

Live Captioning is Available

- Please click CC at the top of your screen to access captions during the live event
- Captions will open in a new window or tab that you can position anywhere you like on your screen. You can adjust the size, color, and speed of the captions.
- If you need assistance, please type your comments and questions in the Q&A box

Affirming and Supporting Our Children with SED as They Go Back to School: Considerations for Families, Educators and Community Members

Sue Badeau, National Expert

Lynda Gargan, Executive Director, National Federation of Families

July 21, 2021



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Disclaimer Slide

This webinar was developed [in part] under contract number HHSS283201200021I/HHS28342003T from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The views, policies and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of SAMHSA or HHS.

COVID and SCHOOLING

POLL ONE

- Facts, Awareness, and Tips



COVID and SCHOOLING

What we know about the pandemic's consequences for education so far helps us plan next steps:

- Learning and development have been interrupted and disrupted for millions of students. More than 1 million* SED students with legal rights to special services did not get them during the pandemic, even more keenly experienced by children of color, and similar issues for students with 504 plans
- The pandemic has exacerbated well-documented opportunity gaps that put low-income and SED students at a disadvantage relative to their peers. – example even pre-COVID 60% of school lacked even the most basic school-based mental health services for children
- One of the most critical opportunity gaps is the uneven access to the devices and internet access critical to learning online.

<https://www.epi.org/publication/the-consequences-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-for-education-performance-and-equity-in-the-united-states-what-can-we-learn-from-pre-pandemic-research-to-inform-relief-recovery-and-rebuilding/>

<https://www.childtrends.org/publications/strategies-for-building-more-equitable-schools-when-returning-to-the-classroom>

COVID and SCHOOLING

What we know about the pandemic's consequences for education so far helps us plan next steps:

- One third of US teachers are at highest risk of severe illness and death from COVID
- Educators concerned about meeting all the needs of their students while maintaining their own health and well-being AND that of their own families are at increased risk of significant impacts from Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)
- One third of K-12 teachers say that the pandemic experience is causing them to seriously consider changing their profession
- Teachers are working harder and longer hours, enjoying their work less, feeling less supported, and two thirds feel serious health and safety concerns about being in the classroom

<https://www.epi.org/publication/the-consequences-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-for-education-performance-and-equity-in-the-united-states-what-can-we-learn-from-pre-pandemic-research-to-inform-relief-recovery-and-rebuilding/>
<https://www.childtrends.org/publications/strategies-for-building-more-equitable-schools-when-returning-to-the-classroom>
<https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/01/more-teachers-plan-to-quit-as-covid-stress-overwhelms-educators.html>

It wasn't only COVID

The past 1-2 years have highlighted many other areas of disparities and injustice in our communities especially related to race, ethnicity, and language

