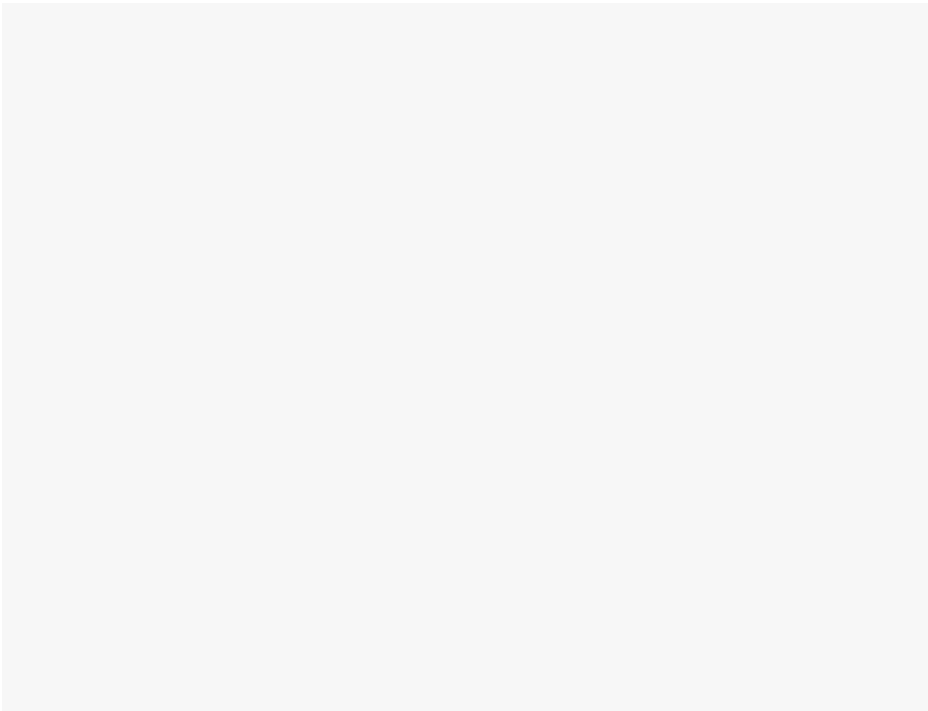
It All Starts with Relationships

Optimizing Brain Development with Relationships

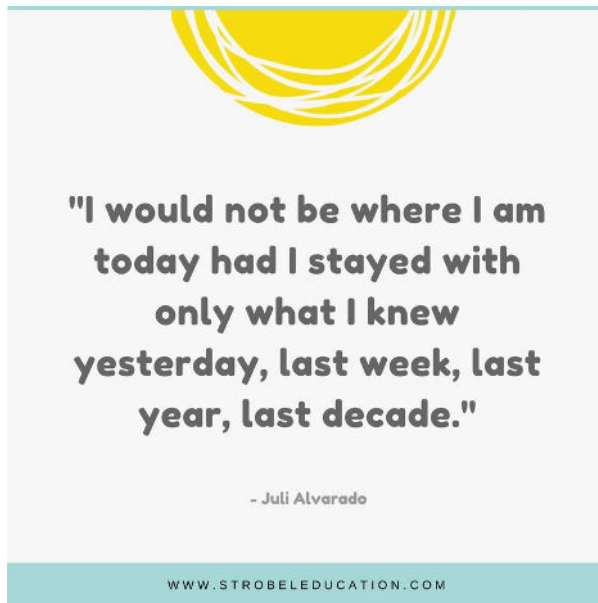
One of the core findings in brain research is that interpersonal relationships shape the function and structure of the brain ... Connections on the outside create connections on the inside. These connections literally wire our brains for willingness and impulse control. – Bailey



Early relationships shape...

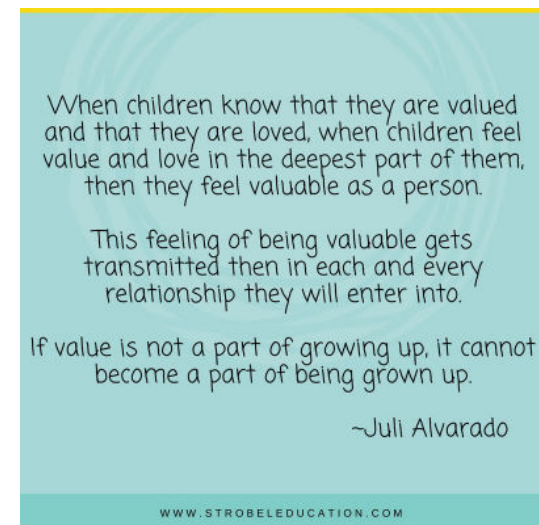
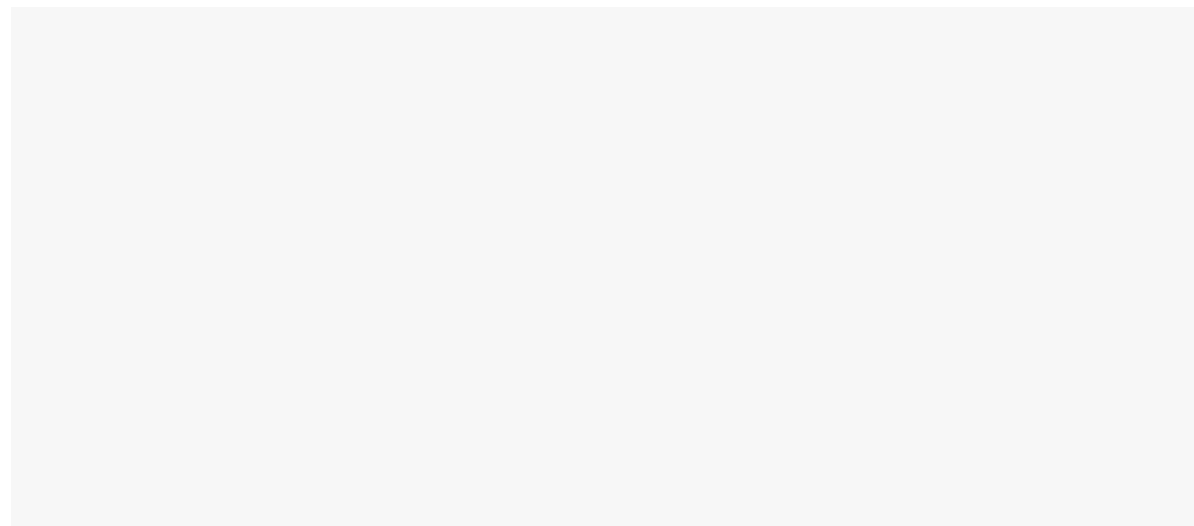
- How we handle stress and how much stress is too much before we become overwhelmed and paralyzed.
 - The way we perceive the world.
 - How we organize our memories into mental models to anticipate the future.
 - Our capacity for interpersonal communication.
 - Our ability to focus and sustain attention.
- 

