

Using Mindfulness With Children of All Abilities to Keep Connections Strong

WITH KRISTIE PRETTI-FRONTCAK, PH.D.



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- Get off autopilot
- "Be present"
- Name it...to tame it...to reframe it



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- Watch & Listen
- Walk & Talk
- Connect on Social

Tag us on FaceBook
 @Kristiepf
 @BrookesPublishingCo
 @EarlyChildhoodInvestigations

Take a picture of mindfulness in action and post to IG
 @Kristie_pf
 #TheKTip
 #ECErevolution



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Mindset
before
Methods

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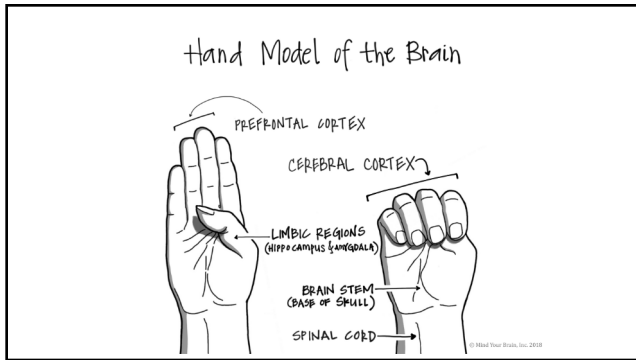
“Rarely is a “choice” made about which state to be in. The nervous system automatically determines which response seems most adaptive for the situation based upon many factors, including current circumstances, memory of past experiences, and innate temperament.”

Drs. Dan Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson - *The Yes Brain*



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THE 4 S'S

based upon the work of Dr. Dan Siegel
and Tina Payne Bryson -
The Power of Showing Up







Safe Seen Soothed Secure

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Safe



Reduce Sensory Input



Be present



Repair and Reconnect

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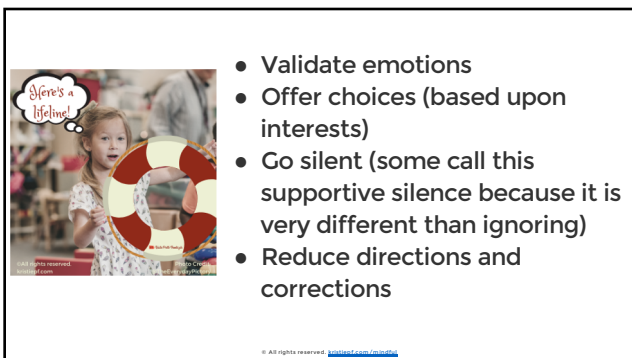
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- Ask open-ended questions aimed to understand
- Use soothing tone of voice and empathetic non-verbals
- Reduce interruptions - pause - try not to rush
- Simplify language - slow down all movements

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- Practice sound minimalism (say very little, turn off TVs/radios, talk in low tones)
- Reduce visual clutter
- Read cues - touch - be close - be attuned


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Seen



Attuned Communication



Process Big Emotions



P.E.A.C.E

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RESPONDING TO A BIG EMOTION
@SEED AND SEW

<p>1. Allow them to feel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Hold space for their emotion + Move their body if they aren't being safe + Hold their hands if they're hitting + Don't rush to make it stop 	<p>2. Connect with them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Empathize with their feeling "You worked so hard on that buddy and it got knocked down. Ugh, that's really disappointing." + Validate their emotion
<p>3. Offer Coping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Offer two coping strategies "Would you like a hug or to stomp your feet to feel calm?" + If they aren't ready for coping go back to step 1. 	<p>4. Problem Solve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + DO NOT enter this phase until they're coped and are CALM. + Invite them in to solve with you. "You want to play with it and Sarah's using it. What could we do?"

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P.E.A.C.E




Presence
Engagement
Affection
Calm
Empathy


From the Power of Showing Up by Dr. Dan Siegel and Dr. Tina Payne Bryson

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Soothed



Recognize and Reduce Stressors



Develop Coping Strategies



Apply the Zig Zag Process

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Common
ECE Stressors

- Confusion and/or overly demanding situations
- Difficulty with sensory-motor skills
- Directions and corrections



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Common
ECE Stressors

- Experiencing intense emotions
- Exposure to violence
- Lack of sleep/rest
- Lack of opportunities for movement and choice



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Common
ECE Stressors

- Large group activities
- Mindreading
- Overuse/reliance on technology and/or a "replacement" for connecting w/caregivers & peers



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Common
ECE Stressors

- Poor nutrition and poor hydration
- Sensory overload
- Unpredictable situations
- Unresponsive adults

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Infographic with
Practical and
Evidence-based
Strategies

Pre-K Teach & Play


A "Brain Architects" Guide For
Reducing ECE Stressors




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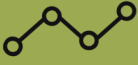
THEY "USE THEIR WORDS" WISELY



Go silent
(watch non-verbals too)



Ask questions
(avoid directing & correcting)



Give visual support
(limit auditory processing demands)

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THEY "SOOTHE THE SYSTEM"



Offer brain breaks
(go for a walk, have a drink of water, take a breath)



Play soothing music,
move around, dance!