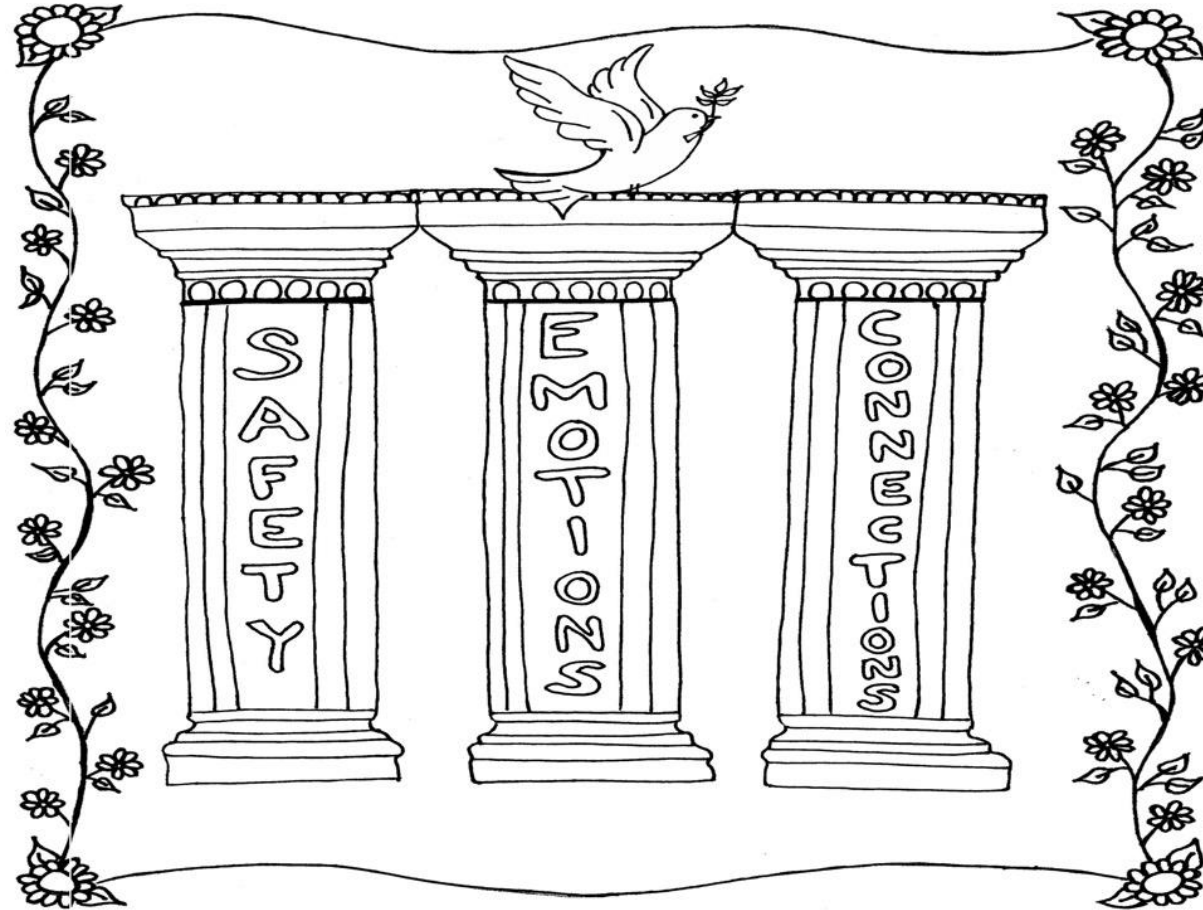
Political upheavals have left communities increasingly polarized

Education in the Post-Covid world:

It's a volatile cocktail



What do Children and Adults Need right now?



More than Pencils and Notebooks:

Fantasies and fears of kids with SED in the backpack

I am really different –
no one can understand
my life

Kids with SED are “2nd
rate” so I am doomed
to fail

I’m too far behind, I will
never catch up

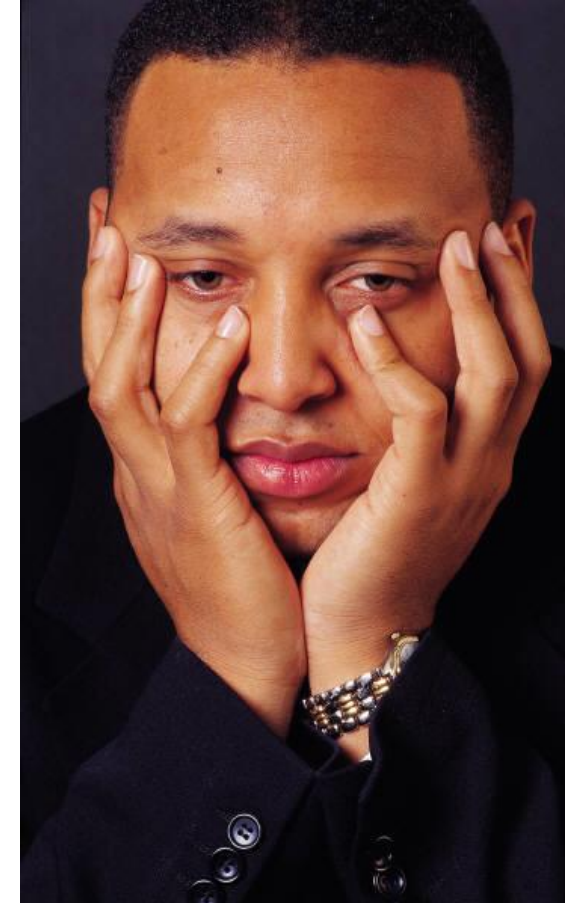
Trauma triggers are
lurking everywhere and
pop-up when least
expected



