



Helping Your Child Manage Stress & Anxiety

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Presenters: Ms. Arciga, Ms. Brown and Ms. Gomez



About Us



Yanel Arciga
School Counselor

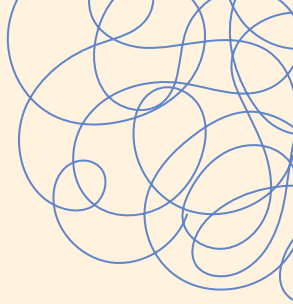


Tiffany Gomez
District Social Worker

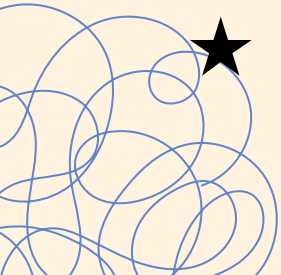


Maggie Brown
District Social Worker

What is mental health?



- ★ Mental health is a way to describe our emotional, psychological and social well-being
- ★ Our mental health affects how we feel, think and act
- ★ It helps determine how we relate to others, make choices and how we manage stress



Why is it important to talk about mental health?

Supporting children's mental health has positive outcomes

- Research demonstrates that students who receive social–emotional and mental health support do better in school academically and behaviorally
- Students with strong mental health and coping skills are better able to handle life's challenges and are more resilient
- Students with a sense of well-being form positive relationships and have positive regard for themselves
- Left unmet, mental health problems are linked to negative concerns such as academic and behavior problems, dropping out, delinquency and difficulty in adulthood

STRESS



What is Stress?

- Definition of Stress: Any uncomfortable "emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological and behavioral changes."
- We can experience and express stress physically, emotionally and mentally
- Stress makes it difficult to think clearly or make good decisions

What is Stress?

- Typically, we can identify what is causing us to feel stress and the stress goes away when the stressor goes away
- Stress is a short-term experience
- A natural and normal response to life's challenges

What Things Cause Us Stress as Adults?



**What Does it Look Like For
You? How do you react?**



What Things Might Cause Stress for Children?

- New or unfamiliar situations
- Family being sick
- Taking tests
- School work being hard
- Being away from parents
- Making new friends or feeling like they don't have any friends

- Death of a family member or pet
- Losing a game
- Peer conflict
- Feeling bullied
- Family or community violence
- Being uncertain about the future

What Does Stress Look Like in Children?

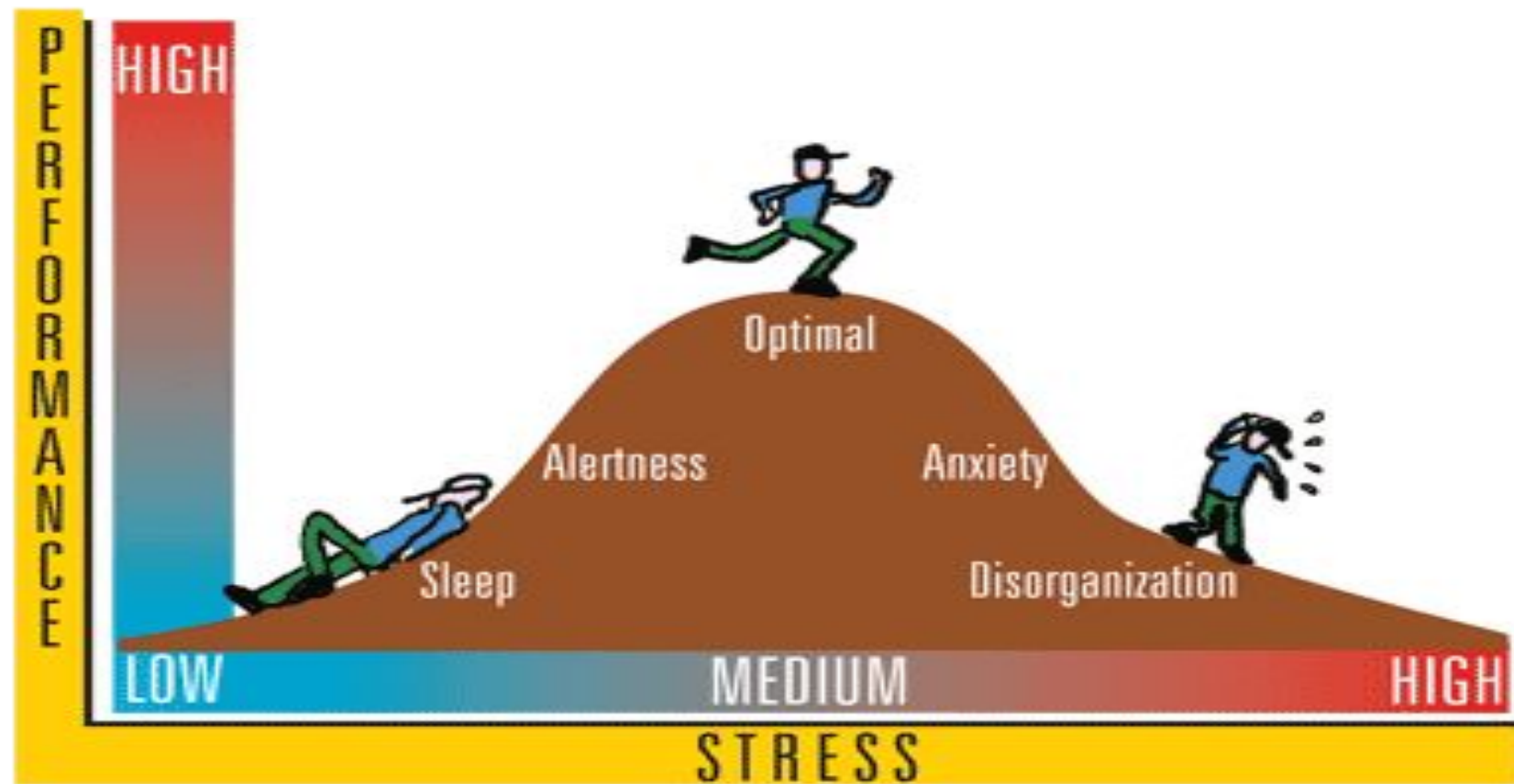
COMMON PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS OF STRESS AMONG CHILDREN