Show compassion
(give a hug, share a smile, offer a hand)

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THEY "REDUCE" TO "RESTORE"



Reduce the size
of the group



Reduce inputs and
demands



Reduce pace to allow
for time to process

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THEY "READY" THEMSELVES



Act from "The YES brain"
- take a breath, be
curious, & offer a lifeline
(Siegel & Bryson)



Reframe the situation
from "misbehavior to
stress behavior"
(Shanker)



Attend to basic needs
for safety, satisfaction,
& connection
(Hanson)

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<p>Coping mechanisms to numb feelings, push them beneath the surface, and feel temporarily better faster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distraction with a toy Giggling/smiling at socially inappropriate times Trying to solve the problem Lovey/Security Item Hurting someone else to feel powerful or in control Using a pacifier to stop expressing A snack/feeding in response to hard feelings <p>@seed.and.sew</p>	<p>Coping strategies to process emotions, leave the reactive brain, and enter the rational thinking brain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drawing/coloring/painting Movement/exercise Breathing Reading a book Playing music Free writing/Gratitude Practice Hugging Looking at the sky Playing calmly with a toy that involves fine motor
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<p>Single Simple Concrete Global Familiar Preferred Self</p>	<p>Multiple Complex Abstract Specific Unfamiliar Unpreferred Others</p>
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Repetitive	→	Flexible
Organized	→	Random
Visual	→	Multisensory

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Secure



Extend the Green Zone



Use Coping Strategies



Skills to Respond to Stress

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Teach children to regulate... by reducing strategies that manage their behaviors


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We actually have two jobs



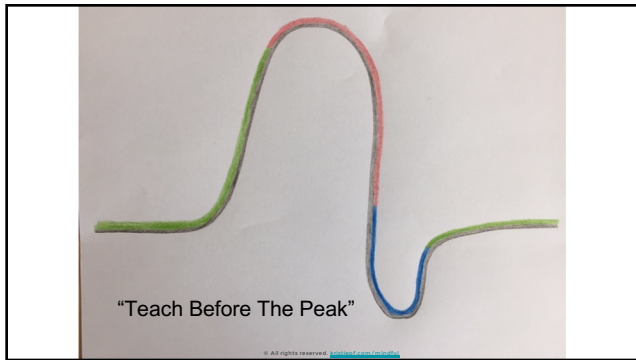
TEACH SELF-REGULATION SKILLS



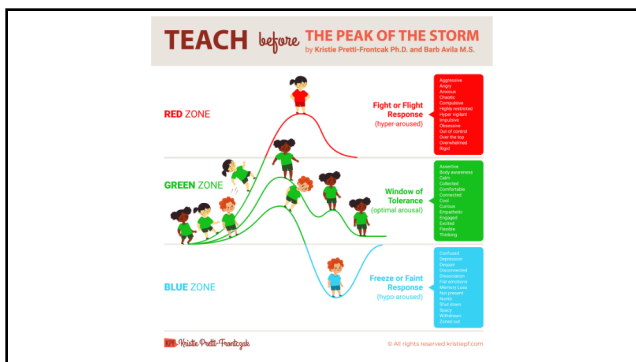
EXTEND & HELP RETURN TO THE GREEN ZONE

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Self Regulation:
The conscious control of thoughts, behaviors, and emotions...
The ability to stop, think, and then act.

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Why Regulation?

Self-Regulation Assessment Rubric

Subcomponents of the self-regulation process: attention/focus, regulation, interaction, recall, and problem-solving

NOTE: Many consider self-regulation as an "umbrella term" that encompasses many constructs that may be used to describe similar skills and processes. This rubric is divided into the subcomponents of attention/focus, regulation, interaction, recall, and problem-solving. Others have noted subcomponents such as attention - sustained/undivided, self-control, self-management, etc. For example, see Murray, Christine W., Fouzdar, Kala, Christopoulos, Christina, and Hancock, Anne (2015) at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10634269.2015.1059088>

NOTE: When children demonstrate various self-regulation skills (engage in the self-regulation process) it is highly dependent upon a wide variety of factors, including the child's developmental stage, environmental circumstances, and individual differences.

Foundational	Emerging	Functional	Strengthening	Generative
Attention/Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being doing many daily activities • Observe (e.g., turns, looks, reaches, moves toward) to sensory stimuli (e.g., auditory, visual, tactile) • Will orient away from stimulus • Notice people and things in the environment 	Attention/Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks and explores a variety of sensory experiences • Begins to ignore distractions • Increasing uses of look/engagement (e.g., looks at caregivers for cues as to how to respond); also noted under interaction 	Attention/Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines what to give/direct attention to • More focused but still for short periods of time • More active role in selecting and shifting attention (e.g., call this attentional control) • More interaction ability from time directly as desired or requested 	Attention/Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently gets, keeps, and shifts attention as requested • Pays attention to task or person despite internal and external distractions 	Attention/Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps several things in their mind at the same time • Greater attentional control for longer periods of time

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Let's Stay Connected



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