Strategies to Help Build Relationships



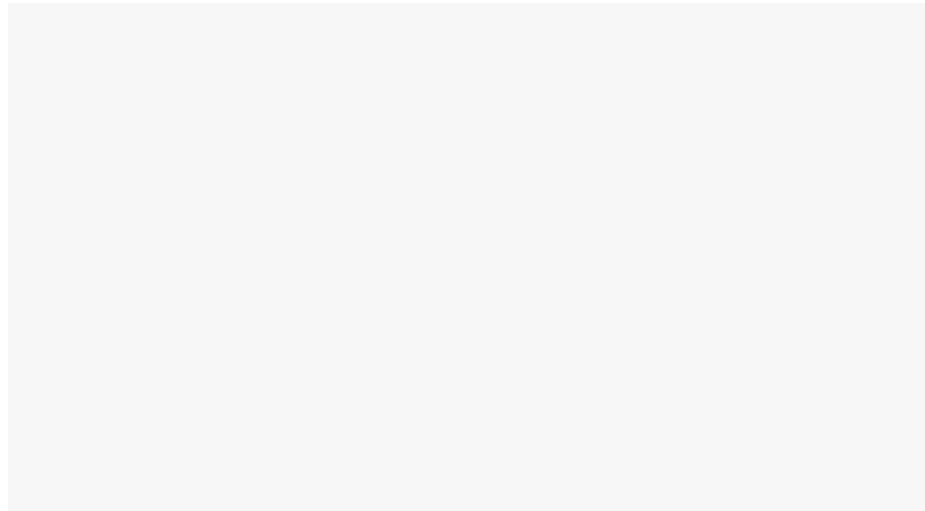
What It Looks Like

- Overall staff mindset of “relationship” approach
- Cohesive school-wide language of student behavior and staff approach
- Certain students with daily charts that track their target behaviors and conference with staff
- Certain students on alternate schedules that allow time for therapeutic supports
- Students who attend social skills group daily, weekly, or monthly to work on coping skills
 - Students with direct supports in coaching and modeling of their skill deficits
- Restorative conferencing after significant behavior
- Classroom mediated circles to address problem behaviors or specific students
- Making the consequence align with the needs of the student
- Monthly staffings on high-risk students to analyze data and adjust plan



Proactive vs. Reactive

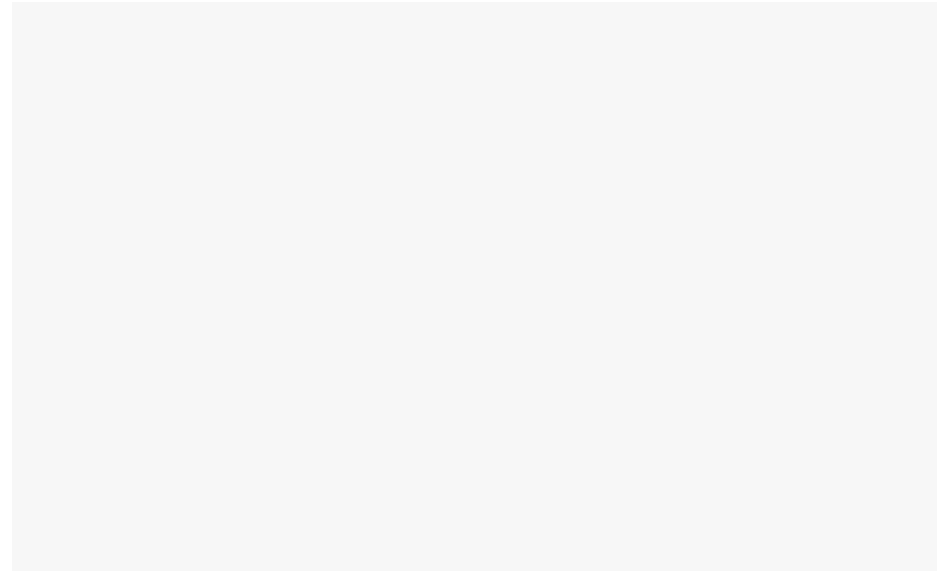
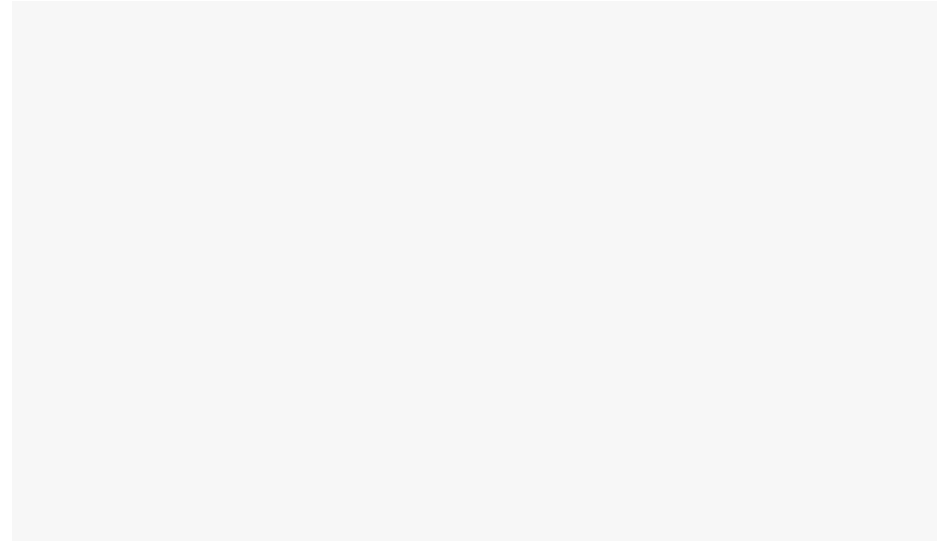
It's nobody's fault that we are where we are today, but it is ALL of our responsibility to do something about it.



