

Validating and Celebrating a Big Life Transition: Home to School



Who Should Be Ready?
Kids for K? or K for Kids?

A three-part exploration:

- ✧ What Makes Us **Who** We Are and **How** We Are
- ✧ Supporting our Children Through Transition Time
- ✧ Channeling the Emotional Detective in You



Pop Quiz: Which parenting approach is most effective for young learners as they transition from home to school?

- a) Helicopter parenting
- b) Boot camp – grit rules
- a) Neither



Brain Development

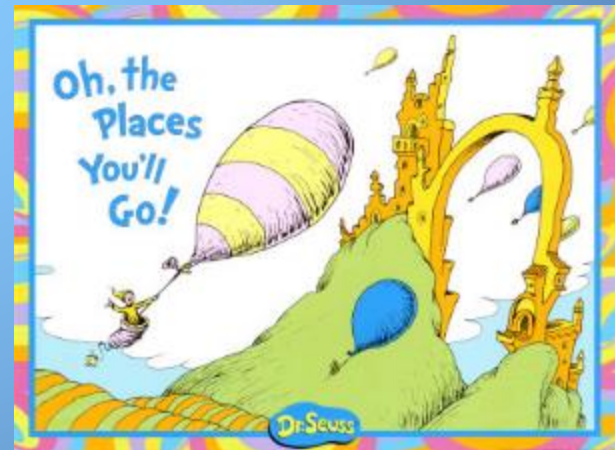
- Children's brains are not mini-adult brains. They are in development, with patterns and pathways that form based on the quality and quantity of interactions in the early years.

As Dr. Seuss wrote....

