



EMPOWERING FAMILIES

A Guide for Parents

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Providing Interventions for Student Success



Greetings Parent(s) and Caregiver(s),

Our staff in the R.E.S.E.T program continue to strive and provide resourceful information and science based strategies to our students and their families, with the goal of reaching optimal well being and upward mobility for everyone. There is an abundance of goals, we as parents and caregivers desire of our children; happiness, emotional strength, academic success, social skills and so much more. We want our children to live happy, meaningful, well balanced lives even in the most difficult situations in our growing society. In this guide, we are offering an attempt to assist with tips and strategies that will help you best intervene with your child. The essential idea is parents can help children with all their goals if we learn to stop yelling and start connecting. Engaging with your child and learning different interventions to support them without the need to threaten, plead or bribe will help you foster an emotional connection. We hope you enjoy and gain something life changing in this guide.



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL YEAR

1. Read EVERYDAY! You can read to your child or have your child read to you...either way READ!
2. Create a consistent after-school routine. Help your child study and complete their homework.
3. Be POSITIVE! Always speak positively about school learning, and your child's teacher.
4. ENCOURAGE! Give your child the opportunity to excel in all areas of their academics.
5. Be sure that your child is getting plenty of rest each night and is ready for school each day.
6. Teach your child to be responsible for their actions and to take pride in all they do!
7. STAY INVOLVED! Make it a point to ask your child about their day.
8. COMMUNICATE! Please know that you can contact your child's teacher, administrators, school social worker, school counselor with any questions or concerns.



"At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents."

-Jane D. Hull

7 STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH A DEFIANT CHILD



When a child acts out and demonstrates defiant behavior, there is usually a reason behind it. Whether it's just looking for attention, testing boundaries, or frustration about school or social life, taking the time to understand why your child is acting out is often a big part of the solution.

There are circumstances, however, when this behavior is the result of a more serious condition known as Oppositional Defiance Disorder, or another more significant emotional issue. But in the absence of these more serious ailments, the average child will most definitely test your limits while growing up

Listed in the next pages are 7 strategies that many have found useful when dealing with a defiant child:

"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run, then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward."

-Martin Luther King Jr.

1. **Hold Your Child Accountable:** Children of all ages need to know the family rules for everything from helping out with chores, to completing homework, to bedtime and curfews, to acceptable behavior toward others. The time to discuss these matters is when things are going well, not after an incident has occurred. Sit down with your kids and let them know what types of behaviors you will not tolerate in your family. List examples of unacceptable behaviors such as treating others with disrespect, being fresh or rude, name calling, refusing to do chores or homework, mistreating possessions, hitting, biting, or any other physical aggression. You cannot expect your child, regardless of age, to be compliant if he doesn't know your expectations. Holding your child accountable does not result in a child who is obedient 100% of the time, but it does mean that you set the limits, and you provide a consequence when your child decides to break the rules—period! The goal is not to prevent your child from ever breaking the rules but to teach him, preferably at a young age, that when rules are broken consequences follow.

2. **Act, Don't React:** When you witness defiant behavior from your child, don't get angry and lose your temper. Instead, take a step back and calmly tell your child that you don't approve of the behavior and that you will handle it at a later time. This will raise a sense of fear in your child's mind because he'll have time to think about the poor actions and the potential consequences. Not only are you using the time to calm yourself down, but you're also teaching your kids how to do the same.

3. **Enforce Age-Appropriate Consequences:** Effective consequences can largely be grouped into two categories: removals and impositions. A "removal" is taking something away from the child, such as your attention, an exciting environment, or a pleasant activity. The most well-known and widely-used removal is a time out. Other effective removals are: Grounding your child from social activities, taking away electronics for a certain period of time, immediately leaving the park, a friend's house, or a family party when a defiant behavior occurs. "Impositions" are consequences that impose a new situation upon the child. Paying his own money into a family "fine" jar, doing extra chores, having to run errands with mom because he abused the privilege to stay home alone by inviting friends over without permission—these are impositions. Without question, effective strategies for consequences require a lot of time and energy to enforce. But if you don't follow through with consequences for bad behavior, you send the message: If you wear me down, you'll get your way. Bad idea! Writing your rules and their respective consequences on a poster board which can be framed and hanging in your home is a way that will allow the rules and consequences to be visible and there's never a question as to what your expectations are.

4. **Keep Your Power:** When you engage in an argument with your child, you're just giving them more power over the situation. In effect, you're enforcing the child's perception that they have the power to challenge you, which can lead to even more defiant behavior. The next time your child tries to draw you into a power struggle over something just say, "We've discussed what is going to happen if you do this. I don't want to talk about it anymore," and leave the room. When you leave, you take all the power with you. Know that the more you engage your child in an argument, the more control you're giving away.

5. No Second Chances or Bargaining: Consistency is key if you don't want to reinforce bad habits. Once your child is old enough to understand that behaviors have consequences, don't give him repeat chances. This just teaches him that you aren't serious and he can get away with this behavior a few more times because he knows you won't take your own rules seriously. Do not bargain with your child, don't offer ice cream or money in return for better behavior. This is possibly the most damaging thing a parent or caregiver can do. You are only enabling the poor behavior and can count on much worse in the future because they're going to see how far they can push you before you strike another bargain.

6. Always Build on the Positive: Be sure that you build on the positive attitudes and actions of your children. Praise your children for their positive behaviors, like rewarding them when they show a cooperative attitude. Positive reinforcement can go a long way in raising a responsible child.

7. Set Regular Times to Talk to Your Child: In a moment of downtime, when things are going well and you don't anticipate an immediate power struggle, sit down with your child and let her know that you take your job as her parent very seriously and your intentions are to keep her safe and help her grow into a responsible, productive, self-reliant adult who will be as happy and fulfilled in life as possible. Remind her that your family has rules and values that are in place for her future, not to cause her grief while growing up.



**"What seems to us as bitter trials
are often blessings in disguise."
-Oscar Wilde**

10 WAYS TO MAKE DISCIPLINE CONSISTANT

"Consistency is one of the biggest factors in leading to accomplishment and success"

-Byron Pulsifer



No matter which of the five main types of discipline you use, it won't work if you aren't consistent. Consistency is one of the more important keys to addressing child behavior problems. Consistently setting limits, giving effective consequences and enforcing the rules all day every day can be tough, however.

Examine what gets in the way of being consistent and take steps to increase your discipline consistency. A consistent approach to discipline helps put kids in control of their behavior. Consistency means as parents we follow through and do as we say we will. It means resisting giving kids second and third chances when they break the rules or behave poorly around others

1. Establish House Rules:

Establish house rules so that you can consistently respond to unacceptable behavior. A written list of rules ensures that kids are clear about what is expected of them. When you make exceptions to the rules, announce it ahead of time. For example, say, “Even though bedtime is usually at 8, since next week is school vacation you can stay up an extra hour.” This shows kids that there can be planned exceptions to rules and that you’re in charge of deciding when those exceptions should take place.

2. Provide Structure:

Kids do best when they have structure and it will make it easier to discipline consistently. Incorporate healthy habits as part of their daily routine and kids will be aware of what you expect from them. Establish a schedule that sets aside specific time to do certain tasks. Younger kids need consistency with nap times and mealtimes. Older kids benefit from a schedule to remind them of when to do homework, complete chores and take care of other responsibilities.

3. Develop a Plan:

It’s easier to be consistent when you have a clear plan about what negative consequences you’ll use to deal with misbehavior. Be prepared with logical consequences, time out, or active ignoring depending on the behavior. Also, consider positive reinforcement for good behavior, such as a reward system or token economy system.

4. Work With Other Caregivers:

When possible, establish consistent rules and consequences among caregivers and environments. If the teacher, daycare provider, and extended family are all on board, it can help change behaviors fast. For kids whose parents are divorced, it’s best when both households use similar rules and consequences. Talk to other caregivers about developing a behavior plan to address specific problems.

5. Pay Attention to Your Moods:

A parent’s temperament is a big factor in discipline. When you’re feeling tired or stressed you’re likely to discipline a little differently. While some parents might have less patience for behaviors, other parents might feel too tired to address them. Pay close attention to your moods and put in the extra effort to respond to behavior problems consistently, despite how you’re feeling.

6. Follow Through with Consequences:

Repeated threats can certainly make discipline inconsistent. If you find yourself repeating instructions over and over or making threats without following through, it’s likely your children have learned to tune you out. It’s essential that parents mean what they say as it builds credibility. If a child knows you mean business, he’ll listen the first time. Follow through with consequences and don’t just make threats as you’ll be training your child not to listen to you.

