

SUPPORTING OPTIMAL BRAIN DEVELOPMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN: PART 1



A Read to Succeed Workshop
UNITED WAY OF METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE

All information from:

Kristie Pretti-Frontczak. "Mindfulness for Children of All Abilities."
kristiepf.com/mindful

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We wish you well!





Understanding the brain helps us better understand the behaviors we see in the classroom.

Social isolation and a disruption of routines causes stress

Positive Stress



Short, stressful events like meeting new people or starting the first day of school are healthy for brain development. They prepare the brain and body for stressful situations later in life.

Tolerable Stress



Tragic, unavoidable events like a natural disaster or losing a loved one aren't good for us. But if supportive caregivers are around to buffer the stress response, these events won't do lasting damage to the brain and body.

Toxic Stress



Ongoing, repeated exposure to abuse or neglect is bad for brain development. If no supportive adults are present to help buffer the stress response, stress hormones will damage developing structures in the child's brain. The result is an increased vulnerability to lifelong physical and mental health problems, including addiction.

Body's Response to Different Types of Stress

POSITIVE



A normal and essential part of healthy development

EXAMPLES

getting a vaccine,
first day of school

TOLERABLE



Response to a more severe stressor, limited in duration

EXAMPLES

loss of a loved one,
a broken bone

TOXIC



Experiencing strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity

EXAMPLES

physical or emotional abuse,
exposure to violence



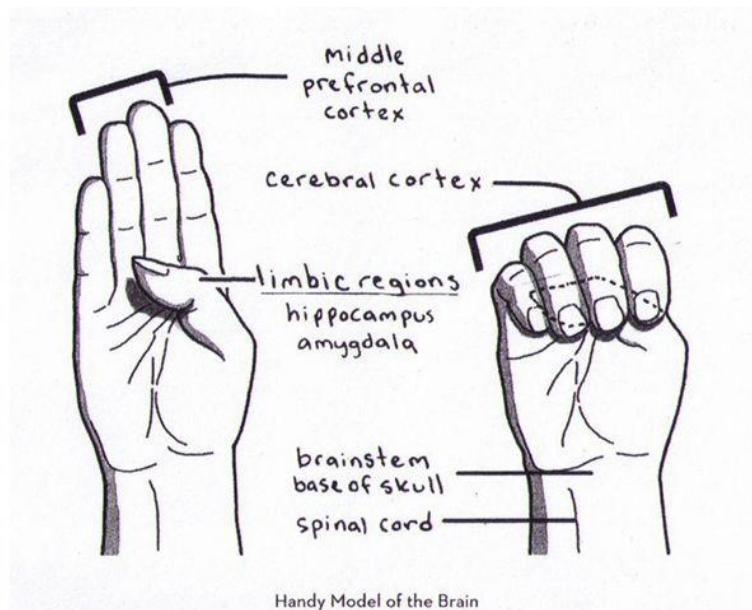
When we're stressed, we all regress.

It is within our ability to see “misbehavior” as an opportunity to teach, and to create a safe environment for children to learn.

We all get upset. Your goal is to regain self-control once you become upset, before you deal with your children. You must discipline yourself first, and your children second. --Dr. Becky Bailey

Hand Model of the Brain

(Dr Daniel Siegel)



Rarely is a choice made about which state to be in. The nervous system automatically determines which response seems most adaptive for the situation based upon many factors, including current circumstances, memory of past experiences, and innate temperament.” – Drs. Dan Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson – The Yes Brain