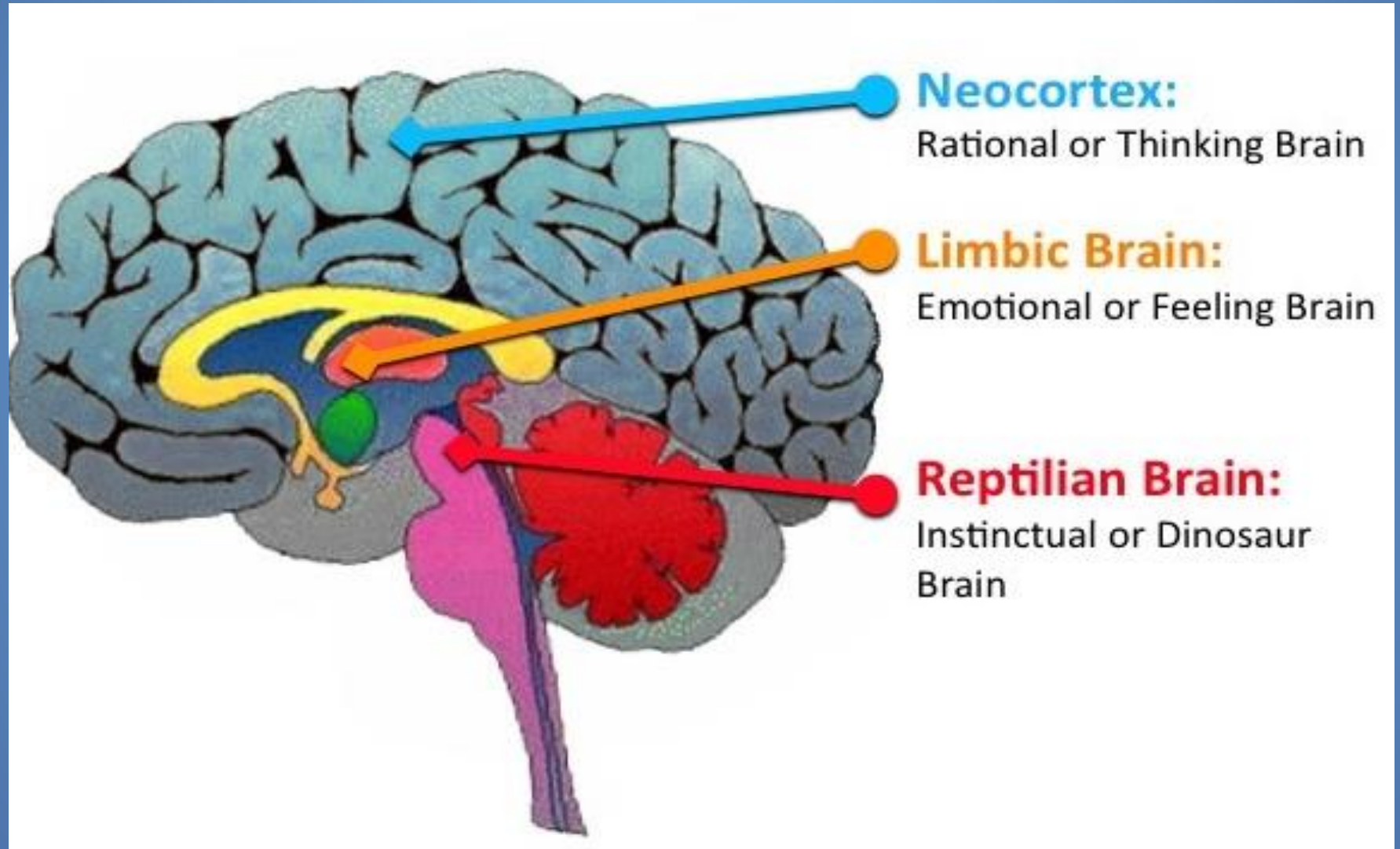


“The more that you read,
the more things you will
know. The more you learn,
the more places you'll go”

(Seuss, 1978)