7. Choose Your Battles Wisely:

If you want to be consistent, you'll need to choose your battles wisely. If you have too many rules or too many consequences, it's impossible to keep it all straight. If you've got a child with lots of behavioral issues, choose to address the most problematic behaviors first. Try not to get after him about every little thing and you'll avoid power struggles that can lead to inconsistent discipline.

8. Expect Change to Take Time:

Behavior changes won't happen overnight so don't give up on your discipline techniques too early just because it didn't work yet. It takes time for a child to realize that every single time he misbehaves, you're going to follow through with a consequence. Often, kids will press their luck in hopes that you'll forget or you'll give up. If you're consistent each and every time, your child will eventually learn to change his behavior.

9. Resist the Urge to Give In:

Inconsistency can stem from giving in when kids whine, beg or promise to be good. If you've taken away a privilege don't give it back until the allotted time has been reached. Most of the time, removing a privilege for 24 hours is sufficient. If you give it back early because your child talks you into it, you've taught him that whining, begging, or attempting to negotiate is a great way to get what he wants.

10. Focus on the Long-Term:

One of the four biggest discipline mistakes parents often make is not looking far enough into the future. Although giving in or letting behavior problems slide might make your life a little easier right now, in the long-term, it will make things worse. Keeping your focus on the long-term goals will help you to remember that your child doesn't need to be happy right now but instead needs to learn the six life skills necessary to become a healthy, responsible adult.



HOW TO SPOT STRESS AND ANXIETY IN CHILDREN



Anxiety is an all-too-common problem faced by children today. As with adults, children respond differently to stress depending on their age, individual personalities, and coping skills. When it comes to anxiety in children, younger grade-schoolers may not be able to fully explain their feelings, whereas older kids may be able to say exactly what's bothering them and why (though that's no guarantee that they'll share that information with Mom or Dad).

In most cases, fear and anxiety and stress in children change or disappear with age. For instance, a kindergartener who experiences separation anxiety may become a social butterfly who bounds into school in the later grades. A second-grader who is afraid of the dark or of monsters may grow into a kid who loves ghost stories.

Once parents determine whether what their child is experiencing is something temporary or a more deeply-rooted anxiety disorder, they can then find ways to help their child manage stress and anxiety.

Signs of Anxiety in Children



Changes in behavior or temperament are common flags that may indicate your child may be experiencing stress and anxious feelings. Some common signs include:

- Complaints of stomach aches or headaches
- Sleep problems or difficulty concentrating
- Behavioral changes, such as moodiness, a short temper, or clinginess
- Development of a nervous habit, such as nail biting
- Refusal to go to school or getting into trouble at school

Common Causes of Childhood Stress:

- Major life changes- (such as divorce, a death in the family, moving, or even the birth of a new sibling.)
- Overly packed schedules-If your child is constantly running from one activity to another, he may feel stressed, especially if he's the kind of kid who needs some quiet downtime to himself every once in a while.

Stress Caused by something at school- Bullies or cliques can become an issue once kids enter grade school. Even if a child isn't being bullied, the pressure to fit in and be popular can be stressful and lead to stress in children. For younger grade-schoolers, separation anxiety can be a common problem.

Terrible news event- News headlines and television news images about natural disasters, terrorism, and violence can be upsetting and can often cause stress in children. When kids see and hear about terrible news events, they may worry that something bad might happen to them or to someone they love.

A scary movie or book- Fictional stories can also cause distress or anxiety in children. Children are commonly affected by frightening, violent, or upsetting scenes from a movie or passages in a book. While some kids might be more sensitive to some media content than others – what's scary or upsetting for one child might have no effect on another – it's a good idea to know what might upset your child, limit violent media content, and stick to age-appropriate movies, books, video games, and other media.

PARENTING & STRESS: DEVELOPING YOUR OWN COPING STRATEGIES

SELF
care
IS NOT SELFISH

“I have come to believe that caring for myself is not self-indulgent. Caring for myself is an act of survival.”

–Audre Lorde

Stress is an inevitable aspect of parenting. It can begin in pregnancy, or even earlier for people with reproductive issues. By the time a child is born, no parent is immune from the stresses of their position.

How to handle feeding, choosing a sleep training method, or even deciding where the child is going to sleep (bed share or crib) are all examples of stressors facing new parents.

As the child grows, discipline becomes another source of stress. In addition, there is the misconception that parenting stress ends when the child reaches a certain age. This, and other incorrect assumptions, often contribute to parenting being harder than it has to be. Often this leads to adrenal fatigue and a collection of physical symptoms.

These are the facts. First, the stress you feel as a parent will continue throughout course of your life and the life of your children. The sources of that stress, and how best to deal with it, is what changes as you and your children grow. Second, stress-free parenting is as much of a myth as Bigfoot. Stress is an inherent aspect of parenting; you will not eliminate it, but you can try to prevent some of it and effectively manage the rest. The following techniques can be used by any parent to reduce stress and increase their enjoyment of the wonderful gift that they have been given.

1. Establish Support Systems: Establishing a support system early will lay a foundation for parents in the years to come. Everyone needs help at some point and, like a well-stocked emergency kit, it pays to have a system in place before you need it. There are two ways to go about building support systems, and parents should pursue both. As a parent, just getting an extra 15 minutes to jump in the shower, have a cup of tea, or simply spend some time alone, can do wonders for relieving stress.

2. Take the time to do fun things: One of the best parts of being a parent is getting to have fun with your kids. Unfortunately, this message sometimes gets lost in today's atmosphere of academic competition and strategically chosen extracurricular activities. It is important to remember that not everything you do with your child has to be resume-worthy. Simply spending time with them, running around at a park or doing something around the house is immensely valuable. It doesn't have to cost anything, and doesn't require a huge time commitment. Even just 20 minutes a week can give you both a well needed respite from the stresses of everyday life. Playing catch, coloring, or dancing around to music in the living room are all great examples. You may not find the perfect activity right away, and that does not matter. Once you've established that these times are set aside for pure enjoyment, free of criticisms or judgments, your kids will start to suggest activities that interest them more.

Kids who are used to doing enjoyable things with their parents are more likely to open up about their lives, fears and challenges as they grow. Without the pressure to perform or the fear of being corrected, kids can become extremely chatty when having fun. They naturally will bring up things from their day, their friends or their inner thoughts. Having this open line of communication is a major source of stress relief because parents don't need to guess what's going on in their child's life. Listen to what they say without pressing them, resist the urge to turn it into an interrogation, and offer your thoughts in a non-threatening way to keep the communication going. The positive memories you build during these no-pressure, fun times will serve as buffers when more stressful times inevitably come around.

3. Corral the chaos: A chaotic space contributes to a chaotic mind. An unbelievable amount of parenting stress comes from the everyday environment. If you are constantly late getting out the door in the morning because socks can't be found or lunch hasn't been arranged, you are starting off each day with an unnecessarily elevated stress level. Establishing systems for yourself and your children will make every day routines run more smoothly.

Other time management techniques can reduce parental stress. Daily occurrences like meals, baths and going to bed should take place at the same time every day. Be sure to set time limits for each activity to keep things moving along. For example: bath time will be at 7pm for a maximum of 30 minutes. Routines create a sense of familiarity and comfort for children. If everyone knows what is expected and when, it is easier to enforce the rules.

4. Seek out professional help: Despite your best efforts to prevent or manage your parenting stress, sometimes things will inevitably be too much for you to deal with on your own or with your support systems. Unforeseen events or sudden changes in lifestyle, a death, natural disasters or a parent becoming unemployed, can cause a substantial amount of stress for parents and children alike. Professional help can be sought out from counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists when necessary.

Understanding trauma



“Mental health problems don’t define who you are. They are something you experience. You walk in the rain and you feel the rain, but, importantly, YOU ARE NOT THE RAIN.”
– Matt Haig

What is Trauma-Informed Care?

Trauma Informed Care is an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. Trauma Informed Care also emphasizes physical, psychological and emotional safety for both consumers and providers, and helps survivors rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

Impact of Trauma

No one is immune to the impact of trauma. Trauma affects the individual, families, and communities by disrupting healthy development, adversely affecting relationships, and contributing to mental health issues including substance abuse, domestic violence, and child abuse. Everyone pays the price when a community produces multi-generations of people with untreated trauma by an increase in crime, loss of wages, and threat to the stability of the family.

