


# **From “Surviving to Thriving:” Tips for Remote Learning**



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**December 14, 2020**




# Managing Conflict and Responding to Behavior





## Expectations and Agreements

- We are SO happy you are here!!
  - You do not need to attend all sessions, but are welcome to!
  - We will be recording the sessions
  - You can use the chat feature to ask questions, which we will respond to throughout the presentation
  - If you need further assistance or have questions, reach out to us directly!
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## Three part series:

**Session 1:** Conditions for Learning

[December 7, 2020](#)

**Session 2:** Managing Conflict and  
Responding to Behaviors

December 14, 2020

**Session 3:** Basics of Self-Care and  
Mindfulness

December 21, 2020





**DISCLAIMER**



## Tools and Strategies

- We hope to provide practical tools and ideas that may help
- We recognize that EVERY family is doing the best they can right now under the circumstances.
- *While we all live through COVID, every family is facing unique challenges.*






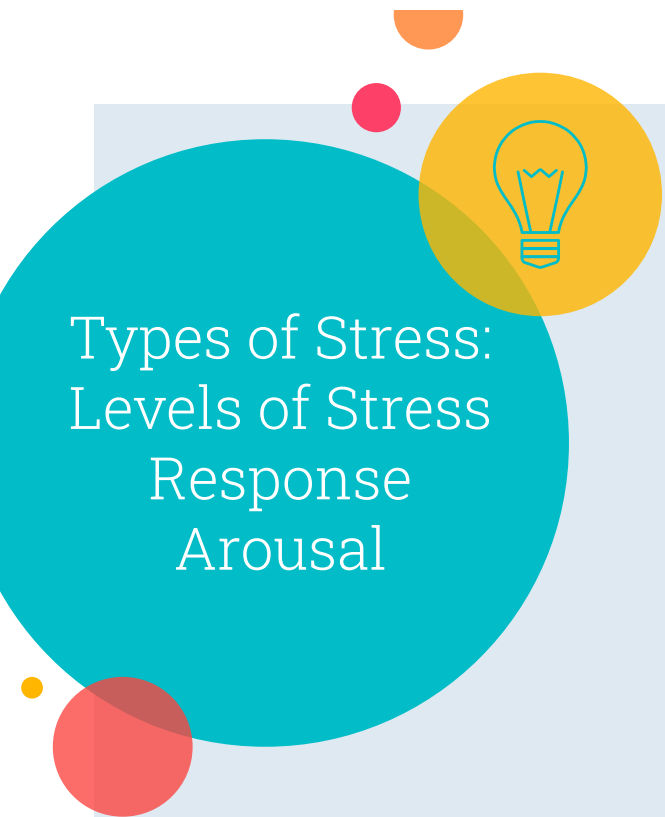
## Review of Last Week

Creating the conditions for learning through an understanding of executive functioning and how to support your child in this area.

Modify, teach and reinforce EF skills, which are like the Air Traffic Controls of the brain,

Emotional dysregulation and stress interfere with EF, which means that one of our essential roles is to co-regulate with them -- use our own self-regulation skills to connect with them.






## Types of Stress: Levels of Stress Response Arousal

1. Positive stress - Raises stress level, but able to calm down
2. Tolerable Stress - More difficult, but manageable with supports
3. Toxic Stress - Happens frequently, no buffers, also known as trauma

**The pandemic is a form of stress, and it's severity is dependent on other factors.  
For many, COVID is traumatic!**



*Pattern of*  
**Stress**

Unpredictable

Extreme

Prolonged

**Sensitization**  
*Vulnerability*

Predictable

Moderate

Controllable

**Tolerance**  
*Resilience*






## Resiliency: Protective Factors

[Check out the Search Institute website for families to help with building resiliency.](#)

### Resiliency occurs when youth have:

- Relationships with caring, nurturing adults
  - Feel connected to a role model/mentor
  - Talents and abilities are nurtured and appreciated: Self-efficacy and Growth Mindset
  - Have a sense of belonging to a community, group or cause larger than themselves - Affiliation
- 




Attunement:  
Connect and  
THEN Redirect

**Connect and  
respond  
emotionally before  
attempting to  
activate the EF  
skills of regulation**

Accurately and empathetically understand and respond to individual's actions communications, needs, and feelings

Two important parts:

- Taking a curious stance in order to identify underlying needs that are being expressed by behavior - asking “why” not “what”
  - Our ability to respond in an empathetic, supportive and effective way
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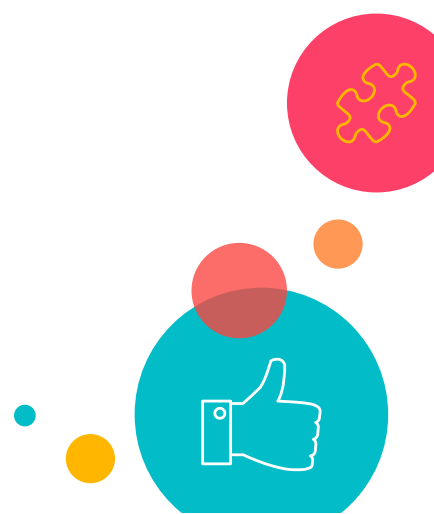