Kids Do Well If They Can

Watch at: tinyurl.com/TSC-Kids-Do-Well

Traditional Discipline vs. A Different Approach



Respond vs. React

| Traditional Reactions | Trauma Informed Responses |
|--|---|
| "Go to the Principal's office." | "I'm here. You're not in trouble." |
| "Stop crying." | "It's okay to feel." |
| "Stop acting like a baby." | "That really set you back, didn't it?" |
| "Detention is waiting for you." | "Sit with me." |
| Don't you talk to an adult like that." | "You're allowed to have a voice. Let's talk together." |
| "You're old enough to handle this on your own" | "Let's handle this together." |
| "Stop whining." | "I want to understand you better. If i know how you feel, I'll be able to help you better. Use your voice so I can really understand." |
| "It's not that difficult." | "I need to know how hard this is for you." |
| "You should never have acted like that." | "Sometimes life just gets too big, doesn't it?" |
| "Act your age." | "This is too big to keep to yourself." |
| "I can't help you with this issue, I've got 30 other children in the classroom." | "We'll get through this together. Every single student in this class is important." |
| "I'm calling your parents. Wait until they find out." | "Let's get everyone involved to support you. You're not in trouble, I want your parents involved so we can all find a way to make this better." |
| "Nobody is going to like you if you keep misbehaving." | "I know you want to be well liked, so let's make that happen." |
| "You need to take ownership." | "I'm sorry this is so hard." |

Lagging Skills and Executive Functioning Skills

Executive Functioning

The executive functions are a set of processes that all have to do with managing oneself and one's resources in order to achieve a goal. It is an umbrella term for the neurologically-based skills involving mental control and self-regulation.

Inhibition/Impulse Control

The ability to stop one's own behavior at the appropriate time, including stopping actions and thoughts. The flip side of inhibition is impulsivity; if you have weak ability to stop yourself from acting on your impulses, then you are 'impulsive.'

Initiation

The ability to begin a task or activity and to independently generate ideas, responses, or problem-solving strategies.

Working Memory

The capacity to hold information in mind for the purpose of completing a task.

Planning/Organization

The ability to manage current and future-oriented task demands.

Organization of Materials

The ability to impose order on work, play, and storage spaces.

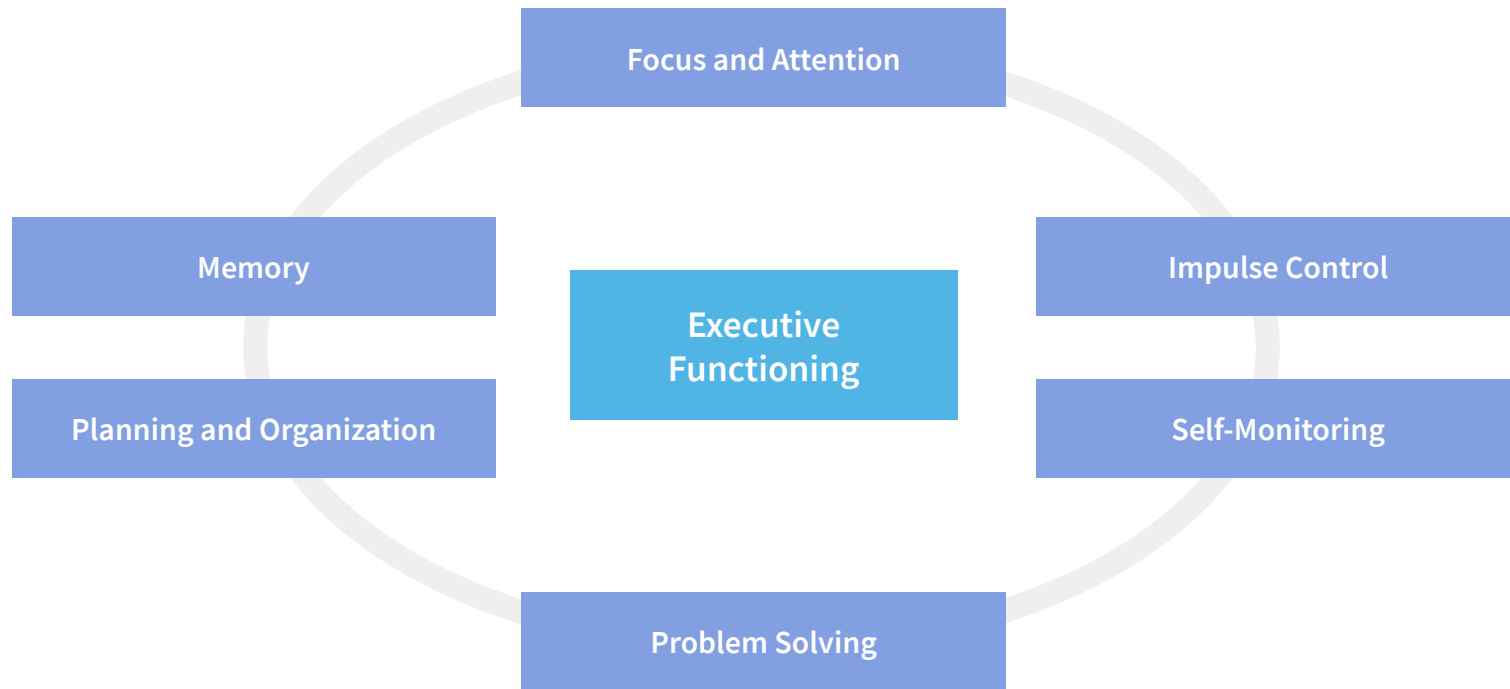
Self-Monitoring

The ability to impose order on work, play, and storage spaces. The ability to monitor one's own performance and to measure it against some standard of what is needed or expected.