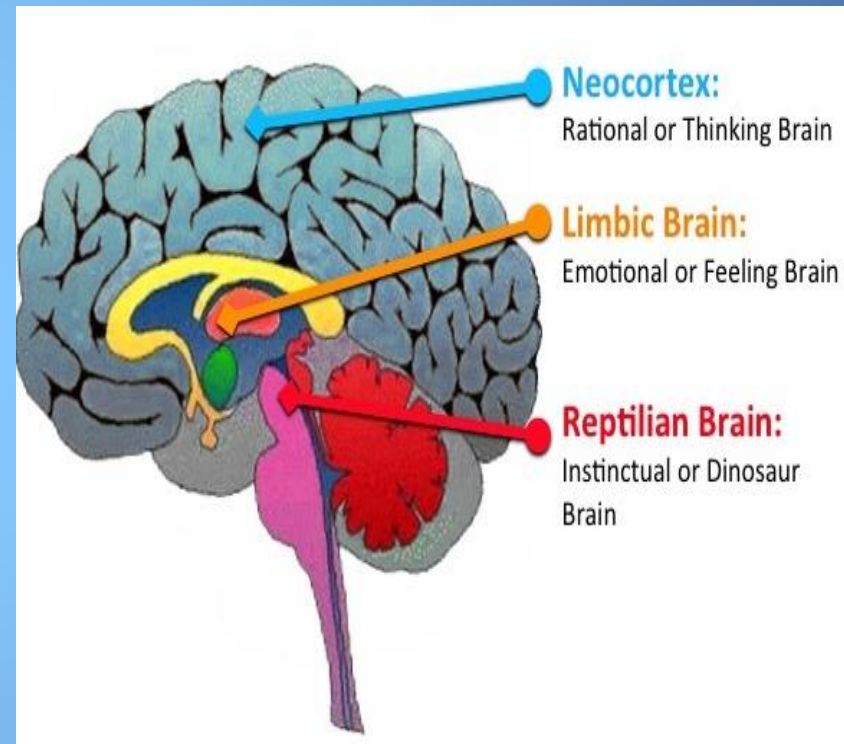


A Brief Tour of the Brain

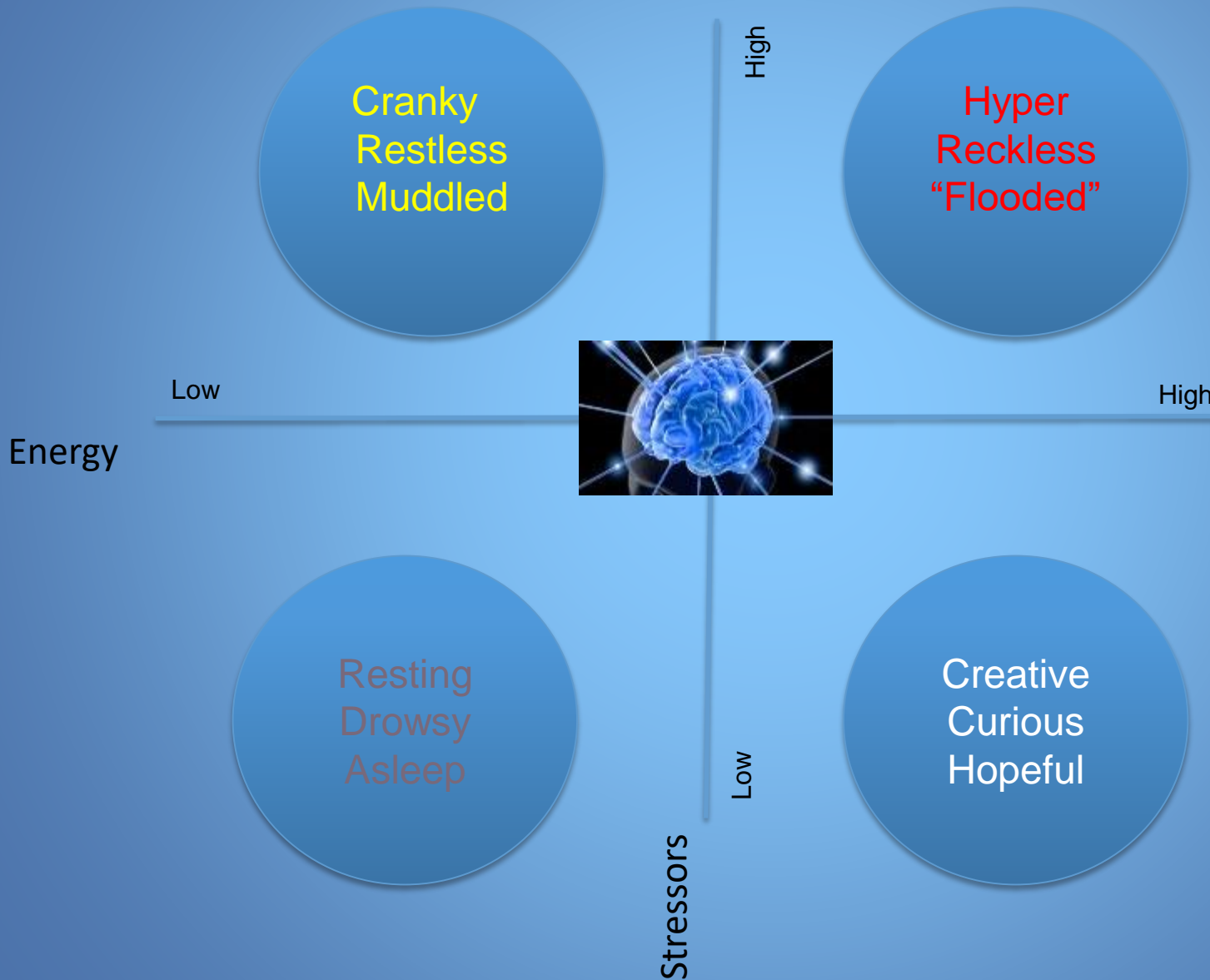


The Brain, Self-Regulation and the Impact of Stressors

- ❖ *Stressors consume energy*
- ❖ *Our brains use a lot of the energy we expend*
- ❖ *After energy is spent, we need to replenish our reserves*
- ❖ *When our available energy isn't sufficient for us to cope, we switch to survival mode: fight, flight or freeze*