Impact of Fantasies, Fears and Trauma

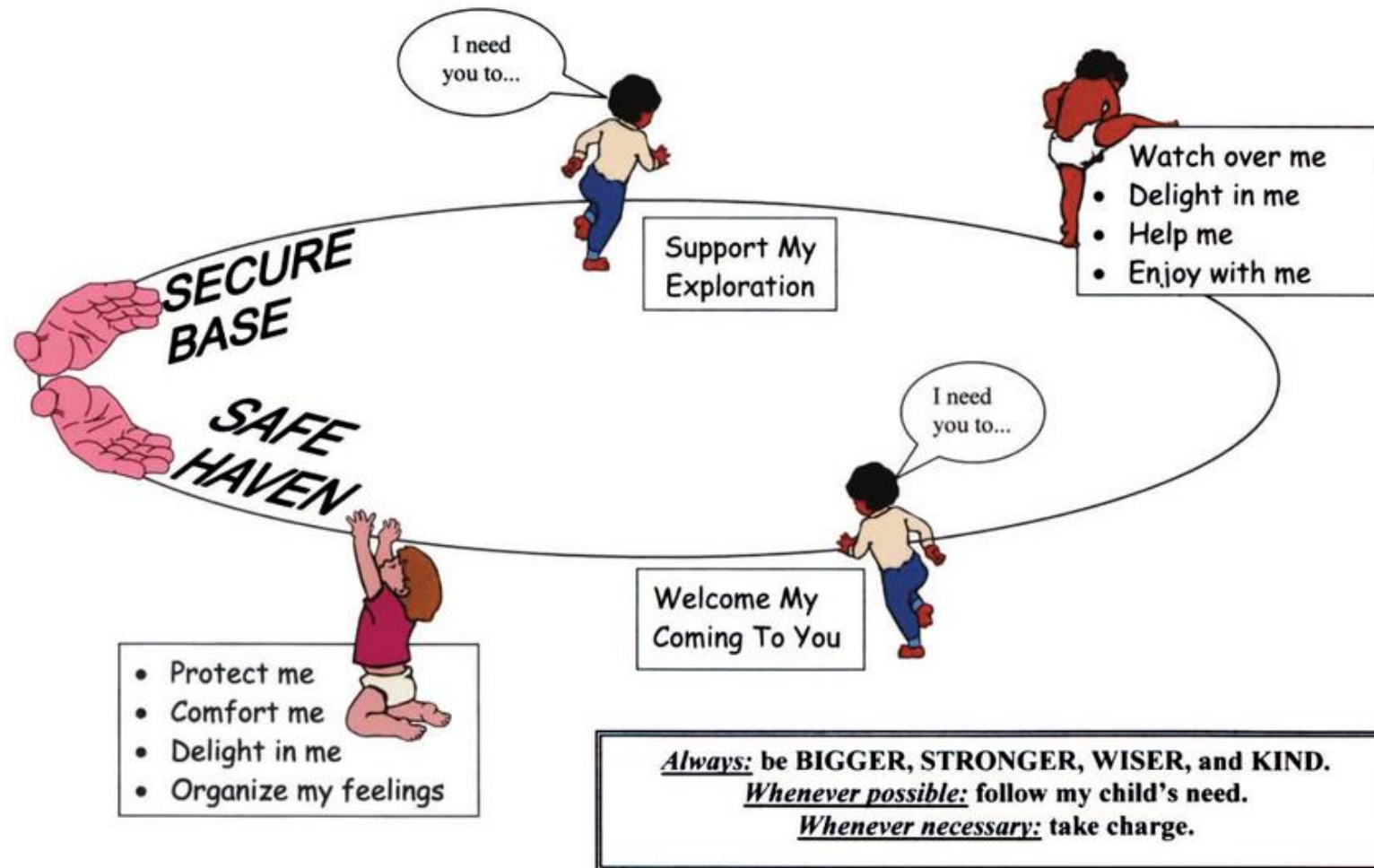
Fantasies and fears of kids with SED in the backpack