The Basics

- The executive functions all serve a “command and control” function; they can be viewed as the “conductor” of all cognitive skills.
- Executive functions help you manage life tasks of all types. For example, executive functions let you organize a trip, a research project, or a paper for school.
- Often, when we think of problems with executive functioning, we think of disorganization. However, organization is only one of these important skills

A Closer Look at Executive Functioning Skills



Interventions to Improve Executive Functioning

Inhibition/Impulse Control

- Teach routines
- Teach stress reduction strategies
- Teach script for problem-solving
- Regulate the environment
- Start and stop games
- Teach about the brain

Initiation

- Help student choose options
- Verbalize the beginning of a project to build awareness
- Prompt the child if needed or offer choices
- Ask, “What might be your first step?”

Working Memory

- Make eye contact before giving instructions
- Play memory games
- Minimize distractions
- Visual reminders of what to do
- Have a child repeat back instructions
- Daily agenda
- Sing or chant information

Organization

- Playing matching games
- Adults model thinking aloud
- Guide and prompt
- Visual reminders
- Checklist
- Make planning and reflection notes

Prioritization

- Give directions in steps
- Visuals with steps involved
- First/then books
- Give simple one or two step commands
- Role play and add contrast
- Break projects down into smaller parts

Self-Monitoring

- Ask child how he/she feels about their effort and accomplishments
- Ask children to reflect on their work/play
- Have pictures of what clean, finished, etc., look like
- Teach children questions to ask themselves “Do I have space?”
“What will help me pay better attention?”
- Provide class time for reflections

Regulation- Let's Think About Getting the Brain Regulated Again!

Regulated Brain vs. Dysregulated Brain

- Labels do NOT help us. We are EITHER regulated OR dysregulated.
- **DYSREGULATION**
 - Mind ... Body ... Spirit
 - Changes the functioning of the physical body
 - Creates unconscious emotions of fear, and fear comes from an event=trauma=behavior
 - When students are in survival mode, their brains are delivering a message that their bodies must respond to
 - The longer the child is in dysregulation, the more significant the issues
 - For every memory pathway that is laid down, multiply by 3 to undo
 - E.g., a 6-month old would take until they were 12-18 months old to undo the trauma

Dysregulated = Fight, Flight, or Freeze. What does this look like in the classroom?

Fight

Flight

Freeze

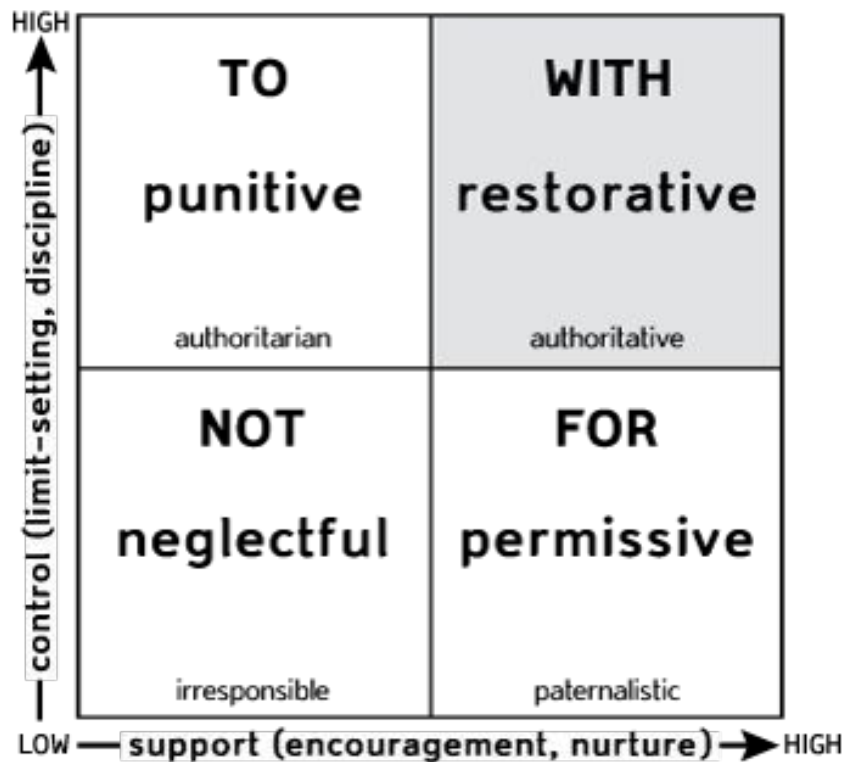
De-escalation - Time In vs. Time Out

1. Use “Time In” Instead of “Time Out”

- a. Keep the child with you instead of sending her/him away (if they are triggered, they cannot choose to be in control, and they need an adult to show them what being in control looks like).
- b. This is NOT a hold.
- c. Adult stays with child, using a calm, regulated voice or other calming sensory input.

2. Trust Based Relational Intervention - empoweredtoconnect.org

- a. A great resource with many suggestions on how to handle children who have been traumatized in one way or another.