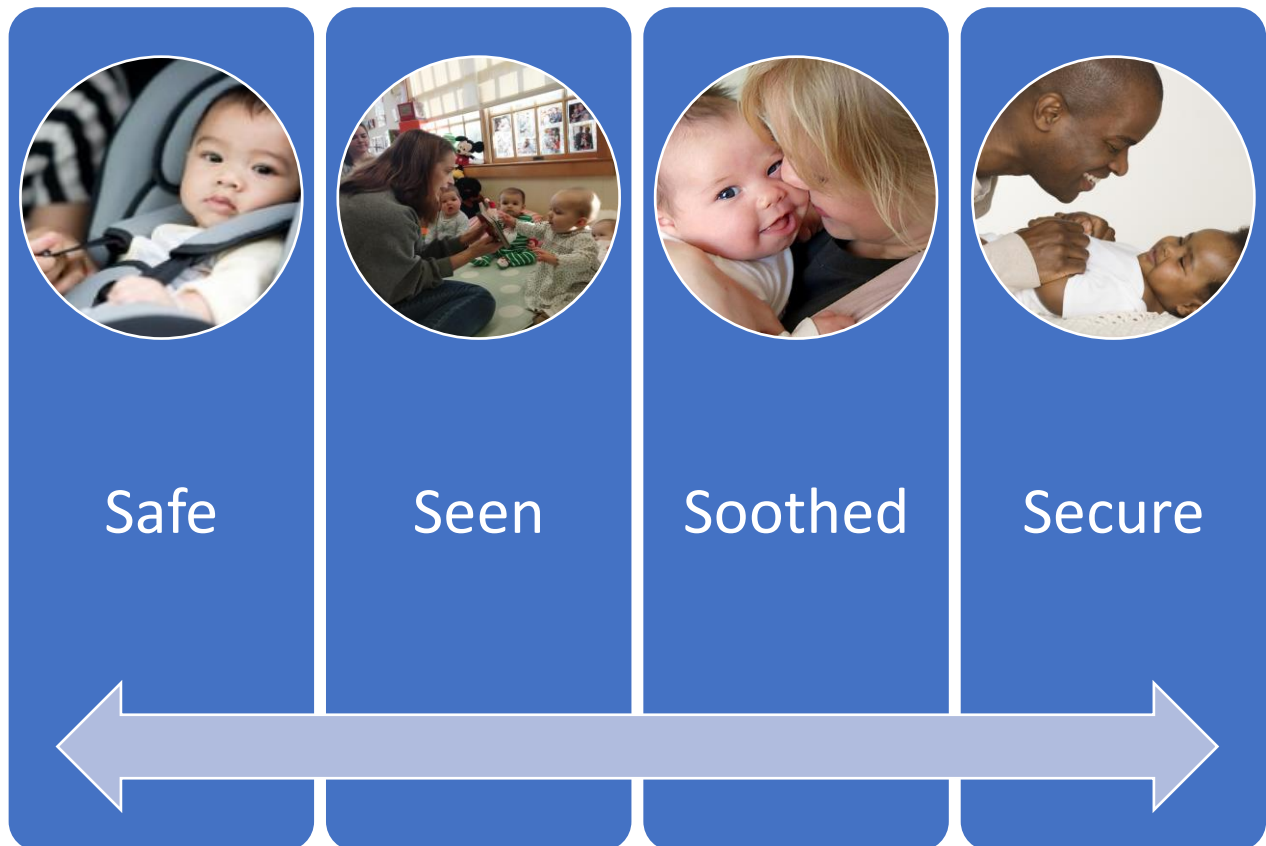
ONLY WITH SELF-REGULATION CAN WE SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS.

Self-regulation is the conscious control of thoughts, behaviors, and emotions. It is the ability to stop, think, and then act.

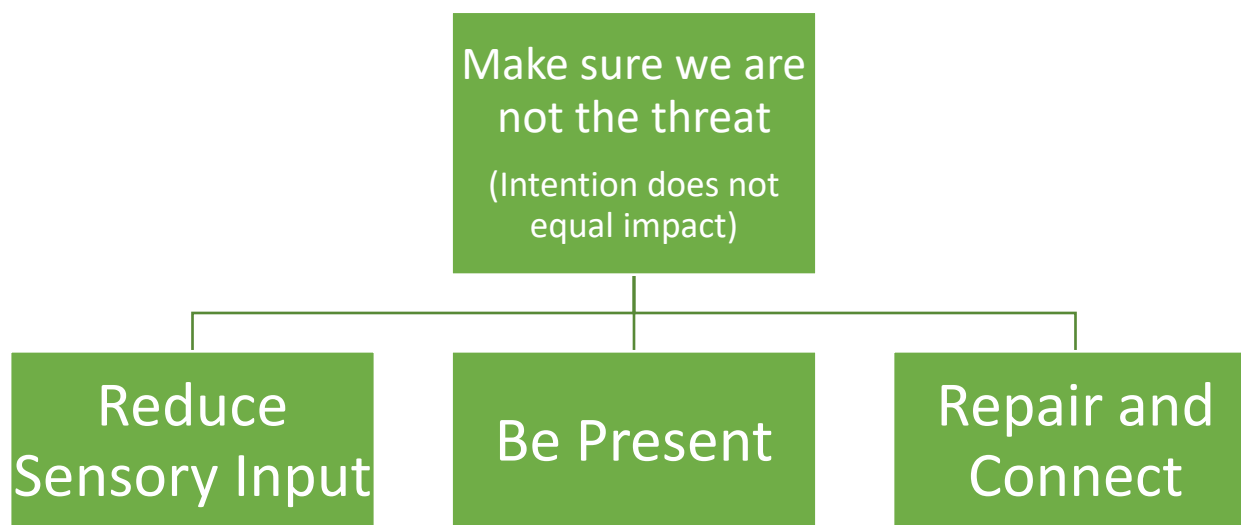
Mindfulness in when adults are committed to making sure that our previous knowledge doesn't cloud our present experience. - Kristie Pretti-Frontczak

Supporting optimal brain development involves "The 4 S's."