A Trauma Informed Parent:

- Understands that an event does not have to be catastrophic in order to be “traumatic” and that symptoms of trauma can manifest following any highly stressful experience that causes lasting emotional or physical effects.
- Is better equipped to help their child cope with and rise above trauma related health issues or post-traumatic stress
- Appreciates their children’s unique temperaments recognizing that while a divorce to one child may be a bump in the road, to another it can be devastating.
- Is aware of ACES: (Adverse Childhood Experiences Study) and knows where to find help should their child’s score warrant attention.
- Knows that post-traumatic stress can mimic other issues such as ADHD, emotional outbursts, body aches, isolation, social problems and poor school performance.
- Understands that the effects of trauma may not reveal themselves for months or even years after an event has occurred.
- Is better equipped to communicate with and guide their child’s physicians in diagnosing and treating health issues.

Age-Related Reactions to a Traumatic Event

A fundamental goal of parenting is to help children grow and thrive to the best of their potential. Parents anticipate protecting their children from danger whenever possible, but sometimes serious danger threatens, whether it is manmade, such as a school shooting or domestic violence, or natural, such as a flood or earthquake. And when a danger is life-threatening or poses a threat of serious injury, it becomes a potentially traumatic event for children. By understanding how children experience traumatic events and how these children express their lingering distress over the experience, parents, physicians, communities, and schools can respond to their children and help them through this challenging time. The goal is to restore balance to these children’s lives and the lives of their families.

How Children May React

How children experience traumatic events and how they express their lingering distress depends, in large part, on the children’s age and level of development.

Preschool and young school-age children exposed to a traumatic event may experience a feeling of helplessness, uncertainty about whether there is continued danger, a general fear that extends beyond the traumatic event and into other aspects of their lives, and difficulty describing in words what is bothering them or what they are experiencing emotionally.

This feeling of helplessness and anxiety is often expressed as a loss of previously acquired developmental skills. Children who experience traumatic events might not be able to fall asleep on their own or might not be able to separate from parents at school. Children who might have ventured out to play in the yard prior to a traumatic event now might not be willing to play in the absence of a family member.

Often, children lose some speech and toileting skills, or their sleep is disturbed by nightmares, night terrors, or fear of going to sleep. In many cases, children may engage in traumatic play—a repetitive and less imaginative form of play that may represent children’s continued focus on the traumatic event or an attempt to change a negative outcome of a traumatic event.

For school-age children, a traumatic experience may elicit feelings of persistent concern over their own safety and the safety of others in their school or family. These children may be preoccupied with their own actions during the event. Often they experience guilt or shame over what they did or did not do during a traumatic event. School-age children might engage in constant retelling of the traumatic event, or they may describe being overwhelmed by their feelings of fear or sadness.

A traumatic experience may compromise the developmental tasks of school-age children as well. Children of this age may display sleep disturbances, which might include difficulty falling asleep, fear of sleeping alone, or frequent nightmares. Teachers often comment that these children are having greater difficulties concentrating and learning at school. Children of this age, following a traumatic event, may complain of headaches and stomach aches without obvious cause, and some children engage in unusually reckless or aggressive behavior.

Adolescents exposed to a traumatic event feel self-conscious about their emotional responses to the event. Feelings of fear, vulnerability, and concern over being labeled “abnormal” or different from their peers may cause adolescents to withdraw from family and friends. Adolescents often experience feelings of shame and guilt about the traumatic event and may express fantasies about revenge and retribution. A traumatic event for adolescents may foster a radical shift in the way these children think about the world. Some adolescents engage in self-destructive or accident-prone behaviors.

HOW TO HELP

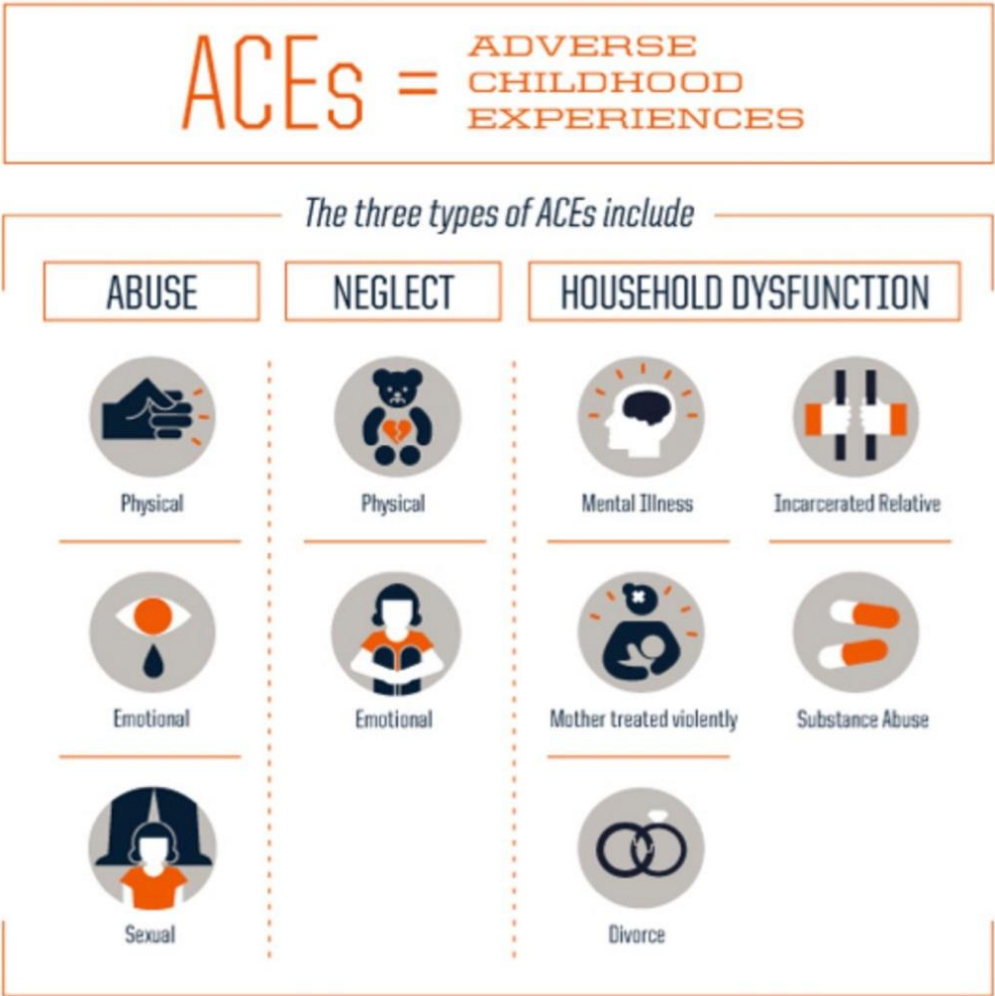
The involvement of family, physicians, school, and community is critical in supporting children through the emotional and physical challenges they face after exposure to a traumatic event.

For young children, parents can offer invaluable support, by providing comfort, rest, and an opportunity to play or draw. Parents can be available to provide reassurance that the traumatic event is over and that the children are safe. It is helpful for parents, family, and teachers to help children verbalize their feelings so that they don't feel alone with their emotions. Providing consistent caretaking by ensuring that children are picked up from school at the anticipated time and by informing children of parents' whereabouts can provide a sense of security for children who have recently experienced a traumatic event. Parents, family, caregivers, and teachers may need to tolerate regression in developmental tasks for a period of time following a traumatic event.

Older children will also need encouragement to express fears, sadness, and anger in the supportive environment of the family. These school-age children may need to be encouraged to discuss their worries with family members. It is important to acknowledge the normality of their feelings and to correct any distortions of the traumatic events that they express. Parents can be invaluable in supporting their children in reporting to teachers when their thoughts and feelings are getting in the way of their concentrating and learning.

For adolescents who have experienced a traumatic event, the family can encourage discussion of the event and feelings about it and expectations of what could have been done to prevent the event. Parents can discuss the expectable strain on relationships with family and peers, and offer support in these challenges. It may be important to help adolescents understand “acting out” behavior as an effort to voice anger about traumatic events. It may also be important to discuss thoughts of revenge following an act of violence, address realistic consequences of actions, and help formulate constructive alternatives that lessen the sense of helplessness the adolescents may be experiencing.

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACE'S)



What are adverse childhood experiences?

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that occur in a child's life prior to the age of 18. This adversity can harm a child's brain and its development, which can result in long-term negative health and social outcomes.

ACEs include emotional, physical and sexual abuse; domestic violence; substance use and mental illness of someone in the household; being separated from parents, including incarceration and divorce; food insecurity; and homelessness.