IMPACT OF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS ON THE BRAIN

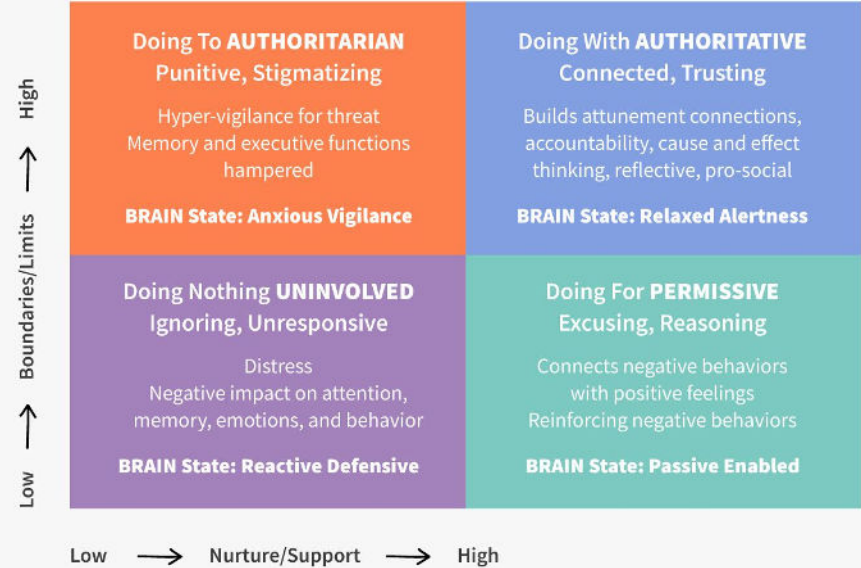


Chart is modified from Diana Baumrind's parenting research

Restoration

Understanding Fair Process

When authorities do things with people, whether reactively — to deal with crisis—or proactively, the results are better. This fundamental thesis was evident in a Harvard Business Review article about the concept of fair process producing effective outcomes in business organizations (Kim & Mauborgne, 1997). The central idea of fair process is that “... individuals are most likely to trust and cooperate freely with systems—whether they themselves win or lose by those systems—when fair process is observed” (Kim & Mauborgne, 1997).

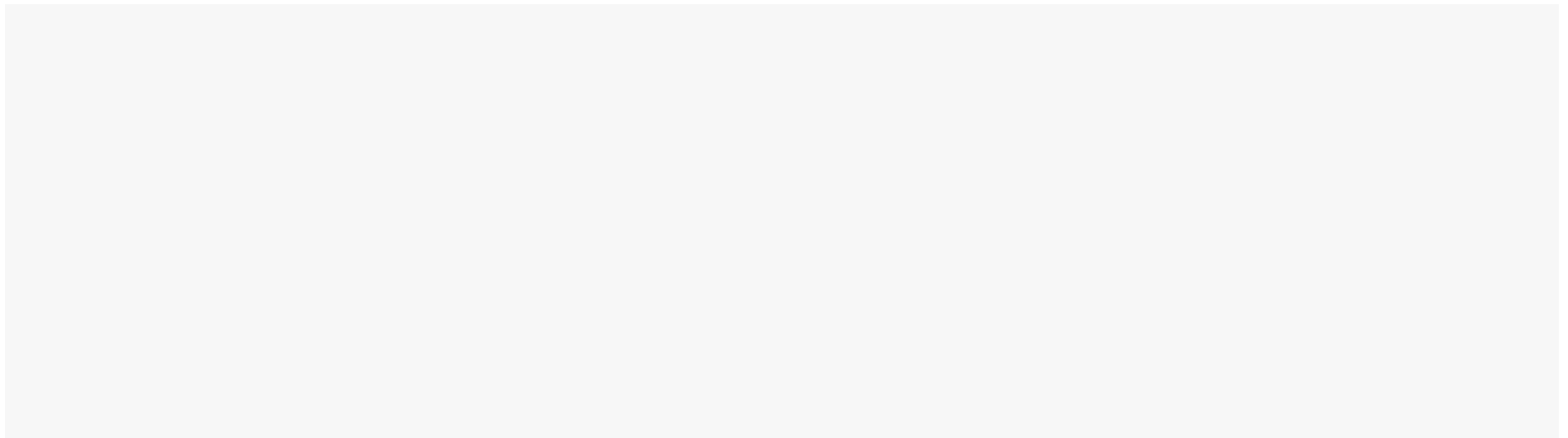
The three principles of fair process are:

Engagement — Involving individuals in decisions that affect them by listening to their views and genuinely taking their opinions into account.

Explanation — Explaining the reasoning behind a decision to everyone who has been involved or who is affected by it.

Expectation clarity — Making sure that everyone clearly understands a decision and what is expected of them in the future (Kim & Mauborgne, 1997).

Restorative Practices



What It Looks Like

- Students who attend social skills group daily, weekly, or monthly to work on coping skills
 - Students with direct supports in coaching and modeling of their skill deficits
- Restorative conferencing after significant behavior
- Classroom mediated circles to address problem behaviors or specific students
- Overall staff mindset of “relationship” approach
- Cohesive school-wide language of student behavior and staff approach
- Certain students with daily charts that track their target behaviors and conference with staff
- Certain students on alternate schedules that allow time for therapeutic supports
- Making the consequence align with the needs of the student
- Monthly staffings on high-risk students to analyze data and adjust plan

Classroom Strategies

(taken from “The Trauma Informed School” - Sporleder & Forbes) a

| GOAL | ELEMENTARY STRATEGIES | SECONDARY STRATEGIES |
|---|---|---|
| Build Relationships | Note on student’s desk, Before school interactions, Lunch with principal | Connect during passing time, Assign a mentor, Lunch with principal |
| Build Self-Esteem | Affirmations, Story Time | Affirmations |
| Create a Calm Classroom | Warm lighting, Increase natural lighting, Sound machine, Animals, Less on walls | Warm lighting, Increase natural lighting, Sound machine, Animals, Less on walls |
| Create a “Family” in the Classroom | Pictures, Welcome in mornings, Chart with “school hierarchy” | Welcome in mornings, Chart with “school hierarchy” |
| Focus on Breathing | 2-5 min meditation, Balloons, Bubbles, Pinwheels, Gonoodle.com | 5-10 min meditation, Gonoodle.com, Pinwheels |
| Focus on Safety | SafeZone in classroom, Mantras | SafeZone in classrooms, Mantras, ISS room (changed) |
| Provide Nourishment | Snacks & water available | Snacks & water available |
| Provide Structure | Be consistent, Keep Daily Schedule Visible, Create Traditions | Be consistent, Keep Daily Schedule Visible, Create Traditions |
| Teach How to Identify Stress | Stress Indicator Bullseye | Stress Indicator Bullseye |
| Teach Problem Solving Skills and Critical Thinking Skills | <i>Linguisystems</i> , Character Analysis | <i>Linguisystems</i> , Character Analysis |
| Teach Social Skills | Group Sessions with Counselor | Group Sessions with Counselor |
| Teach Emotional Expression | Basic Feeling Words, Story Time | Basic Feeling Words, Character Analysis |

Food for Thought ...

