



CASA Infant and Preschool Services
Enhanced Intake Group

Session 2: Supporting
Emotional Regulation
in Young Children


Online Version



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Check in from last session

- If you have any questions, please reach out to CASA IPS



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Welcome

- This is the second video in our 3-part Enhanced Intake series:
 1. Orientation to CASA and Child Development
 2. **Supporting Emotional Regulation in Young Children**
 3. Improving Behaviour through Proactive Parenting
- This series is attended in person or online following a referral to Infant and Preschool Services
- Please take some time in between each session so that you have time to try some of the strategies and see what works for you
- This series is intended to provide you with some helpful strategies and to help us identify which type of service might be the best fit for you and your family
- Reminder to go slowly, take breaks if needed, and to reach out for support

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Goals for today



- Discuss brain development and how brain architecture impacts regulation.
- Explore the importance of you as a parent and co-regulator
- Discuss how to identify stress states and child-specific factors that might contribute to difficulties regulating
- List strategies to help your child stay regulated *more* of the time

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Responding to Children's Emotions

- Parents' first instinct is to make a negative emotion go away. But, we can rarely change children's feelings by telling them to **stop** feeling a certain way
- There is no one right way to handle children's emotions – depends on the situation, the individual child, and the parent's own thoughts and feelings



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Remember From Last Video...

- Think of the brain as having 2 parts
 - A **downstairs brain** for lower level functions like fight or flight reactions, or big emotions like anger and fear
 - An **upstairs brain** for higher level functions like thinking things through, pausing before acting, planning and making decisions



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Upstairs vs. Downstairs Brain

- Children are born with a *well-developed downstairs brain* – the part of the brain that plays a key role in producing emotions
- The *upstairs brain* is *underdeveloped* in preschoolers. When your child is having big feelings, they don't have the upstairs brain yet to help them make sense of those feelings or act reasonably when they are upset



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Stress and Stress Recovery

- Individuals cope with stress in a variety of ways
- Overview of stress responses:
 - Green
 - Blue
 - Red
 - Combo (red and blue together)



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Impact of Stress on the Brain

- When your child is in a stress state, they are in their “downstairs brain” and any “upstairs brain” function is off-line – they’ve “flipped their lid”



- In this downstairs brain state, children may lose skills, become much more reactive, and may be less receptive to words and strategies

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Flipping Your Lid

- Please pause the video and view a video on Youtube where Dr. Dan Siegel discusses the hand model of the brain and explores the concept of "Flipping your Lid"
- The video is called "Dr. Daniel Siegel presenting a Hand Model of the Brain" and can be accessed from this web address:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gm9CJ74Oxw>



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A Shift in Thinking about Behaviour

- Behaviours can be the child's attempt to self-regulate for stress responses
- Behaviours can be due to areas of brain development being delayed or underdeveloped
- Behaviours can be due to the caregivers or environment not meeting child's needs (i.e. miscuing to get needs met in another way)

The causes of behaviours are complex

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We Need to See the Child As...

- Needing connection
- Needing CO-regulation
- Needing contact and support
- Requiring many "re-teachings" and repetition
- Need loving containment
- Telling their story through behaviours



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What Other Factors Cause Emotional Regulation Difficulties?

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Temperament

- Intensity
- Persistence
- Sensitivity
- Perceptiveness
- Adaptability
- Regularity
- Energy



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Adult Impact

- The importance of staying regulated
- Procedural memory
- “Being With”
- Co-regulation



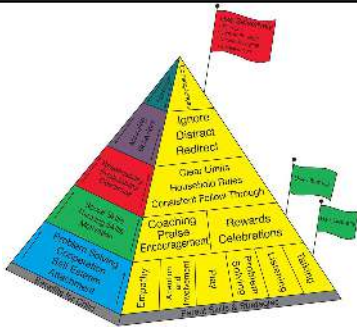
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Break time!

What Can We Do?





Parenting Pyramid[®]

Figure 1. Parenting Pyramid. From *Parenting Pyramid* by The Incredible Years (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.incredibleyears.com/download/product/The-Incredible-Years-Parent-Teacher-Childrens-Training-Series-1980-2011p.pdf>

Stress Model of Crisis



Source: Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Training

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In the Home*

- Begin to recognize individual triggers, stress signs, and regulation cues
- Creation of a calm space with in the home
 - Can use when needed to regulate
 - Sensory-focused
- Buddy Box
- Time In
- Heavy Work
- Child-led play and positive attention

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Supporting Transitions

- Pre-warnings
- Individual warnings
- Limit number of transitions
- Visual warnings
- Individual to child
- Sensory items
- Helper tasks
- First then



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Stress Model of Crisis



Source: Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Training

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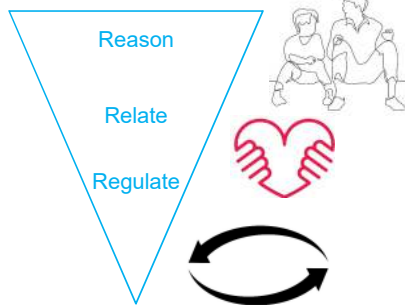
Stay Calm (or as a calm as possible)

- Think of ourselves as a mirror – the calmer we stay, the easier it is for children to calm down ...



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Regulate First!



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Whole-Brain Strategies

Integrating the Left and Right Brain

- *Connect and redirect:* When your child is upset, connect first emotionally (right brain). Then, once your child is more in control and receptive, bring in the left-brain lessons.
- *Name it to tame it:* When big, right-brain emotions are raging out of control, help your child tell the story about what's upsetting them, so their left brain can help make sense of their experience and they can feel more in control.

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Identifying and Labelling Emotions

- Parents must teach children to learn skills to identify, label, and understand emotions
- Parents can serve as “emotional coaches” as they develop awareness of children’s emotions, use emotions as teachable moments, provide validation and acceptance for emotions, and help to label

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Validation

- Acknowledge and accept your child’s emotions, both positive and negative
- When emotions are invalidated by others, it tends to make those feelings more intense
- Parents can help children by accepting their feelings as normal, even if parents don’t think they would feel the same way

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Modeling Emotional Regulation

- Children learn by watching you express your emotion to them and others, and by how you react to other people's emotions
- Managing your Own Emotions
 - Children will benefit from seeing their parents use these strategies
- Taking Care of Yourself
 - Oxygen mask
 - You need to take care of yourself in order to be present for your child

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Emotion Coaching

1. Be aware of the child's emotions
2. Recognize emotion as an opportunity to connect
3. Help them label the emotion they are feeling (i.e. "You look mad, sad, etc.")
4. Show empathy and understanding (i.e. "You are mad because....")
5. Set limits and problem solve using a choice board (i.e. "We can't _____, but we can _____.")



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Limit Setting Around the Expression of Emotion

- A. State limit and "why"
i.e. "Joey, do not hit me, that hurts me" OR "It's okay to be angry, it is not okay to hit"
- B. Utilize emotion coaching and provide alternative choices
i.e. "Joey, you are really mad about having to stop playing now, you cannot throw pillows at me, but you can punch this pillow or bounce this ball."
- C. Use logical consequences
i.e. "If you continue to throw items at me, I will take them away."

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“Being With”

- Being With means being present for your child with all their emotions – both positive and negative
- Sometimes we feel the instinctive need to push our child out of their negative feeling, which can sometimes make them last longer
- Remember to validate and help them through their emotions, rather than pushing them to feel differently
- Youtube Video - Inside Out: Sadness Comforts Bing Bong

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Questions?



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Thank You!

Please spend some time working on these strategies and continue on to the next video when ready



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