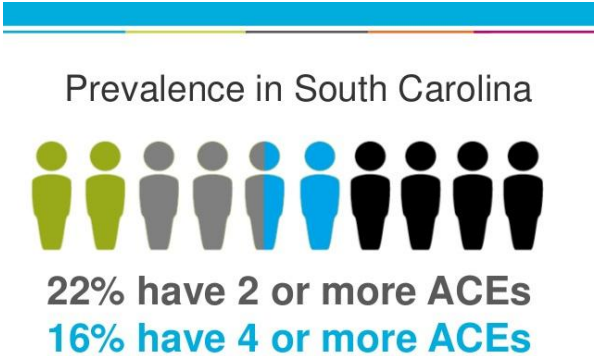
ACE'S ARE COMMON AND PREVENTABLE



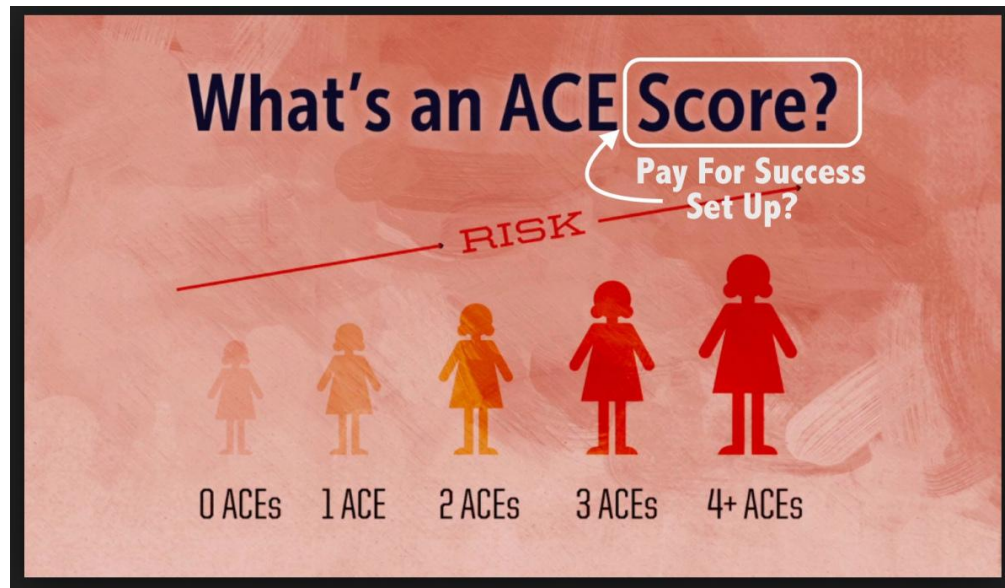
“The greater a child’s terror, and the earlier it is experienced, the harder it becomes to develop a strong and healthy sense of self.”
— Nathaniel Branden, *Six Pillars of Self-Esteem*

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can have lasting, negative effects on health, well-being, and opportunity. ACEs and their associated harms are preventable. Creating and sustaining safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for all children and families can prevent ACEs and help all children reach their full health and life potential.

Preventing ACEs requires addressing factors at all levels of the social ecology—the individual, relational, community, and societal levels.



KNOW YOUR ACE SCORE



What the ACE Score Questionnaire Is/Isn't

Is:

- History tool (just like medical conditions or diseases)
- Communication tool
- An idea of future risk
- Creates common language
- Gateway to compassion, empathy and healing

Is not:

- Diagnostic tool
- Screening tool
- Destiny
- Predictor at individual level
- Fun quiz

Place this website in your browser yo take the ACE quiz

<https://www.theannainstitute.org/Finding%20Your%20ACE%20Score.pdf>

Contact Children's Trust for extended parenting programs that aid in supporting creating safe environments, resiliency and sustaining nurturing households.

Programs:

- Community Support for Young Parents
- Home Visiting
- Strengthening Families Program
- Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)

COMMON MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH



ADHD, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

ADHD, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder ADHD is one of the most common brain disorders in children and can continue into adulthood. When children and youth suffer from ADHD they have problems paying attention, staying focused on certain tasks and they may struggle with controlling their energy level and behavior. Some children with ADHD are also hyperactive and may have trouble being patient and sitting still.

Additional symptoms or behaviors may include being easily distracted, problems with organization, failure to complete household tasks or turn in school work; trouble listening; making careless mistakes, forgetting things often, get easily bored and frustrated and talking a lot and interrupting.

For these problems to be diagnosed as ADHD, they must be out of the normal range for a person's age and development. For example it is typical for children to be hyperactive or over-stimulated or fidgety sometimes but with kids with ADHD these behaviors are more severe and happen all of the time.

For more information about ADHD visit: C.H.A.D.D. Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder at: www.chadd.org

ANXIETY DISORDERS



Anxiety disorders is a term for a variety of mental health problems that may cause children to be fearful, distressed, excessively worried and uneasy. All kids experience some level of anxiety while growing up and fears such as fear of the dark, monsters, or speaking in front of their classmates can be typical as long as they are not long-lasting, extreme or cause your child to feel very upset or have trouble functioning on a regular basis. Children and youth with anxiety disorders may also feel irritable, restless, nervous and may even suffer from panic attacks where they may experience shortness of breath, a rapid heart rate, and sweaty hands. Physical complaints are also often common in anxiety disorders and your child may complain of headaches, stomach pain, or other physical issues. Children with anxiety disorders often feel helpless or powerless and sometimes have overwhelming concerns that everything is going wrong and that everyday things will turn out badly. They may have trouble sleeping and may try to avoid going to school wither because they are worried something bad will happen there or that something bad may happen to family members in their absence. There are several specific types of anxiety disorders, including:

Generalized Anxiety Disorder: Children with General Anxiety Disorder may worry a lot about everyday things such as family issues, how well they will do on tasks or activities, grades, friendships and they may have trouble controlling their anxiety. Children with Generalized Anxiety Disorder often want everything to be perfect and are very critical of themselves and their performance. They will seek constant approval or reassurance from others. They may also isolate themselves form others, have frequent absences from school, and refuse to join in group learning or social activities. They can become be easily frustrated and often have a fear of new activities so they have difficulty joining in or getting started. Their constant preoccupation with 'worries' may make paying attention difficult and fear of being wrong, embarrassed, or having to interact may make lead them to isolate themselves, avoid activities and sometimes even school.

ANXIETY DISORDERS



Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder in which children have unwanted and repeated thoughts, feelings, ideas, sensations (often called obsessions) that make them feel like they have to perform little rituals (compulsions) in order to control their thoughts and feelings. Rituals might include checking and rechecking their book bag or door clock, counting and re-counting or re-arranging objects or repeating the same phrase.

Children with OCD may touch the same thing over and over, check and re-check things constantly or have the same thought over and over. When this happens they may not feel in control of their actions. Sometimes compulsive activities may become so time consuming that child has little time to concentrate on other things, they may avoid friends, family or school fearing that others will recognize their odd behaviors or try to stop them.

Children with OCD may also be obsessed with perfection, have problems with concentration and even feel anxious or depressed, They may also have difficulty communicating their needs and letting people know what is going on and how they feel. **Panic Disorder:** Panic disorder may be diagnosed if your child experiences at least two unexpected panic or anxiety attacks followed by at least one month of concern that they may have another one.

Panic attacks are events that come on very suddenly and for no apparent reason.

Phobic Disorders: Can be diagnosed when a child has an unrealistic and overwhelming fear of a specific object or situation.

Specific Phobias: A specific phobia is an intense, irrational fear of a specific object, such as a dog, or a situation, such as flying or being picked for a team. Common childhood phobias include animals, storms, medical procedures, heights, water, blood, and the dark.

Children will usually try to avoid situations or things that they fear; when they cannot they will feel overwhelming anxious and as a result may develop headaches or stomachaches, cry, be very clingy and may even throw a tantrum. Children usually cannot even recognize that their fear is irrational.

ANXIETY DISORDERS



Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): is the development of symptoms that occur following a traumatic or terrifying event or experience. Children with posttraumatic stress disorder, or PTSD have intense fear and anxiety, after experiencing or witnessing the traumatic or life-threatening event and may feel fearful and anxious as well as 'emotionally numb', and irritable. They may often try to avoid places, people, or activities that remind them and lead them of the event.

Other symptoms or behaviors may include flashbacks or emotional stress from reminders of the event, difficulty concentrating, being easily startled or hyper-vigilant (on-guard all the time), having frequent nightmares and even the denial of the event itself or the inability to remember it. Children may also seem start to act less mature, and may become whiny and clingy. Symptoms may come and go for no reason and moods change drastically and without warning, which may make it difficult, to know how to help.