Is Stress Ever Good?

- Some stress can be beneficial at times
- “Good stress” can make you feel motivated, energized, excited and focused
- Can encourage us to deal with challenges and solve problems
- Can build resiliency and help us adapt to changes

Stress Performance Connection



What About Anxiety?



**What is the difference
between stress and
anxiety?**



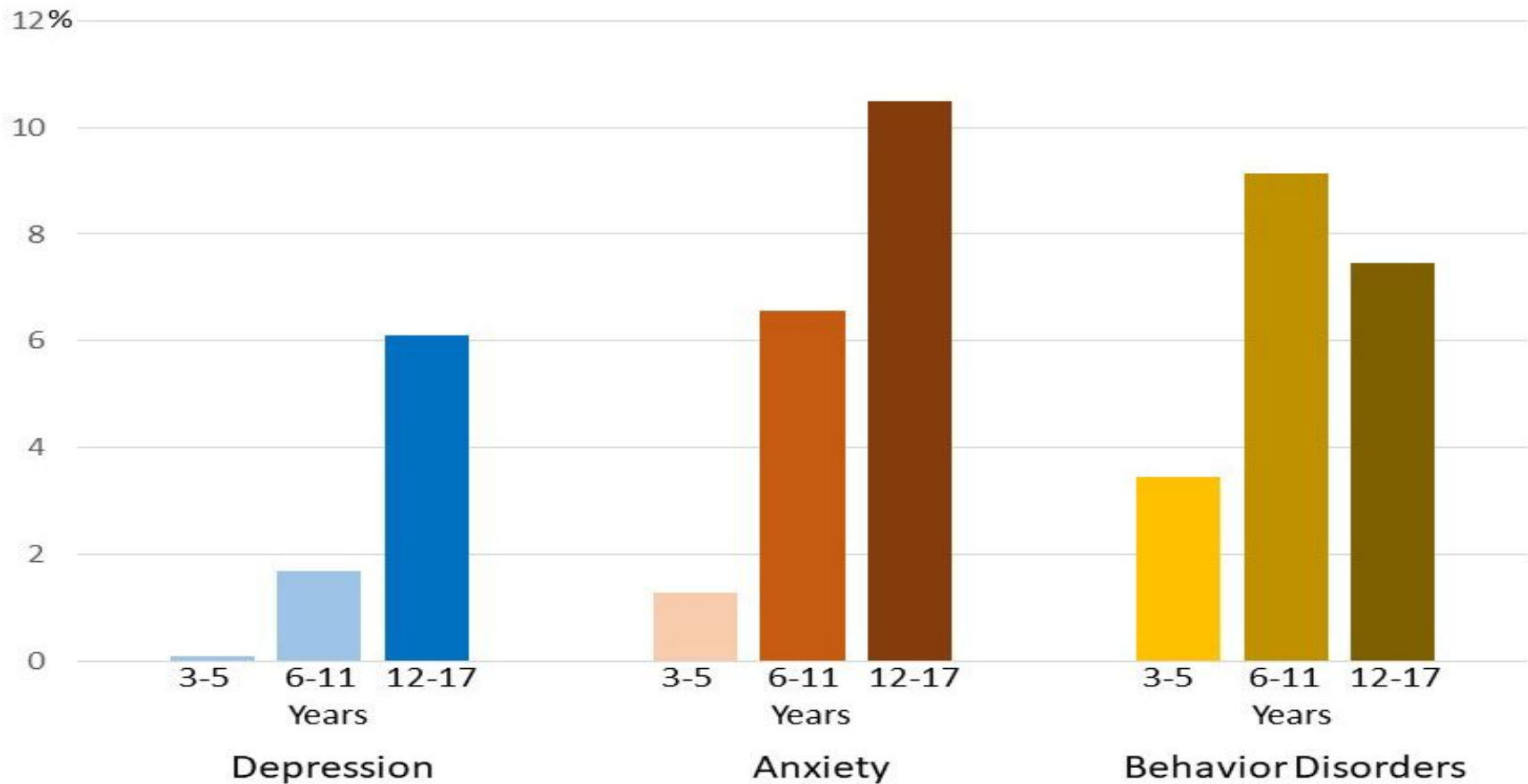
Anxiety vs. Stress

- Anxiety can be a reaction to prolonged levels of high stress when we don't take steps to reduce stressors
- Unlike stress, anxiety often lingers and continues after the stressor is gone
- While stress is usually specific, anxiety makes us feel uneasy, worried or nervous about everyday life or things in general

Anxiety vs. Stress

- Anxiety can feel like fear but it is not the same. Anxiety is a response to an unknown and imprecise threat (we know what we are fearful of)
- Anxiety is a feeling that is often out of proportion to the situation (real or imagined)
- **Anxiety is a worry or fear that future events will have a negative outcome**

Depression, Anxiety, Behavior Disorders, by Age



Anxiety Disorders

- **Separation Anxiety Disorder**

- Persistent or extreme fears about leaving caregivers or familiar people.

- Refusal to leave home or attend school

- **Generalized Anxiety Disorder**

- Pervasive and high levels of anxiety across a variety of situations

- Concerned about doing things well; Perfectionistic

- Worries frequently about relatively minor things