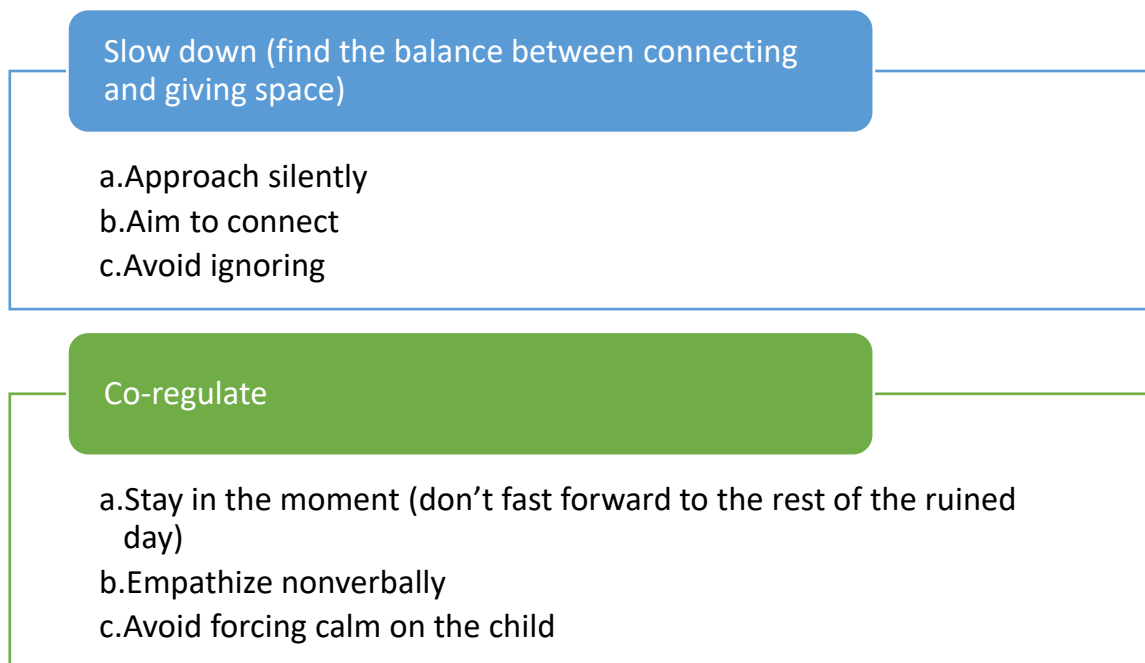
We must make sure children feel:



Safe – To support safety we must :



Strategies to support safety include:



Prompt

- a. Get child off autopilot
- b. Encourage possibilities (maybe something else is possible, What would happen if? We can find the way out of this)
- c. Avoid redirection

Reframe

- a. See needs vs. wants (what you see as a need may not be what the child sees as a need)
- b. Address needs
- c. Avoid overwhelm

Offer Lifelines

- a. Be there for the child
- b. Invite calm
- c. Avoid distress or harm
- d. Types of lifelines (the same one won't always work for the same child)
 - i. Validate emotions
 - ii. Offer choices (based on interests)
 - iii. Go silent (some call this supportive silence because it is very different from ignoring)
 - iv. Reduce directions and corrections
 - v. Simplify language and slow down all movements
 - vi. Ask open-ended questions aimed to understand (or statements that infer understanding)
 - vii. Use soothing tone of voice and empathetic non-verbals
 - viii. Reduce interruptions – pause – try not to rush
 - ix. Practice sound minimalism (say very little, turn off tvs and radios, talk in low tones)
 - x. Reduce visual clutter
 - xi. Pay attention to the child's cues – aim for attunement

Repair and Restore

- a. Grow coping strategies
- b. Establish balance
- c. Avoid revisiting issues

An invitation to commit to supporting your children and families.



Resources

- Find future webinars and register via our Eventbrite page – <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/united-way-of-greater-nashville-30218001622>
- Find webinar recordings here - <https://www.unitedwaynashville.org/rtg-training>
- Register to vote!
 - General Info on Registering to Vote - https://vote.dosomething.org/?r=source:web,source_details:hellobar
 - Register to Vote in TN - <https://ovr.govote.tn.gov/>
- Get an absentee ballot!
 - General Info on Absentee Ballots - <https://www.usa.gov/absentee-voting>
 - Get an Absentee Ballot in TN - <https://ovr.govote.tn.gov/>
- Get informed about the candidates!
 - Nashville Voter Guide - <http://nashvillevoterguide.com/>