It is important to remember that not every child who hears about or experiences a traumatic event will develop PTSD. It is typical for children and youth to be sad and or nervous after traumatic events, but most children will recover from these feelings in a short time. Children most at risk for developing symptoms of PTSD are those who directly witnessed a traumatic event, or who suffered directly as a result of it for example lose a family member during a fire or tornado, children and youth with existing mental health problems and kids who do not have a strong support network or people to help and comfort them. Violence at home also increases a child's risk of developing PTSD after a traumatic event.

Separation Anxiety Disorder When a child suffers from separation anxiety they experience excessive anxiety when they are away from home or their parents. They may also have extreme homesickness and refuse to go to school, camp and sleepovers and may demand that someone stay with them at night Children with separation anxiety commonly worry about bad things happening to their parents or caregivers while they are away. It is important to remember many are toddlers it is typical for them to anxious when their parent leaves. And it is often common for them to cry when they are left with a babysitter or at day care but they usually settle down and feel better shortly after they get involved in an activity.

CONDUCT DISORDER, ODD AND DEPRESSION



Conduct Disorder **Conduct Disorder** Is one of the disruptive behavior disorders. Young people with conduct disorder may bully or threaten others, lie, steal, fight, destruct property, and have low self esteem masked by bravado, and show little empathy or remorse for others.

Young people with conduct disorder seem to like to engage in power struggles; often react badly to demands from those in authority and may challenge household or classroom rules, refuse to do tasks or assignments and argue with others. These behaviors can significantly impair academic success and social functioning at school, in the home and community.

Oppositional Defiant Disorder **ODD** is also considered a disruptive behavior disorder and young people with ODD may experience sudden unprovoked anger, feel resentful or angry for seemingly no reason. They may also blame others for their behavior, argue with adults, deliberately annoy and bother others, and display defiance or refuse to comply with requests. Constant arguing and challenging of household or classroom may isolate them from their peers or siblings and make it difficult to learn or develop positive relationships.

Depression Children and youth with depression experience unusually long lasting sad moods and may lose interest and enjoyment in activities that they used to enjoy. Children with depression may feel hopeless, worthless, tired, and may have difficulty concentrating and making decisions. They may isolate themselves from others and be reluctant to engage in activities; have difficulty concentrating, completing tasks or schoolwork; and be exceptionally quiet and disengaged.

Signs and symptoms of depression in children may also include irritability or anger, increased sensitivity, changes in sleep or appetite and even outbursts or crying. They may also complain of physical ailments such as stomachaches and headaches. Physical complaints (such as stomachaches, headaches) that don't respond to Children and youth that suffer from depression may even have thoughts of death or suicide.

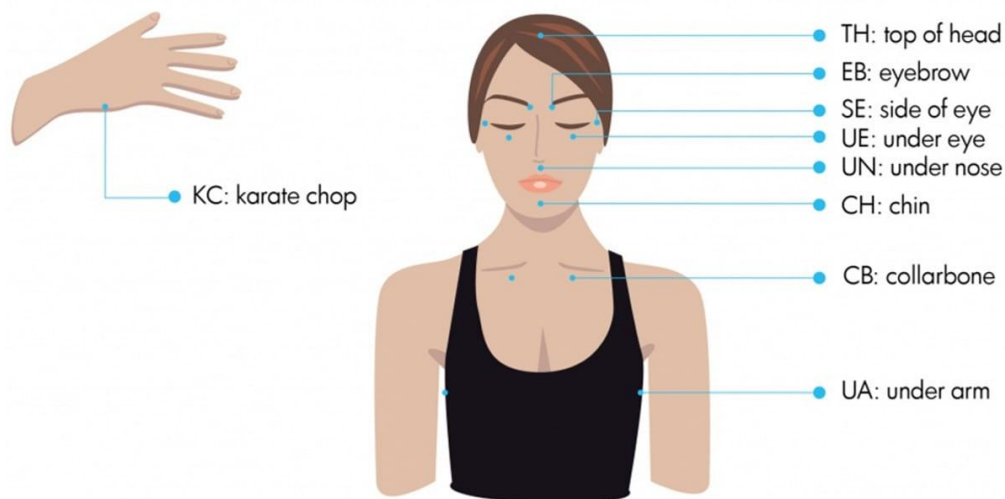
It is important to remember that even though depression is a very serious illness, it is also a treatable one!

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS TO USE AT HOME



Benefits of tapping: Emotional Freedom technique (EFT) helps you access your body's energy and send signals to the part of the brain that controls stress. Stimulating the meridian points through EFT tapping can reduce the stress or negative emotion you feel, ultimately restoring balance to your disrupted energy.

The basic technique requires you to focus on the negative emotion at hand: a fear or anxiety, a bad memory, an unresolved problem, or anything that's bothering you. While maintaining your mental focus on this issue, use your fingertips to tap 5-7 times each on 9 of the body's meridian points. Tapping on these meridian points – while concentrating on accepting and resolving the negative emotion – will access your body's energy, restoring it to a balanced state.





Benefits of humming: Research has shown humming to be much more than a self-soothing sound: it affects us on a physical level, reducing stress, inducing calmness, and enhancing sleep as well as lowering heart rate and blood pressure and producing powerful neurochemicals such as oxytocin, the “love” hormone.

Check out this book on humming: **The Humming Effect (Paperback)**

Sound Healing for Health and Happiness:

By Jonathan Goldman, Andi Goldman, Beaulieu, John, N.D., Ph.D.



Benefits of music therapy: Music engages the whole brain, improving social behaviors and decreasing the inappropriate ones. Enhancing focus and attention.
Reducing anxiety.

Listen to music that enhances your current emotional state. ...

Listen to music that changes your current emotional state. ...

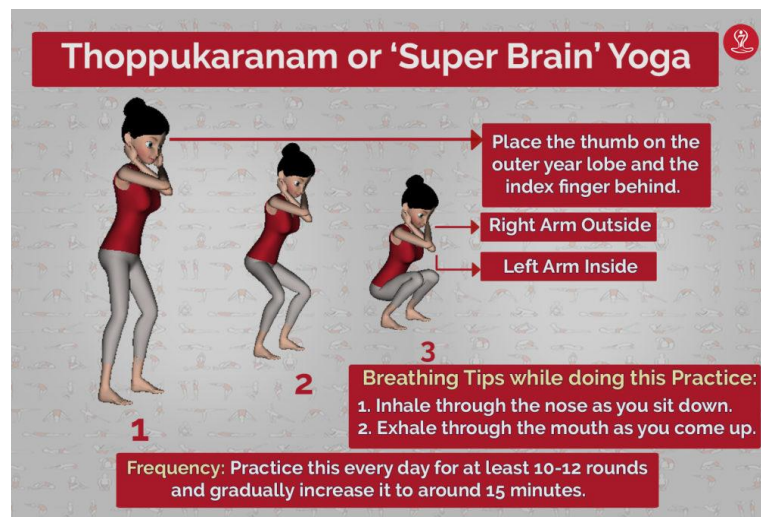
Be purposeful with your auditory environment. ...

Actively listen to the music. ...

Listen outside your comfort zone.



Benefits of journaling/writing: helps control your symptoms and improve your mood by: Helping you prioritize problems, fears, and concerns. Tracking any symptoms day-to-day so that you can recognize triggers and learn ways to better control them. Providing an opportunity for positive self-talk and identifying negative thoughts and improves memory. When your words have been taken hostage by your amygdala, take a deep breath, sit down, pull out a pen and write!



Benefits of Superbrain Yoga: SuperBrain Yoga focuses exclusively on the mind. This technique was initially created to increase our intelligence via combination with ear acupressure. It works by taking energy from the lower chakras—the wheels of energy in the body—and moving them upward through the forehead and crown chakras.

During this process, our physical energy transforms into more subtle energy, which may improve our overall brain function. SuperBrain Yoga energizes the brain by synchronizing our alpha brain waves, eliminates stress, encourages mental stability and promotes healthy cognitive function.



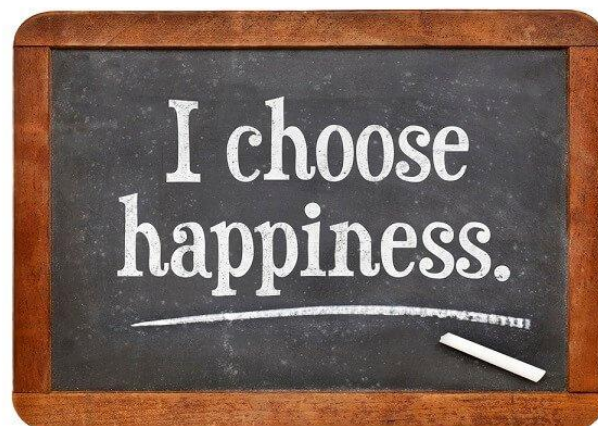
What are Affirmations, and do they work?