- Appear stressed much of the time

- Most common childhood anxiety disorder

◦ **Social Phobia**

- Severe distress about being in social situations, interacting with others and being evaluated by others
- Fear of social situations is out of proportion to the actual situation
- Typical age of onset is in adolescence or early adulthood


◦ **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

- Distress as a result of a traumatic situation.
- Common types of trauma: exposure to violence, auto accidents, home fires and injuries, natural disasters

What are Panic Attacks?



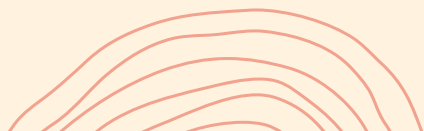
Panic attacks are sudden & unexpected episodes of severe anxiety, which may have no obvious triggers and can happen when a person least expects it. Panic attacks can be extremely frightening, and this is especially the case if the sufferer is a child.



Panic Attack Symptoms




Panic attacks can result in a range of psychological & physical symptoms which can vary from person to person. Your child may feel as though they've lost control & as though they are trapped, or unable to free themselves from a certain situation.



Panic Attack Symptoms



Panic attacks can also be accompanied by physical symptoms which may include:

- Feeling faint, dizzy or lightheaded
 - Feeling nauseous
 - Abdominal discomfort
 - Chest pains and shortness of breath
 - Heart palpitations, racing heart
 - Fluctuating body temper
 - Hyperventilating or shortness of breath
- 

What can cause panic attacks?