- Self-fulfilling failure prophecies
- Grief, loss, separation anxiety and trauma triggers make concentration difficult
- May demonstrate trauma symptoms masking as ADD/ADHD, ODD, or other behavioral or mental health issues
- May experience frequent psychosomatic symptoms
- Easily launched into survival mode
- Social anxiety - “I don’t/can’t fit in”; “Nobody likes me” or “Nobody will like me if they know my real story”
- Falling behind academically
- Missed special education needs
- Mis-labeled or placed in special education



Circle of Security

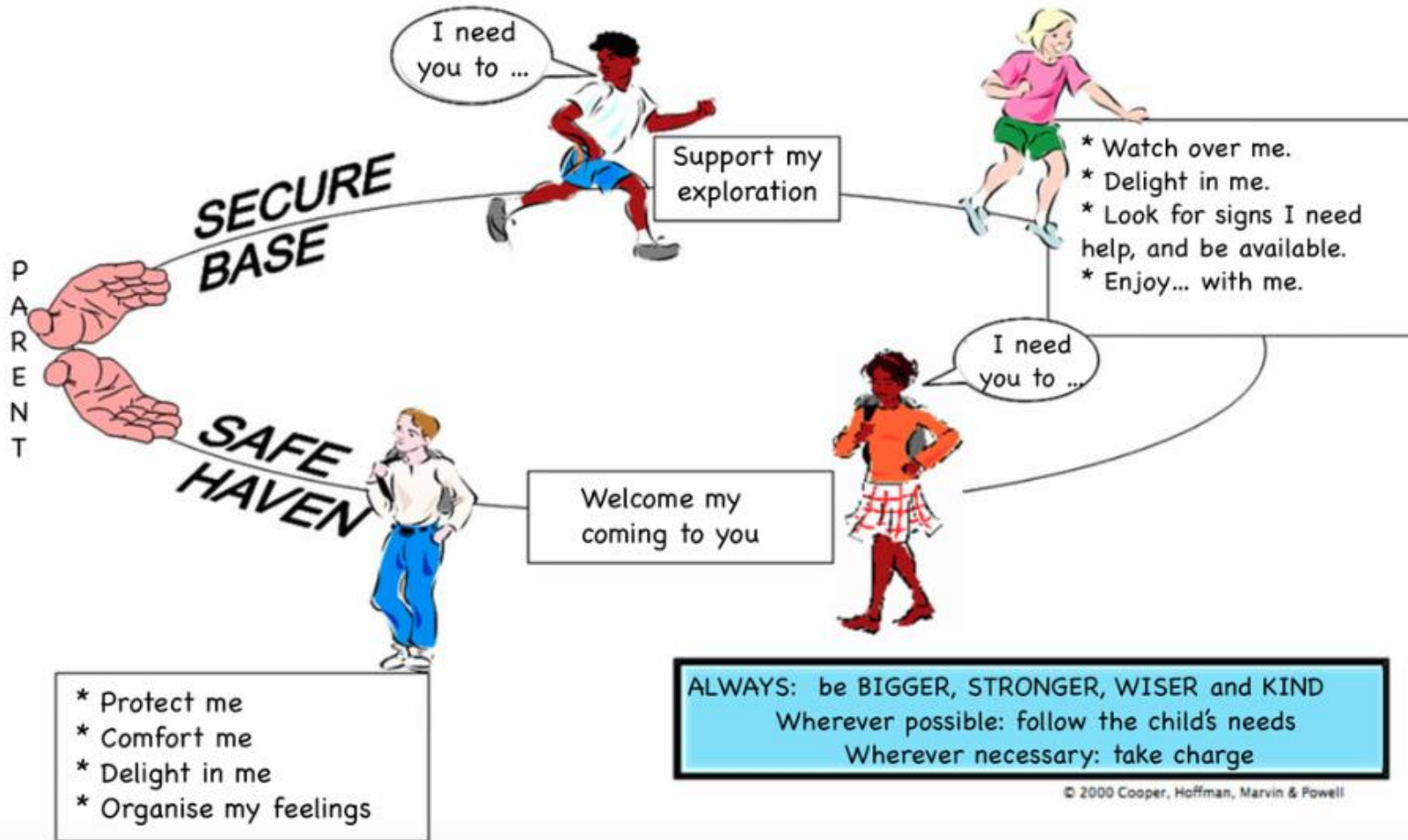
Parent attending to the child's needs



© 2000 Cooper, Hoffman, Marvin & Powell

Circle of Security

Parent attending to the youth's needs



Support Family Resilience

- Individual resilience contributes to but is not the same as family resilience
- 4 core signs of a resilient family during times or crisis or prolonged stress
 - ✓ Maintaining membership
 - ✓ Nurturing young
 - ✓ Caring for vulnerable
 - ✓ Maintaining economic support