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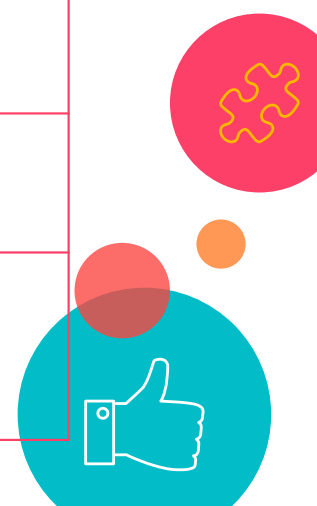
ANGER

MIGHT BE





Facial Expressions	Includes intense expressions as well as lack of expressiveness
Tone of Voice	Higher-pitched, louder, softer
Extent of Speech	Becoming very verbose, very quiet; rate of speech
Quality of Speech	Organization, maturity (example: regression)
Posturing	What does body look like (curled up, fists clenched, muscles tense/loose)?
Approach vs. Avoidance	Does child get withdrawn/overly clingy?
Affect Modulation Capacity	Harder time being soothed, and/or self-soothing?
Mood	Does mood overtly change (example: normally even tempered, but becomes more labile in the face of intense emotions)?





Collaborative and  
Proactive Solutions:  
PLAN B!

“Kids do well when they can.” Sometimes expectations exceed their ability to adapt to the frustration they are experiencing.

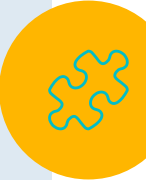

**All behavior is communication.**

[A Plan B  
Cheat Sheet  
to Guide the  
Conversation](#)

**Plan A** - Coerce and exert control.

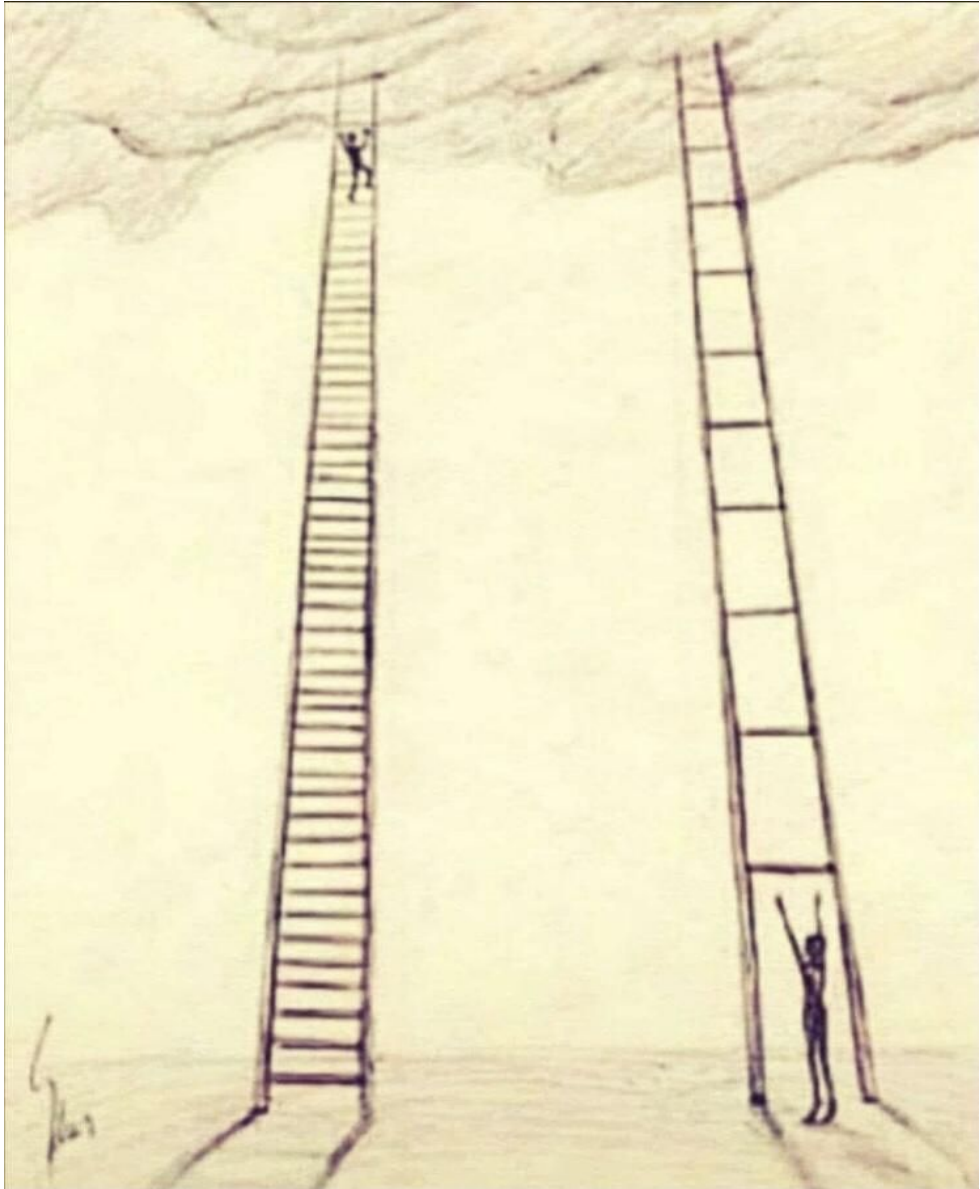
**Plan C** - Let go of expectation for now.