Like most mental health conditions, there may be various factors that could increase the likelihood of your child experiencing panic attacks such as:

- Hereditary/genetic factors
- Phobias
- An existing mental health condition
- Short-term emotional triggers such as suffering a bereavement
- Low self-esteem
- Certain substances can also trigger symptoms such as caffeine

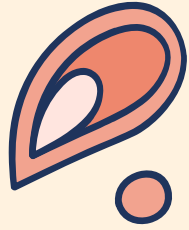
Effects on School and Social Performance

- May struggle with various demands of school
- Inattentive or forgetful behavior
- Perfectionistic (may look like not wanting to start an assignment or not able to finish it)
- Avoidance of difficult tasks or social situations

- Does not volunteer or participate in classroom activities
- Withdrawal from others or situations
- May be perceived by others as unmotivated, lazy, uninterested in school
- Unwilling to participate due to concerns about failure or embarrassment

PROVIDING SUPPORT





What do we do to feel better as adults when we feel nervous, anxious or stressed?



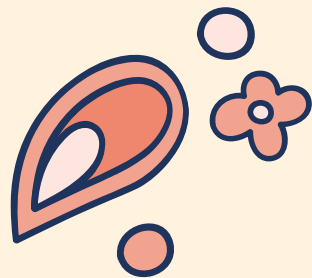
- Call a friend or talk to someone you trust
- Go for a walk
- Dance or listen to music



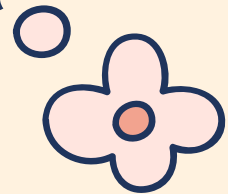
- Do something creative
- Less healthy strategies