Created by Gregor Cresnar
from Noun Project

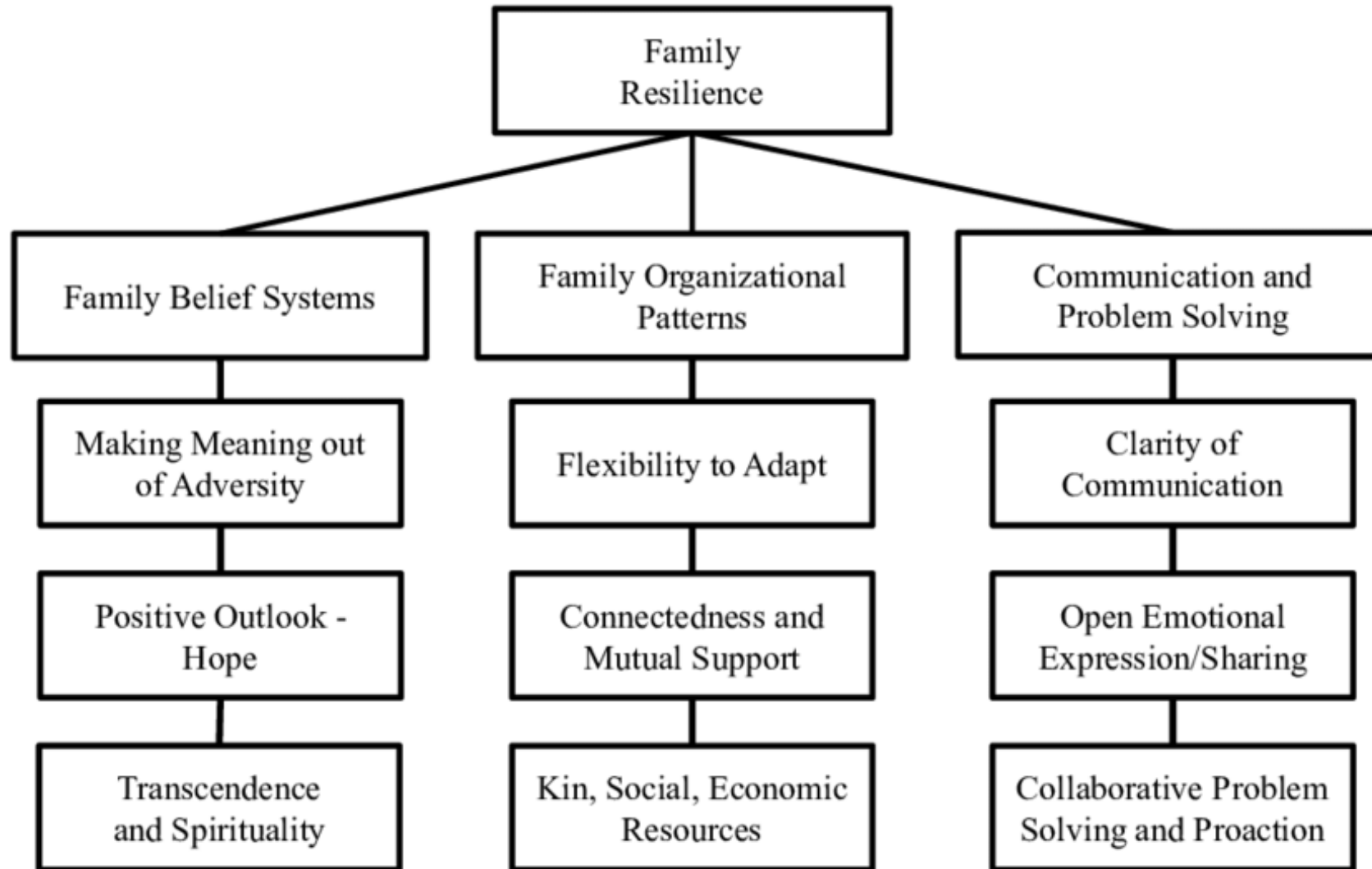
Support Family Resilience

- **4 core characteristics of a resilient family during times or crisis or prolonged stress**
 - ✓ Hope, optimism, shared beliefs, values
 - ✓ Communicate about a wide range of feelings
 - ✓ Balance of consistency and flexibility
 - ✓ Capacity for problem solving



Created by Gregor Cresnar
from Noun Project

Support Family Resilience



Quick Tips for Periods of Adjustment and Transition

Relationships matter more than schoolwork (SEL)

Know the kids, the parents, the staff and the community

Addressing post-COVID needs is more than re-starting pre-COVID approaches

Not the time to do long-term special education assessments – although immediate assessment is needed for many students

Attend to needs of teachers and staff as well as students

Broad Tips for Parents/Caregivers from “Experts”

POLL TWO

- Locate learning resources