Put simply, they are positive phrases or statements used to challenge negative or unhelpful thoughts. If you frequently find yourself getting caught up in negative self-talk, positive affirmations can be used to combat these often subconscious patterns and replace them with more adaptive narratives.

Is There Science Behind Them?

Science, yes. Magic, no. Positive affirmations require regular practice if you want to make lasting, long-term changes to the ways that you think and feel. The good news is that the practice and popularity of positive affirmations are based on widely accepted and well-established psychological theory.

There is MRI evidence suggesting that certain neural pathways are increased when people practice self-affirmation tasks (Cascio et al., 2016). If you want to be super specific, the ventromedial prefrontal cortex—involved in positive valuation and self-related information processing—becomes more active when we consider our personal values (Falk et al., 2015; Cascio et al., 2016).





Benefits of smiling/laughing: Smiling not only offers a mood boost but helps our bodies release cortisol and endorphins that provide numerous health benefits, including:

Reduced blood pressure. · Increased endurance. · Reduced pain. · Reduced stress. · Strengthened immune system. · Contagious (mirror neurons) · Encourages you to stay positive.

Each time you smile, you throw a little feel-good party in your brain. The act of smiling activates neural messaging that benefits your health and happiness.

For starters, smiling activates the release of neuropeptides that work toward fighting off stress. Neuropeptides are tiny molecules that allow neurons to communicate. They facilitate messaging to the whole body when we are happy, sad, angry, depressed, or excited. The feel-good neurotransmitters—dopamine, endorphins and serotonin—are all released when a smile flashes across your face as well. This not only relaxes your body, but it can also lower your heart rate and blood pressure. The endorphins also act as a natural pain reliever—100-percent organic and without the potential negative side effects of synthetic concoctions.

Finally, the serotonin release brought on by your smile serves as an anti-depressant/mood lifter. Many of today's pharmaceutical anti-depressants also influence the levels of serotonin in your brain, but with a smile, you again don't have to worry about negative side effects—and you don't need a prescription from your doctor.



What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the quality of being present and fully engaged with whatever we're doing at the moment — free from distraction or judgment, and aware of our thoughts and feelings without getting caught up in them.

We train in this moment-to-moment awareness through meditation, allowing us to build the skill of mindfulness so that we can then apply it to everyday life. In teaching the mind to be present, we are teaching ourselves to be live more mindfully — in the present, taking a breath, not beholden to reactive thoughts and feelings — which is particularly helpful when faced with challenging circumstances or difficult situations.

Benefits of Mindfulness:

Mindfulness can: help relieve stress, treat heart disease, lower blood pressure, reduce chronic pain, , improve sleep, and alleviate gastrointestinal difficulties.



Benefits of Tibetan bowls: Tibetan singing bowls are a type of bell that vibrates and produces a rich, deep tone when played. Also known as singing bowls or Himalayan bowls, Tibetan singing bowls are said to promote relaxation and offer powerful healing, the gong harmonizes and allows deep relaxation of both sides of the brain. It stimulates stress relief on all levels and the elimination of toxins from the body.

What is Social Emotional Learning?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

SEL can be more than just a 30-minute lesson. A systemic approach to SEL intentionally cultivates a caring, participatory, and equitable learning environment and evidence-based practices that actively involve all students in their social, emotional, and academic growth. This approach infuses social and emotional learning into every part of students' daily lives—across all of their classrooms, during all times of the school day, and when they are in their homes and communities.

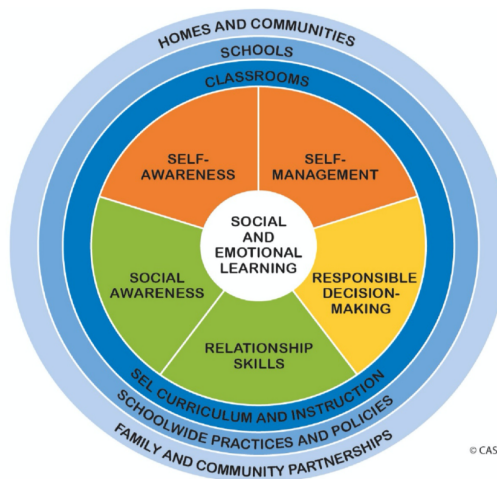
Relationship Skills

Forming positive relationships, working in teams and effectively dealing with conflict.



- **Communication**
- **Social Engagement**

- **Relationship Building**
- **Teamwork**

Self-Management

Managing emotions and behaviors to achieve one's goals.



- Impulse Control
- Stress- Management
- Self-Discipline
- Self-Motivation
- Goal Setting
- Organizational Skills




Self-Control

1. STOP
2. Think
3. What could happen?
4. Is that what I want?



Responsible Decision-Making

A person who makes responsible decisions has the ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions.

- Identifying Problems
- Analyzing Situations
- Solving Problems
- Evaluating
- Reflecting
- Ethical Responsibility

SELF-AWARENESS

Ability to accurately recognize your emotions and thoughts and know how they influence behavior.




- Identifying Emotions
- Accurate Self-Perception

- Recognizing Strengths
- Self-Confidence
- Self- Efficacy





SOCIAL-AWARENESS

SHOWING AND UNDERSTANDING EMPATHY FOR OTHERS



- Perspective-Taking
- Empathy
- Appreciating Diversity
- Respect for Others


Brain Strategies

In order to cultivate academic and behavioral success in the R.E.S.E.T program, we are continuously adding evidenced based research practices to support students with learning how to self-regulate utilizing strategies that is simple and explicit. We have incorporated brain strategies that support our students and parents by empowering them to explore the amazing learning and healing power of their brains. Equipping students with effective interventions to assist with understanding how their brain impacts behaviors will help them better recognize and manage emotions, control responses to stress, increase learning and improve relationships.

Using a simple approach, we teach our students and parents about the upstairs brain and downstairs brain and how to integrate the two so they can work together in harmony. The fist represents the prefrontal cortex (executive functioning), OK sign represents big feelings and the four fingers mean we have agitated our amygdala and our ability to think clear has been hijacked. Parents try these strategies with your student. If you need support reach out to the RESET Social Worker for guidance and support.

Upstairs Brain
Allows Us To Think Before We Act
Decision-Making
Control Over Emotions & Body
Focus & Concentration
Self-Awareness


Whole Child Brain




Downstairs Brain
Allows Us To Act Before We Think
Fight & Flight Response
Emotional Reactions
Bodily Functions

Provided by : Student Intervention Services
Credit: Siegel & Bryson "The Whole Child Brain "


WHERE IS YOUR BRAIN?