How to help your child





How to help your child



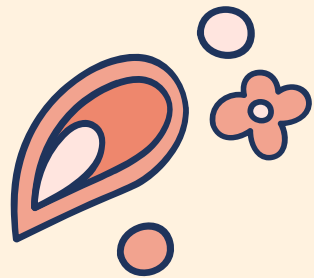
Stay calm

**Listen to
their needs**

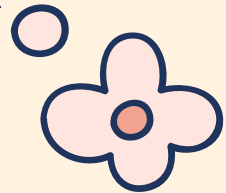
Be patient



**Don't
overreact
or avoid**

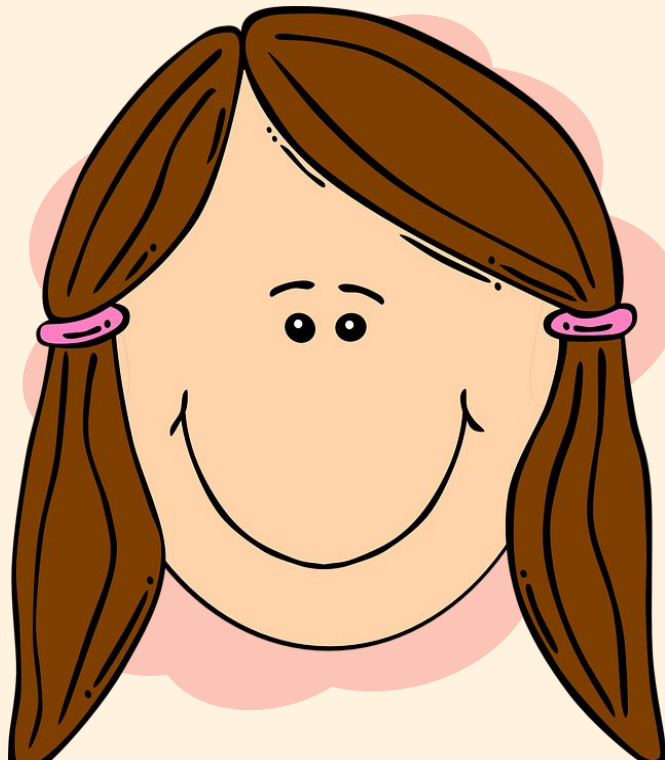


How to help your child



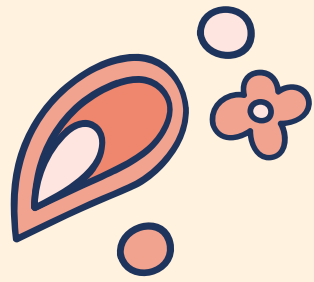
**Mistakes are
ok**

**Express positive
but realistic
expectations**

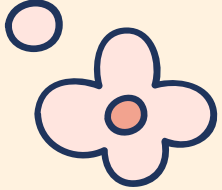


**No one is
good at
everything**

**Practice
makes better**

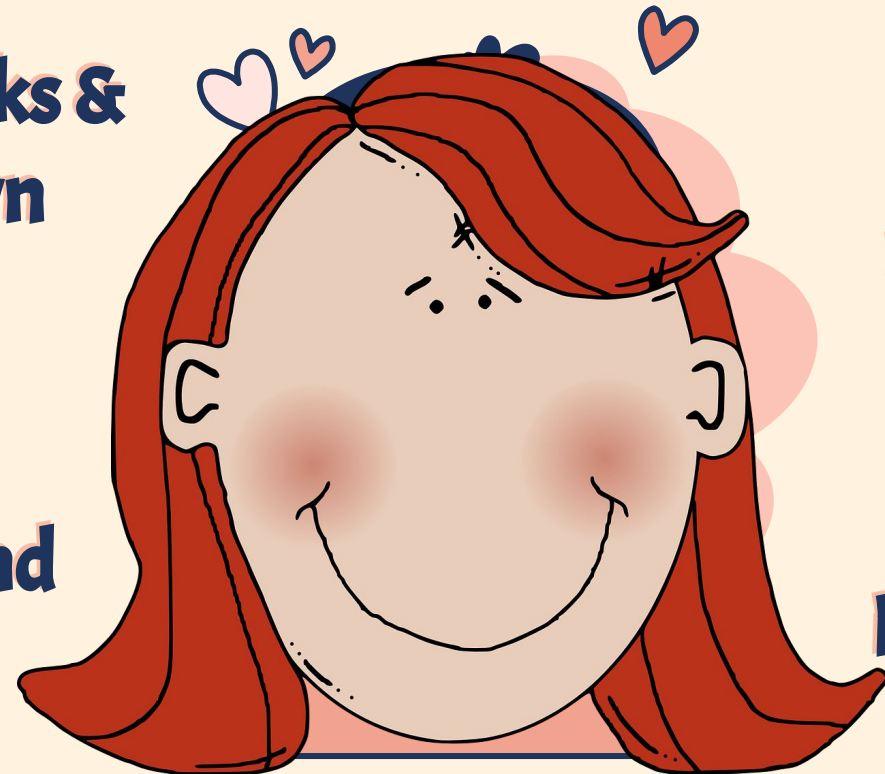


How to help your child



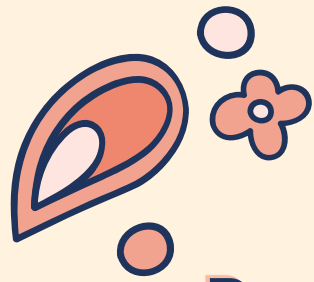
**Provide breaks &
break down
tasks**

**Organize
materials and
time**

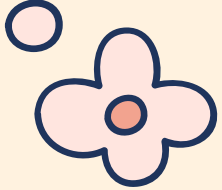


**Praise &
reinforce
effort**

**Have
predictable
routines**



How to help your child



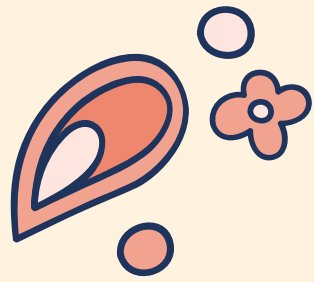
**Practice
breathing &
visualization
exercises**