***Plan B - CPS - Work to:***

- 1) Show Empathy by learning their point of view
  - 2) Define the problem with adult's expectation included.
  - 3) Invitation to collaborate on a solution that will account for the point of view of both parties.
- 
- 



# The Importance of Smaller Steps





## Six Steps to Safety

- **Reflect**

- “Your behavior is telling me you’re having a hard time right now because you’re...”

- **Validate**

- “It makes sense that you’re having a hard time because...”

- **Replace**

- “Can you tell me in a different way that you’re upset/sad/angry...”

- **Comfort**

- “You’re letting me know that you need a break right now. Let’s go to...”

- **Engage**

- I want to help you by...”

- **Praise**

- If the students makes the right decision by taking a break
- If they didn’t make that decision, try to give other alternatives





## Consistent Response

It is important to identify a consistent response to all behaviors!

First try the “Six Steps to Safety” approach

If that doesn't work, know when to use which of the following:

- **Ignore**
- **Limit Setting**
- **Praise**







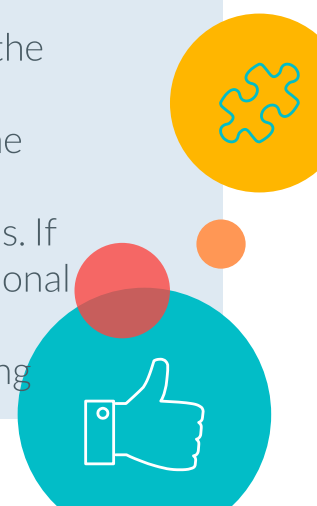
## Ignore the Behavior, not the Person

### **Actively not attending to undesirable behaviors that are not immediately dangerous**

Examples of when this is appropriate:

- Whining/minor disrespect (eye rolling, slamming door)
- Temper tantrum (unless dangerous)
- Pouting/sulking

Once the initial steps occur you:

1. Remove attention from the behavior. Don't continue to give warnings, name the behavior, or engage with the child around the behavior
  2. Immediately reinforce any positive alternatives displayed by the child
  3. Set limits only if the behavior escalates and becomes dangerous. If it continues longer than several minutes you can provide additional prompts
  4. If it escalates or continues for longer, time to shift to limit setting
- 

# Limit Setting



Setting firm expectations - make sure you are aware of what is in your control!

Power struggles may be avoided by providing limited choice - providing the child with illusion of control

Differentiate children who feel overwhelmed by a task and which are non-compliant. Try this:

- Elicit what the child is feeling and/or name what you are seeing (You seem really upset about doing this work. What do you think is making you so upset?)
- Break large tasks into smaller ones
- Offer to help

Compromise - Define for yourself which rules are essential and which you can compromise on! What is small to you might be really important to them.



## Limit Setting, Continued



### **Choose your moments!**

When children are in a high state of arousal, they are unable to access higher cognitive functions, including logic, problem solving, planning, anticipating, delaying response, etc.

### **Be aware of triggers!**

Time out and ignoring can trigger fear of abandonment and rejection; setting limits can trigger fear of authority and punishment. It is important to be aware of this and try to minimize the impact by:

- Always naming the rationale for the limit and linking it to the behavior
- Always naming the boundaries around the limit (length of time, etc.)
  - Moving on
- Making adaptations to limits for specific triggers





### What does your teenager control?

- Their friends
- Their choices around drugs and alcohol
- Their engagement in school
- Their activity level
- Almost everything in their lives, when you are not around!

### What do you control?

- Your attitude - positivity -
- Your language and behavior!
- How you manage your emotions and attitude, even when they are negative
- Where you focus your attention
- How you demonstrate an interest in their interests
- How you model your values
- Love them “no matter what and even if...”
- Provide them with love, food, shelter, clothing...and extras!