**Thinking Brain
Upstairs Brain
Ready To Learn**

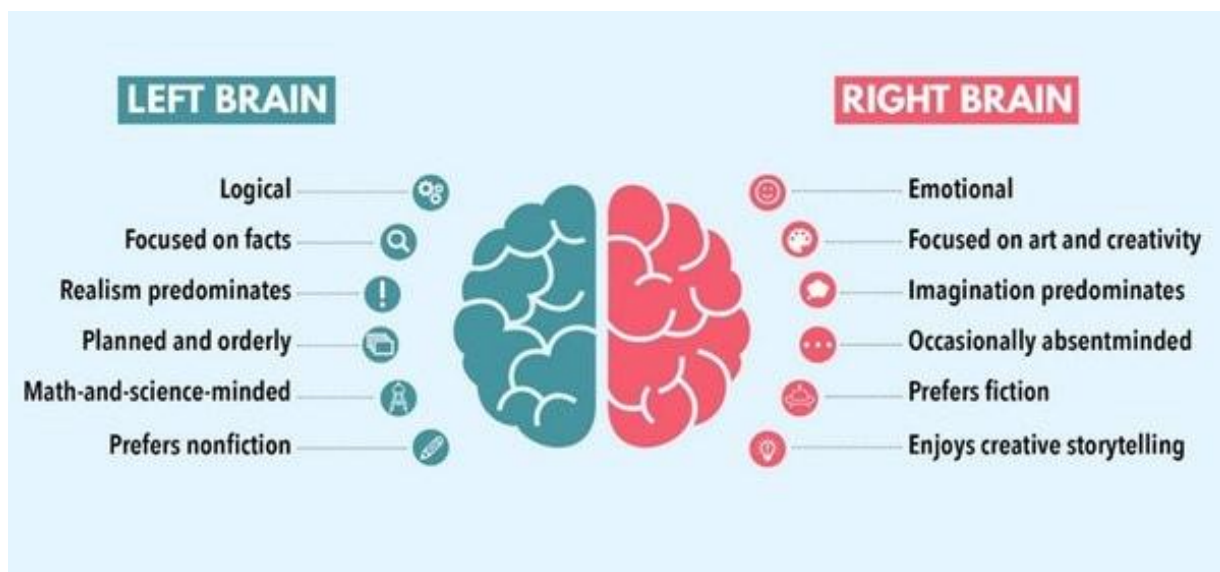


**Yellow Zone
Caution Area**



**Feeling Brain
Downstairs Brain
Flipping Lid**

Provided by: Student Intervention Services

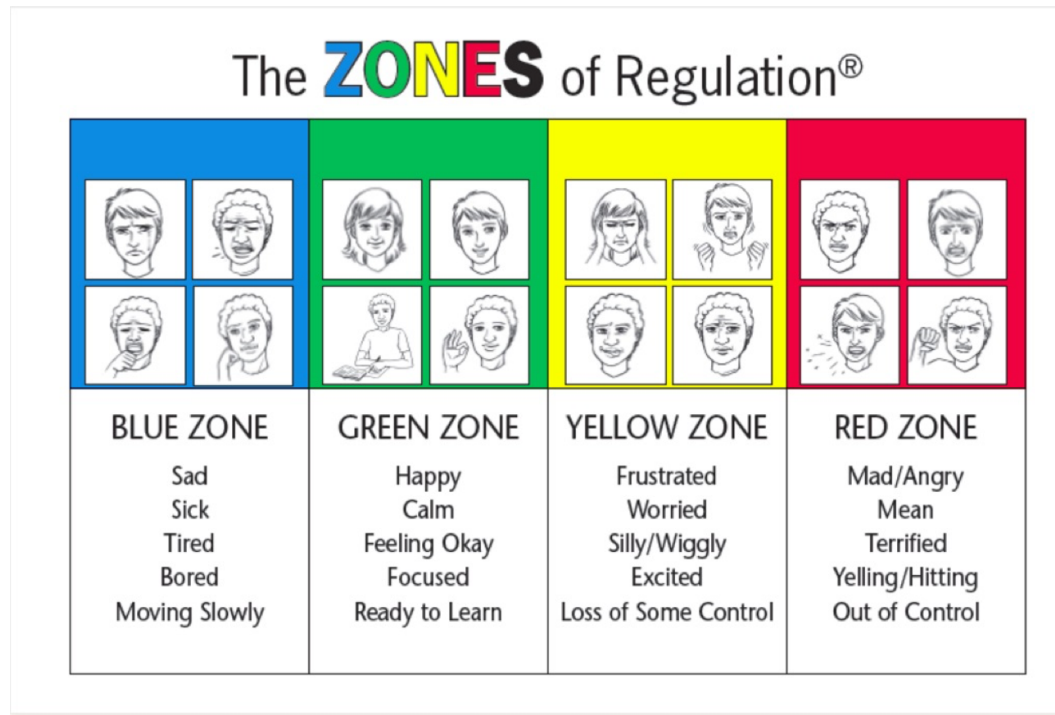


Left Brain to Right Brain

Our brains are divided into two hemispheres that operate differently from each other. In the middle resides the corpus collosum which is a bundle of fibers that run along the center of the brain connecting the two brains. The scientific community refers to the way different sides of the brain influence us as left hemisphere and right hemisphere dominant. Your left brain loves and desires order. It is logical, literal linguistic (it like words), and linear (it put things in a sequence order). On the other hand, the right brain is holistic and non verbal sending and receiving signals that allow us to communicate, such as facial expressions, eye contact, tone, voice, posture and gestures. The right brain cares about feelings and emotions.

Children are more right hemisphere dominant, especially during the first three years. The ability to master logic is not developed. Logic and responsibilities do not exist for them yet. This is why some of our children get so upset and emotional over the most trivial situations. For those children who are older and have experienced adverse childhood experiences may have been interrupted with negative impacts on their brain development disabling them from regulating their emotions appropriately. This is where parents benefit from connecting with the right side of the brain before redirecting. When a parent and child are tuned in to each other, they experience a sense of joining in together, just like the corpus collosum joins the two brains. In order to live balanced meaningful lives full of connected relationships, it's crucial that our two hemispheres work together in harmony. Once you take the time to tap into your right brain and connect with the child's right brain, it is much easier to connect left to left and deal with the issues in a rational manner.

Zones of Regulation, What Zone are you in?



The Zones is a systematic, cognitive behavioral approach used to teach self-regulation by categorizing all the different ways we feel and states of alertness we experience into four concrete colored zones. The Zones framework provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, manage their sensory needs, and improve their ability to problem solve conflicts.

The Red Zone is used to describe extremely heightened states of alertness and intense emotions. A person may be elated or experiencing anger, rage, devastation, or terror when in the Red Zone.

The Yellow Zone is also used to describe a heightened state of alertness and elevated emotions, however one has more control when they are in the Yellow Zone. A person may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness, the wiggles, or nervousness when in the Yellow Zone.

The Green Zone is used to describe a calm state of alertness. A person may be described as happy, focused, content, or ready to learn when in the Green Zone. This is the zone where optimal learning occurs.

The Blue Zone is used to describe low states of alertness and down feelings such as when one feels sad, tired, sick, or bored.

COVID - 19 Anxiety Workbook Activities

My Spheres of Influence Worksheet

If you're prone to hypothetical worry (i.e., the 'what if?' thoughts), you may find it helpful to practice noticing these thoughts and then redirecting your attention to things within your control.

Research shows that when we shift our focus to what we can control, we see meaningful and lasting differences in our wellbeing, health, and performance. So, write down what you have control over inside the circle below. Then, note the things you cannot control outside of the circle, using the table below as inspiration.

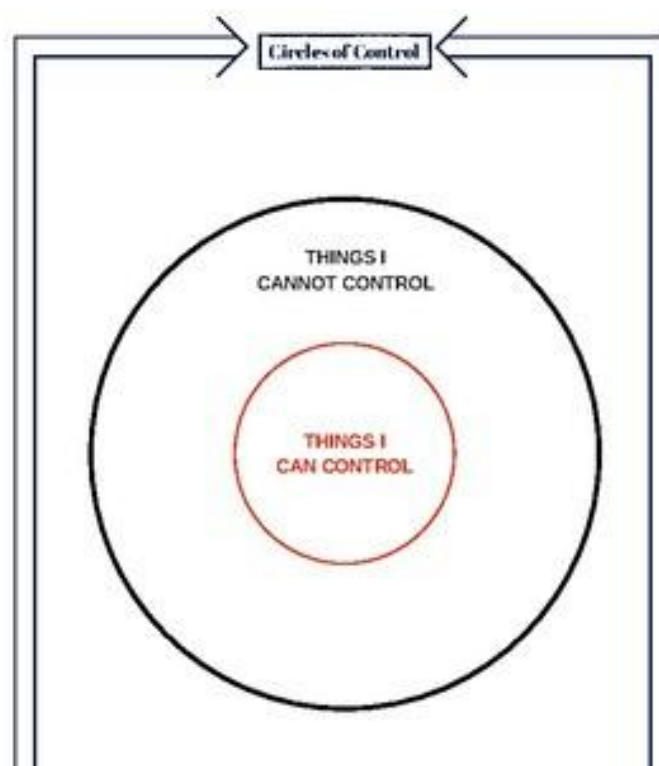
Remember: You cannot stop hypothetical worries from occurring, but you can control your response to them

Within My Control

- Building resilience
- Following the latest information and advice
- Focusing on what's important to me
- My information diet
- My routine • Relaxation
- Cultivating connection
- Eating well
- Exercising
- Seeking and offering support
- Voting and activism

Outside My Control

- Other people's health
- The news
- The government's actions
- Schools opening or closing
- The state of the healthcare system
- Flights and holidays being cancelled
- Traffic
- Public transport
- Aging
- The weather