What students show us is really all they know. It's up to us, the adults in their lives, to offer an array of appropriate, alternative means for them to regulate their emotions and manage the intensity of their behaviors. To do so, we must provide a safe environment in which students are free to explore those strategies, practice them, and discover the ones that work best for them. Just as we do when students are struggling with writing a compelling summary or chronicling the events leading up to the Civil War, we must teach students who struggle with managing trauma-related stress. The better we teach students to recognize when they are in their downstairs brain versus their upstairs brain and give them a tool set for getting back upstairs, the greater the chance we have at supporting students' pursuit of personal and academic success. We may not be able to stop the trauma from happening, but we can give students the skills and strategies to manage the intensity, through intentional teaching in a safe, predictable environment.

Taking Care of YOU!

- Take care of yourself!
- You cannot pour from an empty cup!
- Their fight is NOT our fight.
- You only know what you know. You can only give what you can give.
- Don't set yourself up to fail by expecting the impossible.
- Change takes time. Give it time.
- You cannot give away that which is not yours to give.
~Juli Alvarado

Self-Awareness

Be True to You

EQ = Emotional Intelligence

- Emotions Drive People~People Drive Performance
- Current neuroscience tells a clear story: If you really want to understand and influence people, you need to be smarter with feelings
- Our system always functions in a state of FEAR or LOVE
- Regulatory Model for Behavior
 - Underneath behavior is stress
 - Stress triggers emotion (either love or fear)
 - Emotion drives behavior
 - Our students tend to reside in fear ... it is INCUMBENT for us to activate LOVE

I would not be where I am
today had I stayed with
only what I knew
yesterday, last week, last
year, last decade.

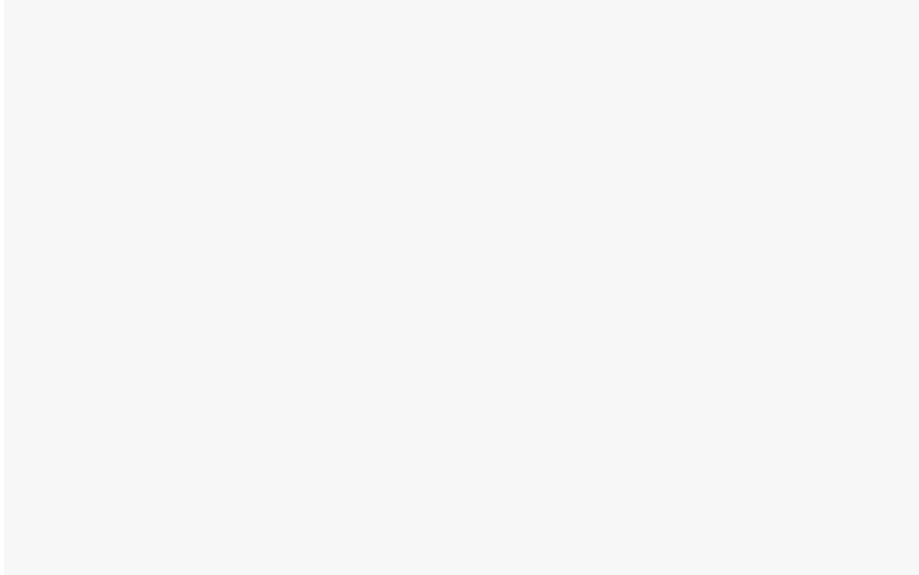
- Julie Alvarado

Parallel Process of Recovery

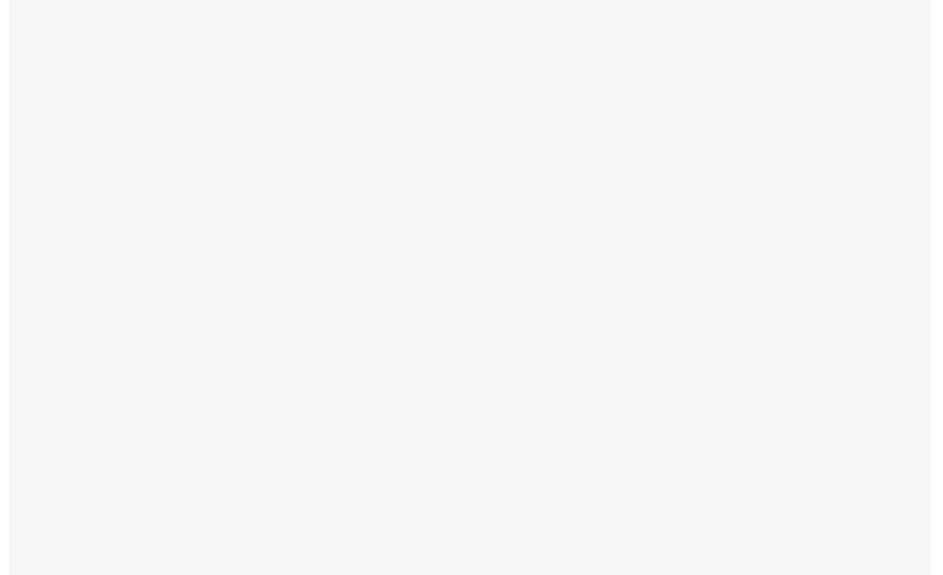
- **Don't Miss the Boat**
- **We have a collective anger**
 - Pass the buck, whose fault is it, not mine
- **We need to heal before we can help**
- **Secondary Trauma**
 - What we experience because of working with kids with trauma
 - Their trauma becomes our trauma, their fight becomes our fight, their anger becomes our anger
 - Their trauma is NOT our trauma, their fight is is NOT our fight, their anger is NOT our anger
 - If I make your fight my fight, I reinforce that fighting is what we do