Control -  
Understand  
what is in  
your control  
and Your  
Teenager's  
Control





When your  
child or teen is  
angry

Calm voice

Calm face

Calm body

(Separate emotion from discipline)

Be respectful of them - so they respect you

See you as a resource during difficult times






## Praise

When overwhelmed by distress, children may begin to identify primarily with the “bad” - “I’m a bad kid”

The use of positive praise and reinforcement can:

- Increase positive interactions with the child
- Increase desired behaviors
- Increase attunement
- Increase felt safety
- Build self-esteem and self-efficacy

The good things are often much more difficult to notice!!  
Noticing the positives often requires effortful focus and selection of behaviors to target






## The Importance of Creating Joyful Moments

**COVID asks us to find  
joy in small moments  
and commonplace  
activities.**

### Create and Plan Joyful Moments with Intention

- ★ Avoid “Technoference” - being distracted from the moment by your phone and apps designed to hijack your attentional control.
  - ★ Beware of social media that prompts comparison and negative self-concept.
  - ★ Spontaneity and action matter
- 




It's so important  
to have tools!

Realistic toolboxes:


- Before you go into a situation
  - Always be prepared!
- When something happens suddenly
  - Techniques for is things don't go well
- After something happens
  - How you recover
- Baseline
  - Take care of yourself!







When to seek help...

- 
- Emotions or behaviors that are intense and persistent
  - Excessive anxiety
  - Increased aggression or disruptive behaviors
  - Regressive behaviors
    - *That don't resolve with support or that you feel overwhelmed by*

### **Resource Guide**

#### **Your Life, Your Voice**

Teens - Speak with a counselor for free by calling 1-800-448-3000

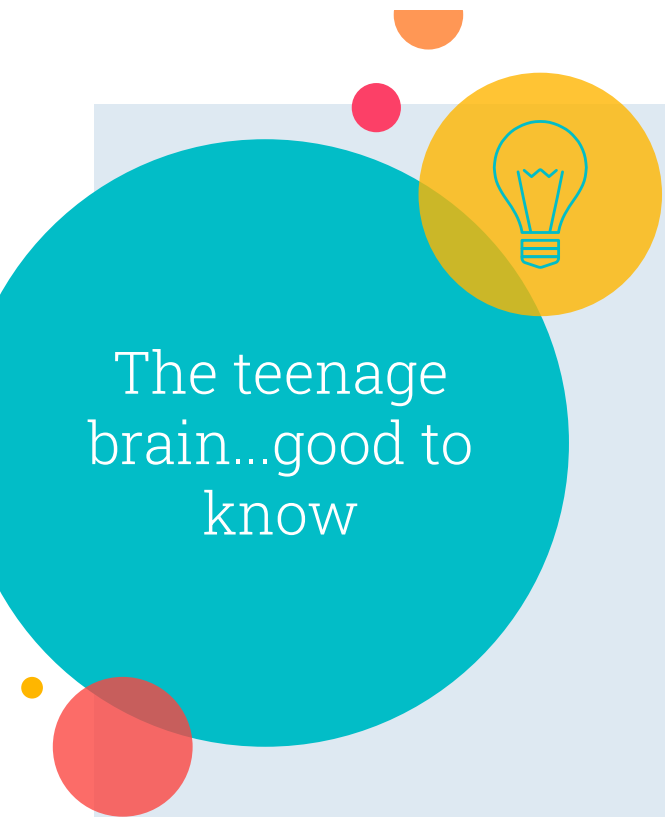
Text with a counselor for free by texting VOICE to 20121 everyday noon to midnight

#### **Seize the Awkward**

Reach the Crisis Text Line by typing SEIZE to 741741 or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800)273-8255

**Mobile Crisis Response Team - Harbor Care - 603-816- 0101**





The teenage  
brain...good to  
know

Pruning and Myelination: the act of specializing  
Designed for social engagement outside of the  
family system.


Hormonal changes trigger pleasure seeking  
activity and emotionality

The need for control and influence over their  
environments is paramount.

[Why are teenagers so moody?](#)

[The Adolescent Brain - What makes it amazing!](#)





If you have  
questions/suggestions,  
please reach out!  
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[sarahk@whitebirchedu.com](mailto:sarahk@whitebirchedu.com)



## Resources

Blaustein, M. & Kinniburgh, K. (2010). Treating traumatic stress in children and adolescents: How to foster resilience through attachment, self-regulation, and competency. New York: Guilford Press.

Dr. Ross Greene: [Livesinthebalance.org](http://Livesinthebalance.org)

Dr. Paul Jenkins: Live on Purpose Youtube Channel

Dan Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson, [The Whole Brain Child](#) (2011)

Search Institute resource for families:

<https://keepconnected.searchinstitute.org/bringing-out-the-best-in-your-family/>