Starting a Daily Gratitude Practice

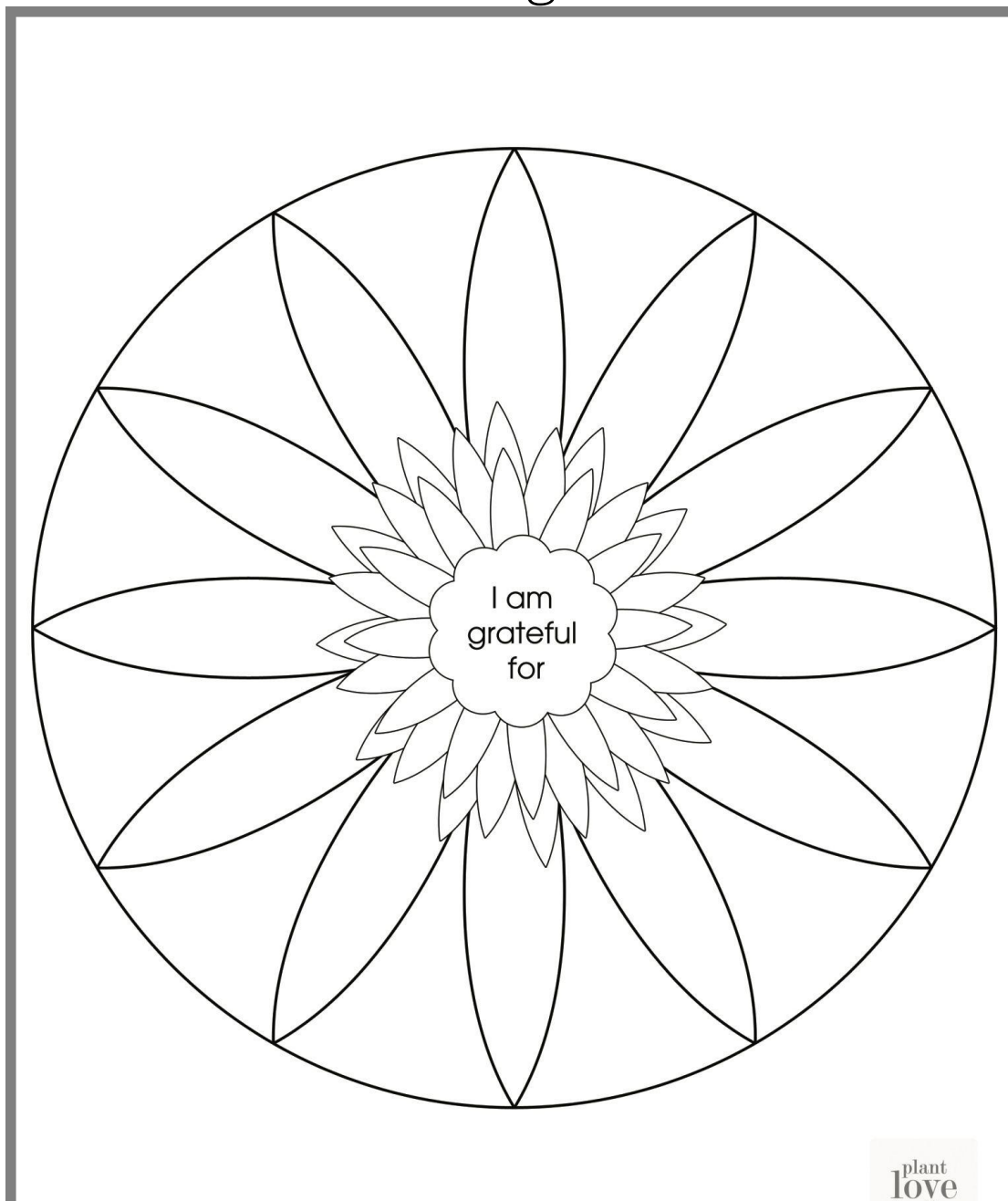
“Enjoy the little things. For one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.”

– Robert Brault

Research shows that cultivating gratitude has a plethora of benefits, including:

- Reducing stress and anxiety
- Boosting mood
- Strengthening your immune system
- Improving sleep

A simple way to cultivate gratitude is to keep a gratitude log. Each day at a set time in your daily routine, write down one thing you're grateful for on the following sheet.



Developing a Regular Exercise Routine

“Walking is man’s best medicine.” - Hippocrates

Exercise reduces the overall activation of your amygdala and sympathetic nervous system – the parts of your brain and body that generate your stress response.

Research suggests that aerobic exercise (such as walking, cycling, and jogging) provides the same benefits as non-aerobic exercise (such as yoga and pilates).

Studies also suggest you need around 21 minutes three times a week to experience the benefits. So, you don’t have to spend hours doing it – it’s something most of us can fit in to our lives when it becomes a priority.

It’s important to find something that you enjoy when it comes to building an exercise habit. Now more people than ever are interested in fitness, you have endless options. These include ‘bedroom fitness’ resources and tools that make it easy to keep moving indoors.

Here are some ideas. Tick the ones you may be interested in adding to your Stress Resilience Action Plan:

- 1. Schedule a daily walk
- 2. Complete YouTube video workouts.
- 3. Do a free trial of Les Mills at home workouts.
- 4. Do online yoga with Yoga with Adriene.
- 5. Do the 5 week strength and flexibility plan from the NHS.
- 6. Set yourself a challenge to run 5k with the support of the Couch to 5k running plan for beginners.
- 7. Invest in some indoor exercise equipment.
- 8. Do this 10 minute home cardio workout from the NHS.
- 9. Find an outdoor gym to visit.
- 10. Browse Pinterest for indoor workouts
- 11. Do an affordable at home cardio workout with a jump rope.
- 12. Invest in a Fitbit to track your progress.

Don’t forget: Motivation follows action!

Stress Resilience Plan Next Stop!

My Stress-Resilience Action Plan

PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

Current skills				
Skills to work on				
My goals				
My resources				
Action plan				

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Further Resources

“Don’t be ashamed of needing help. You have a duty to fulfil just like a soldier on the wall of a battle. So what if you are injured and can’t climb up without another soldier’s help?”
- Marcus Aurelius

There are endless ways to improve your mental wellbeing and an abundance of tools to support you.

This time may represent an excellent and rare opportunity for you to invest in yourself and develop skills that will help you for the rest of your life.
Here are some recommended resources:

Crisis Hotlines

Child Sexual Abuse. Stop It Now! Phone: 1-888-PREVENT (1-888-773-8368)
Crime Victims. National Center for Victims of Crime. Phone: 1-855-4VICTIM (1-855-484-2846)

Dating Abuse. Love is Respect. Phone: 1-866-331-9474, TTY: 1-866-331-8453, or Text LOVEIS TO 22522

Domestic Violence. National Domestic Violence Hotline. Phone: 1-800-799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233), TTY: 1-800-787-3224

Missing and Abducted Children. Child Find of America, Inc. Phone: 1-800-I-AM-LOST (1-800-426-5678), or National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. Phone: 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)

Rape and Sexual Abuse. Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. Phone: 1-800-656-HOPE (1-800-656-4673)

Runaway and Homeless Youth. National Runaway Safeline. Phone: 1-800-RUNAWAY (1-800-786-2929), or Text: 66008

Suicide Prevention. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Phone: 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255), TTY: 1-800-799 4889

Excellent sources for additional information children’s mental disorders:

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at www.aacap.org
Child Mind Institute at <http://childmind.org>

National Institute of Mental Health at www.nimh.nih.gov

Psych Central at www.psychcentral.com/disorders SAMHSA www.samhsa.gov

TeenHealth at <http://kidshealth.org/teen>

Mental Health Agencies and Resources in the Midlands

1.) South Carolina Youth Advocate Program- Services children and their families by providing Wraparound Services (Family Support, Behavior Modification, and Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services), Diagnostic/Clinical Services, and In-Home Family Services.

140 Stoneridge Drive Suite 350
Columbia, SC 29210
1-800-882-5513

2.) Post Trauma Resources- Specializes in trauma prevention and recovery, individual therapy, family therapy, couples therapy, and assessments for adult and children.

1709 Laurel Street
Columbia, SC 29201
803-765-0700

3.) Columbia Area Mental Health- Provides specialized services to children, adolescents, and families through clinic based services, school based services, WRAP around services, the Child Welfare Program, The Developmental Disorders Clinic, and Infant and Early Childhood Evaluation and Treatment Clinic.

2715 Colonial Drive Suite 100
Columbia, SC 29204
803-898-4777

For after-hours emergencies call 803-898-8888

4.) Eau Claire Behavioral Medicine- provides counseling and behavioral medicine in Columbia, Pelion, and Ridgeway South Carolina. They have licensed social workers, professional therapists, nurse practitioners, and psychiatrists.

4605 Monticello Road
Building B, Suite 1
Columbia, South Carolina 29203
(803) 714-0266

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