Prevention & Triggers

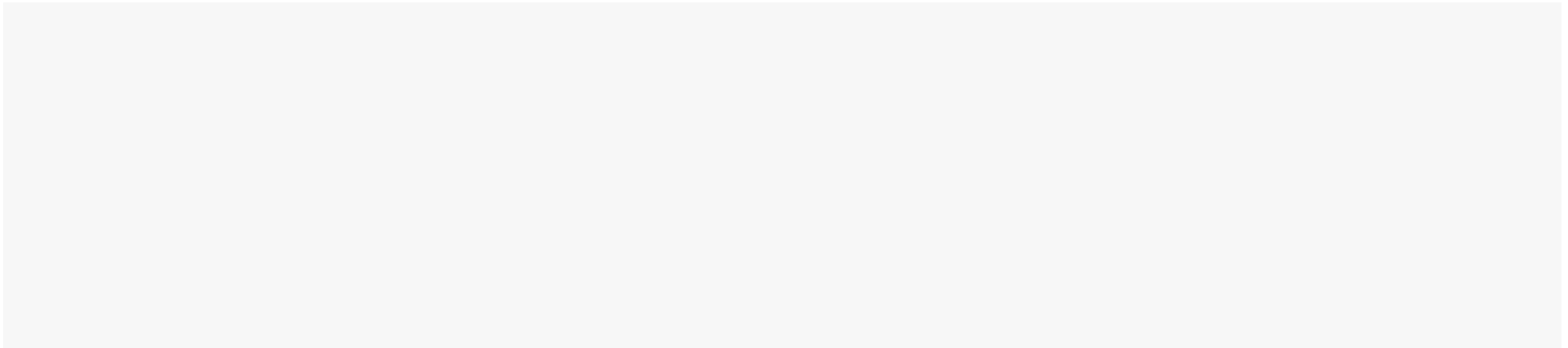
What students do that I like/appreciate



What students do that I dislike or that drives me crazy



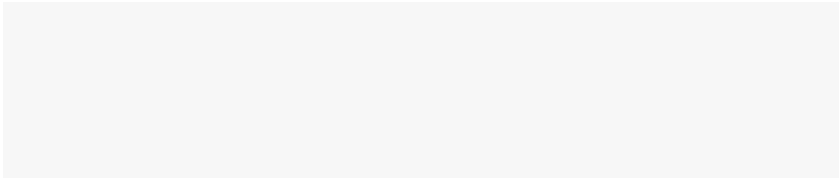
When the Tornado Hits



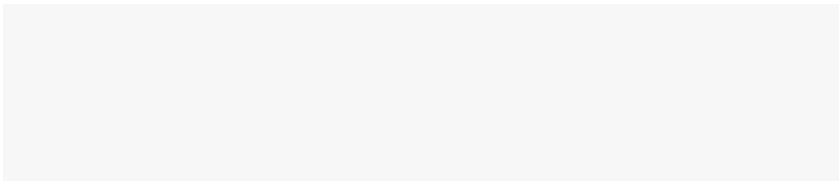
Fostering Resilient Learners

5 Step Problem Solving Approach

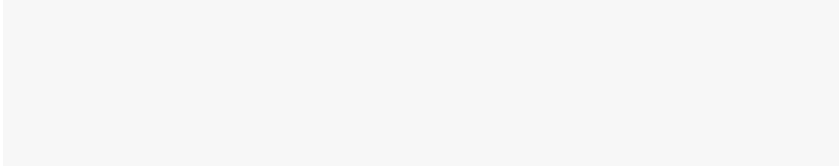
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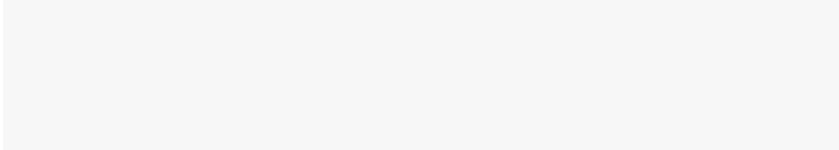
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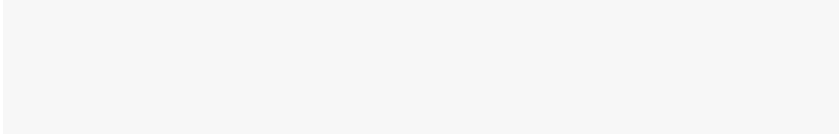
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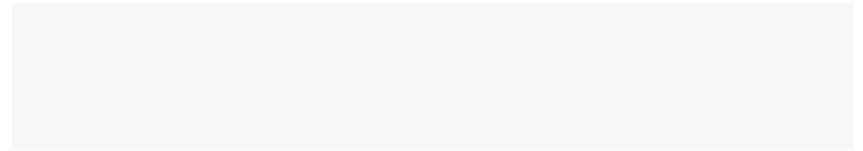


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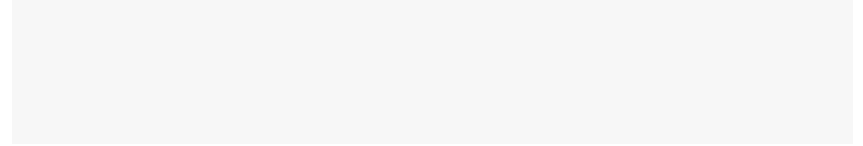