- Identify additional resources
- Connect with school staff
- Be pro-active about making your needs and expectations clear (i.e. around mask wearing)
- Be flexible and accepting of the needs and expectations of the other students/parents and school staff



Tips for Parents at Home

Relax	Relax the rules
Use	Use resources but don't get overwhelmed
Follow	Follow the child's interests
MOVE	MOVE our bodies
Build in	Build in some one-on-one time

Predictability

- Predictable environment
- Predictable use of time and routines
- Predictable rules and expectations
- Predictable consequences
- Predictable is NOT rigid!



Develop Strategies for Transitions

Make them as calm and peaceful as possible



Activities and Actions:

Help child/adult to identify:

- What activities strengthen you?
- What activities calm you?
- What activities nurture your goals and ability to dream?



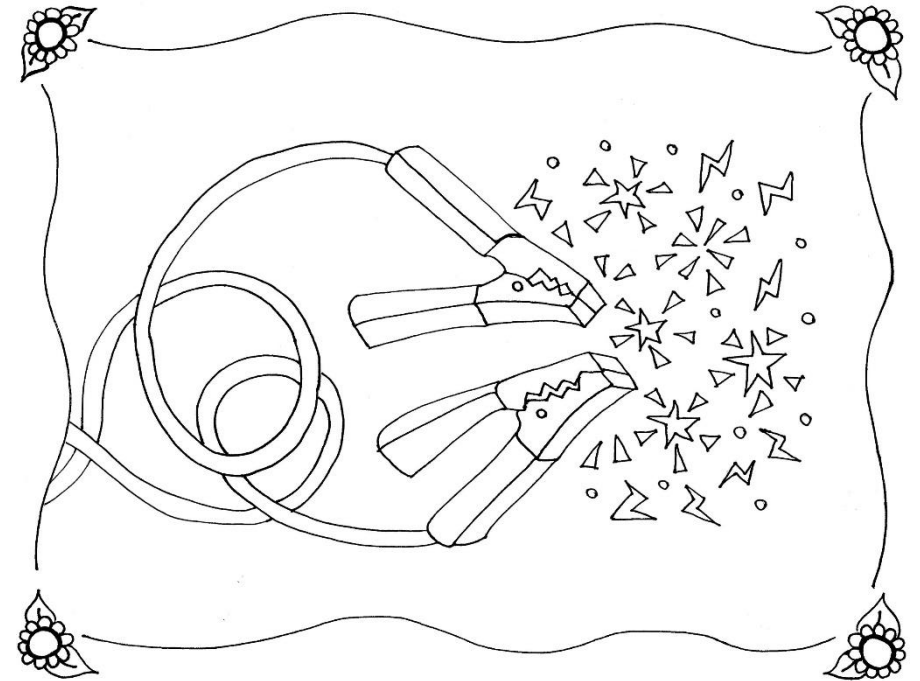
Balance Mind, Body, Heart, Spirit, Senses:

- Re-set the brain with breathing
- Move your body
- Nurture creativity
- Laugh and Play



Communicate and Connect

- Eat meals together
- Show affection (use of touch)
- Never hinge relationships on behavior



Beyond Covid

- Facts, Awareness and Tips



Support Physical and Psychological Safety

- Ensure that there is an identified “go-to” person or liaison for youth with SED, their parents/caregivers (and caseworkers where applicable)
- Provide choice and control wherever and whenever possible
- Ensure that anti-bullying, community-building, and school-climate policies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all types of SED
- Ensure that youth with SED do not receive harsher or socially isolating disciplinary actions
- Proactively address differences in parental needs/expectations regarding issues such as vaccination and mask-wearing

Support Stability

- Provide meaningful and concrete supports to caregiving families
- Ensure communication, engagement and collaboration between school, families and providers
- Minimize classroom and school placement changes and teacher changes for students with SED and all students

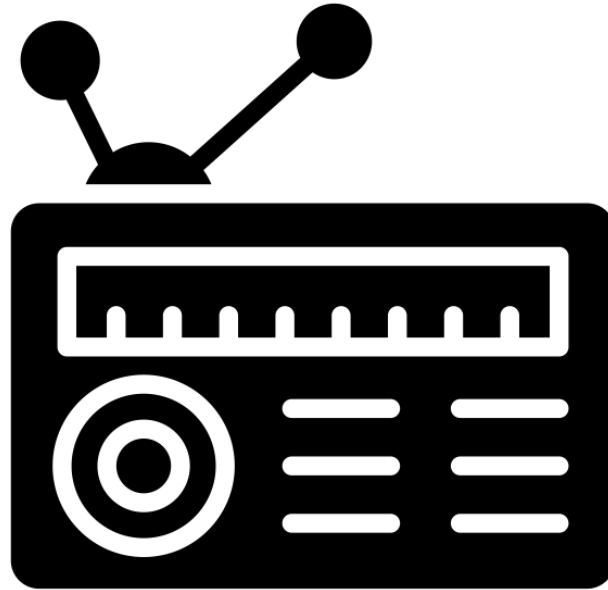


Support Well-Being: Trauma and Resilience

- Provide training, coaching and supporting for ensuring schools are trauma informed, trauma responsive and resiliency focused
- Help youth learn self-regulation skills
- Provide multi-sensory tools (including designated safe spaces) for emotional expression, management and regulation



TUNE-IN



Created by Vectors Point
from Noun Project

TUNE-IN

How is the child feeling – anticipate concerns and questions

Child's understanding of certain information they heard related to COVID, vaccines, other issues in the community or country

WHO is the child worried about

Support Well-Being: Transition

- Fully engage youth and their parents/caregivers in transition planning
- Ensure that life transition planning and school transition planning are in sync
- Ensure youth transitioning into adulthood have access to relevant ID, transcripts, medical documents, credit repair and related resources
- Provide meaningful access and resources related to a full array of post-secondary opportunities to youth including
 - Pre-college and college
 - Technical or vocational
 - Advanced placement and credit options
 - School-to-work options

Support Well-Being: Advocacy

- Ensure that both youth and parents/caregiving adults understand all their legal rights related to education
- Engage students in identifying and expressing their own educational and life goals and equip them to advocate for their own goals
- Equip caregiving adults with tools to facilitate effective educational advocacy including IEP or 504 plan participation



Promote Broader School-Based Activities

- Use and promote positive, appropriate and sensitive language related to race, gender/sexuality, special needs, health/mental health, family composition, SES, etc.
- Engage parent support groups
- Provide books and resources for the classroom teacher and the library that promote engagement and understanding



Questions and Contact Information

Sue Badeau

- www.suebadeau.com
- badeaufamily@gmail.com

Lynda Gargan

www.ffcmh.org
lgargan@ffcmh.org