**Ask them
what works
for them**

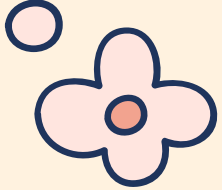


**Encourage fun
& relaxing
activities**

Laugh together



How to help your child



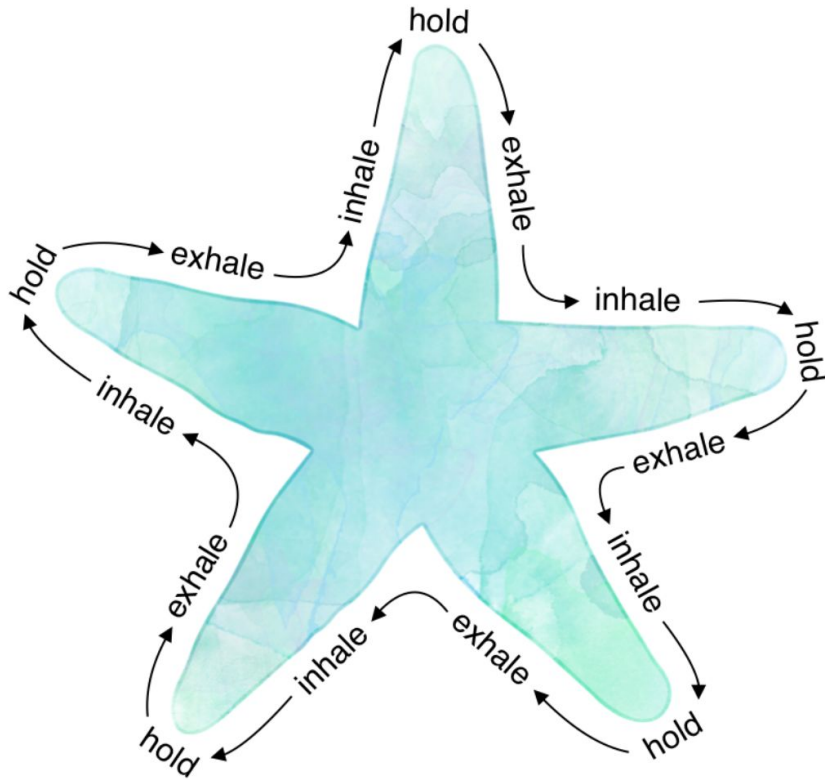
**Explore
thinking**

**Problem solve
and create a
plan**



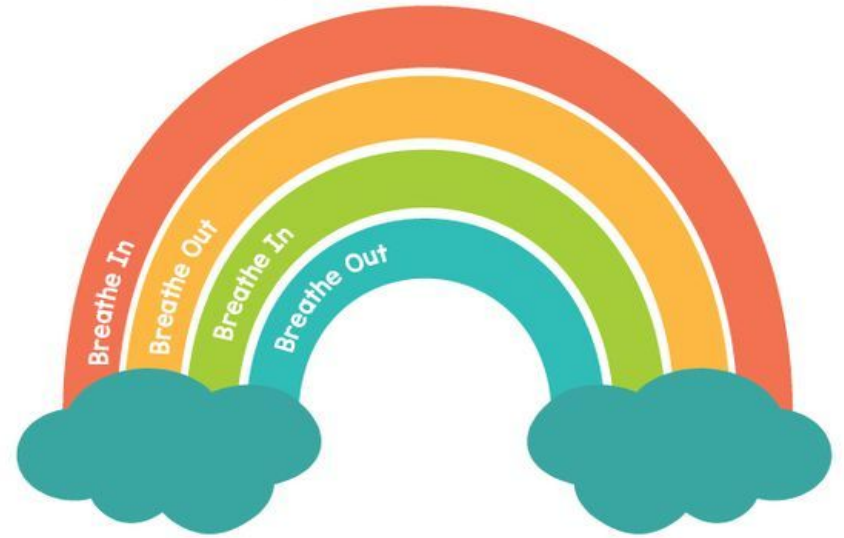
**Give
responsibilities
to build self
confidence**

Starfish Breathing



Trace and Breathe

Trace along the rainbow with your finger as you breathe in and out



5-4-3-2-1 Mindfulness

List...

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste



And when you're ready



Mind Yeti



Aura



SAM

Mindfulness Apps



Calm



Breathe Kids



Smiling Mind



Headspace

Behavior Scale: How to Judge Severity




- **Mild Symptoms:** Symptoms do not keep the child from any normal activities. School, play, relationships and sleep have not changed.
- **Moderate Symptoms:** Symptoms keep the child from doing some normal activities. New behaviors mainly happen at home. They affect how the child and parent interact. They may also keep them from going to school. Your child may not sleep well because of these symptoms.
- **Severe Symptoms:** Symptoms keep the child from doing most normal activities. They affect the way the child interacts with parents. Symptoms also impact relationship with siblings & friends. Adults at school may also be impacted by the child's actions

When to Get Help



- Student's behaviors are interfering with life activities
- Student causing significant/repeated disruption in classroom
- Student escalating others' behavior



- 
- Student self-injuring
 - Student is withdrawn and is avoiding activities
 - Student becoming suicidal/threatening others

Getting Help at School


- **Teacher**
- **Trusted Adult**
- **School Counselor**
 - Check-ins
 - Individual Counseling
 - Group Counseling
 - Outside Referrals



Calming Corners



**A strategy you want to try
at home or something you
learned today**





Thank You!