6 Step Communication Process

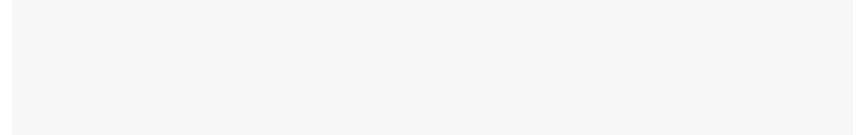
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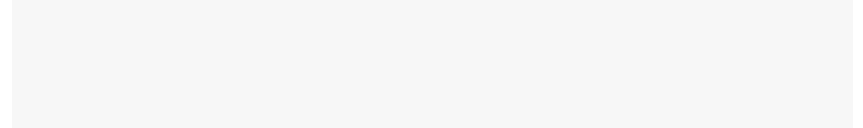
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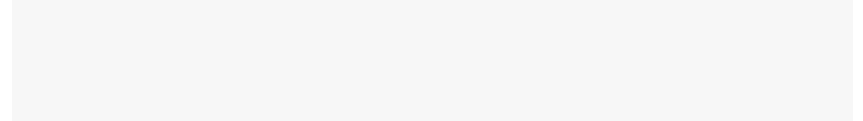
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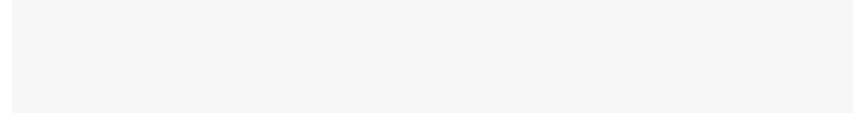
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Prevention

Triggers

- Know your own triggers
- Identify how you typically respond to your triggers
- Identify some more appropriate ways to respond to your triggers
- Your students most likely know your triggers
- Learn what triggers your students

If it's predictable, it's preventable.

- Develop routines and procedures
- Have a plan for preventing problems
 - Analyze areas and times that problems usually occur
- Avoid power struggles
 - Make a pledge and share it with students
- Know your students
 - Build strong relationships with them. Know what motivates them and connects them to their learning

Ask the Right Questions

What is the motive behind the misbehavior?

- Understanding the motive is the path to true change
- Most times, the behavior is simply a distraction
- Beware of tornadoes

During the tornado (distraction):

- Help the student recognize how they are acting
- Teach them how to prevent future tornadoes
- Support students, be available while holding them accountable

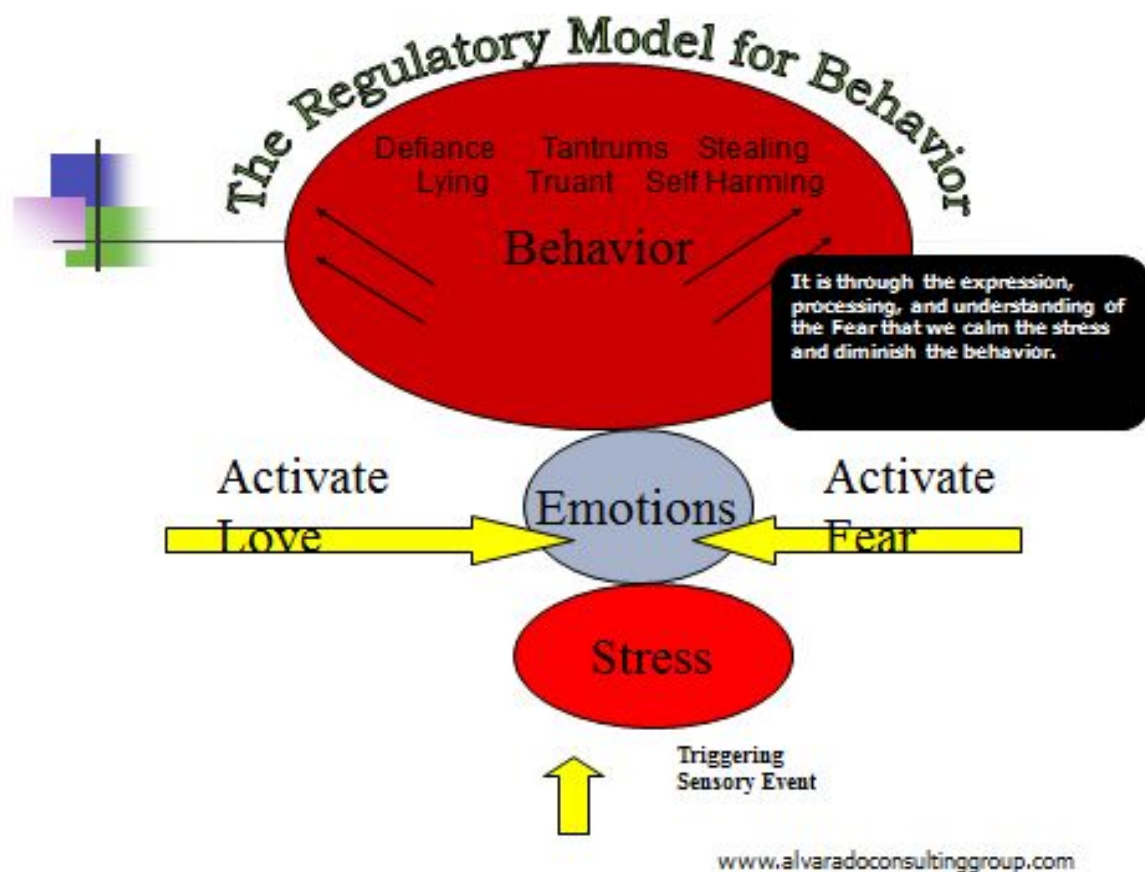
Discussion Questions

Consider a student who tends to create chaos. Think carefully about when and where this happens. Now try to determine the motive behind it.

What does this student need from you to regulate and move back into his or her upstairs brain?

How might you remind yourself to remain calm in the midst of a student's tornado?

ERH- Emotional Regulatory Healing



On-site Professional Development: Bring Strobel Education to Your School

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- The 90-minute Reading Block
- Fluency Strategies
- Comprehension Strategies
- Differentiated Literacy Stations
- Vocabulary
- Mini-Lesson Modeling
- Close Reading & Text Complexity
- Strategies for Struggling Readers

Writing Topics

- Writer's Workshop
- 6 Traits of Writing
- Assessing Writing
- Writing Process
- Mini-Lesson Modeling

Staff Motivation & Keynotes

- Remembering Your Why
- Reimagining Education
- The Science of Happiness
- Positive School Culture
- Growth Mindset
- Genius Hour

All Content Areas

- Standards-Based Grading
- Formative Assessment
- Close Reading Strategies
- Text-Dependent Questioning
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