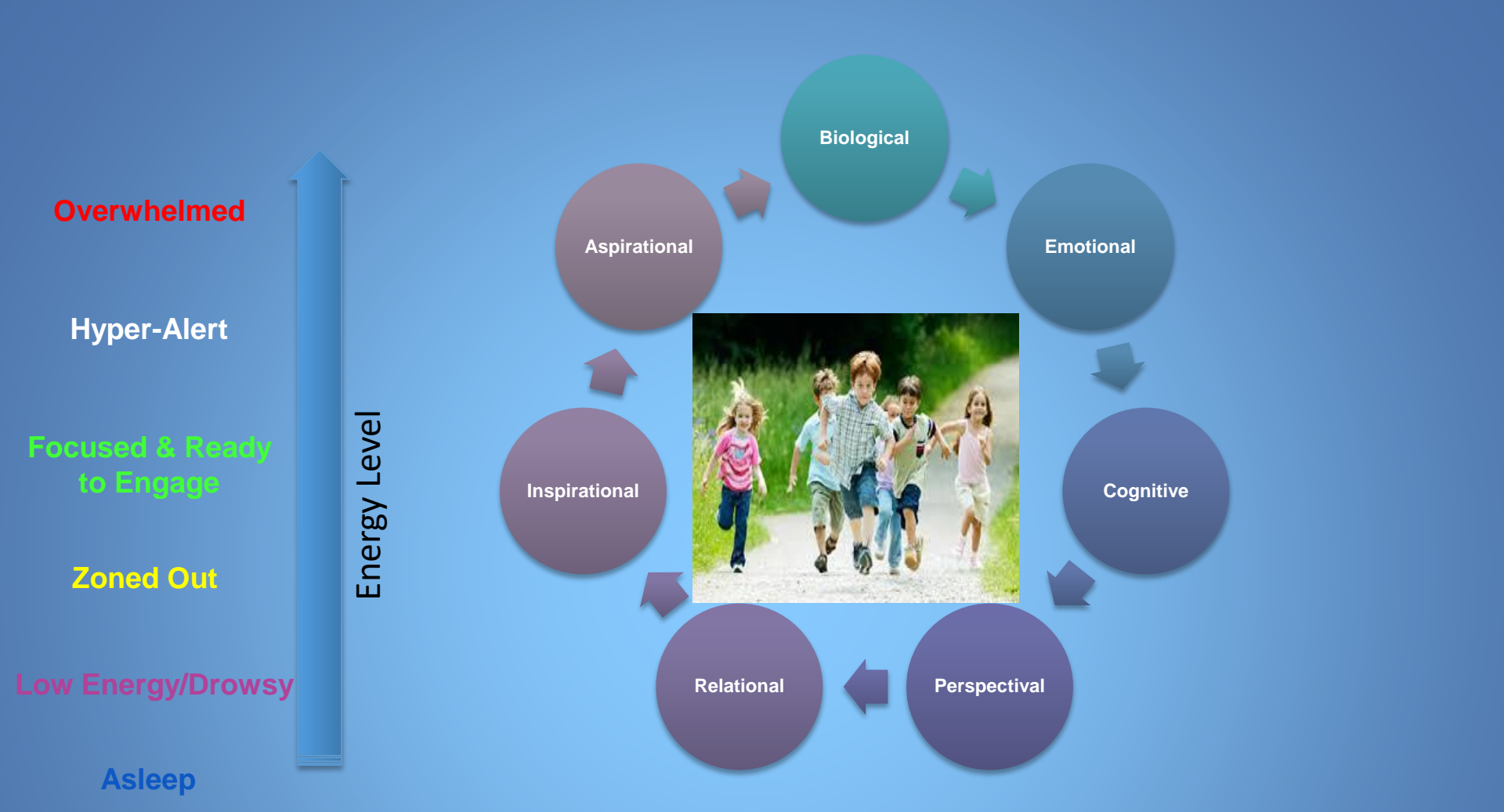
Every day, we help to create the conditions that determine where our kids spend their time



An Unfiltered Demonstration of How We Deal with Significant Stressors

Social Engagement...Fight...Flight...Freeze





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They say that a person only needs three things to be truly happy in this world: Someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for

Tom Bodett

It's at the core of healthy social-emotional development



We Start by Creating Environments That Educate the Heart

What Do We Know For Sure?

- ✧ transition to school can bring about feelings of happiness, sadness, and worry – every child's & every family's experience is unique
- ✧ a healthy transition can increase the likelihood of positive social, emotional, and academic outcomes in years to come
- ✧ Key Elements in supporting this transition include
 - Cultivating Relationships – among families, early childhood programs, schools, and communities
 - Equity-driven transition experiences help to shield vulnerable children
 - Coaching & mentoring parents as partners



Resilience, Relationships and Asset Building

The resilient child can succeed with the support of **one significant adult**, someone who cares enough to listen, to be patient, to maintain high expectations and to form an unconditional loving relationship.

Are you that person? If not you, then who?



What Do Our Kids Need In Order to Thrive?

9 predictors of resilience (from Dr. Michael Ungar)

A Thought About Resilience



Structure

Consequences

Parent-child connections

Many strong + relationships

Strong self-identity

Sense of control

Sense of belonging & purpose

Rights & responsibilities

Safety and support

*When we analyze our children's early years,
how well have we created norms that support
these needs?*



In Days Gone By, We Rewarded and Punished Kids into Compliance

Today, When We Build Social-Emotional Health & Self-Regulation, We See

Increased emotional awareness

Kids with permission to make changes in their environment

Changing adult understandings of the why of specific behaviours

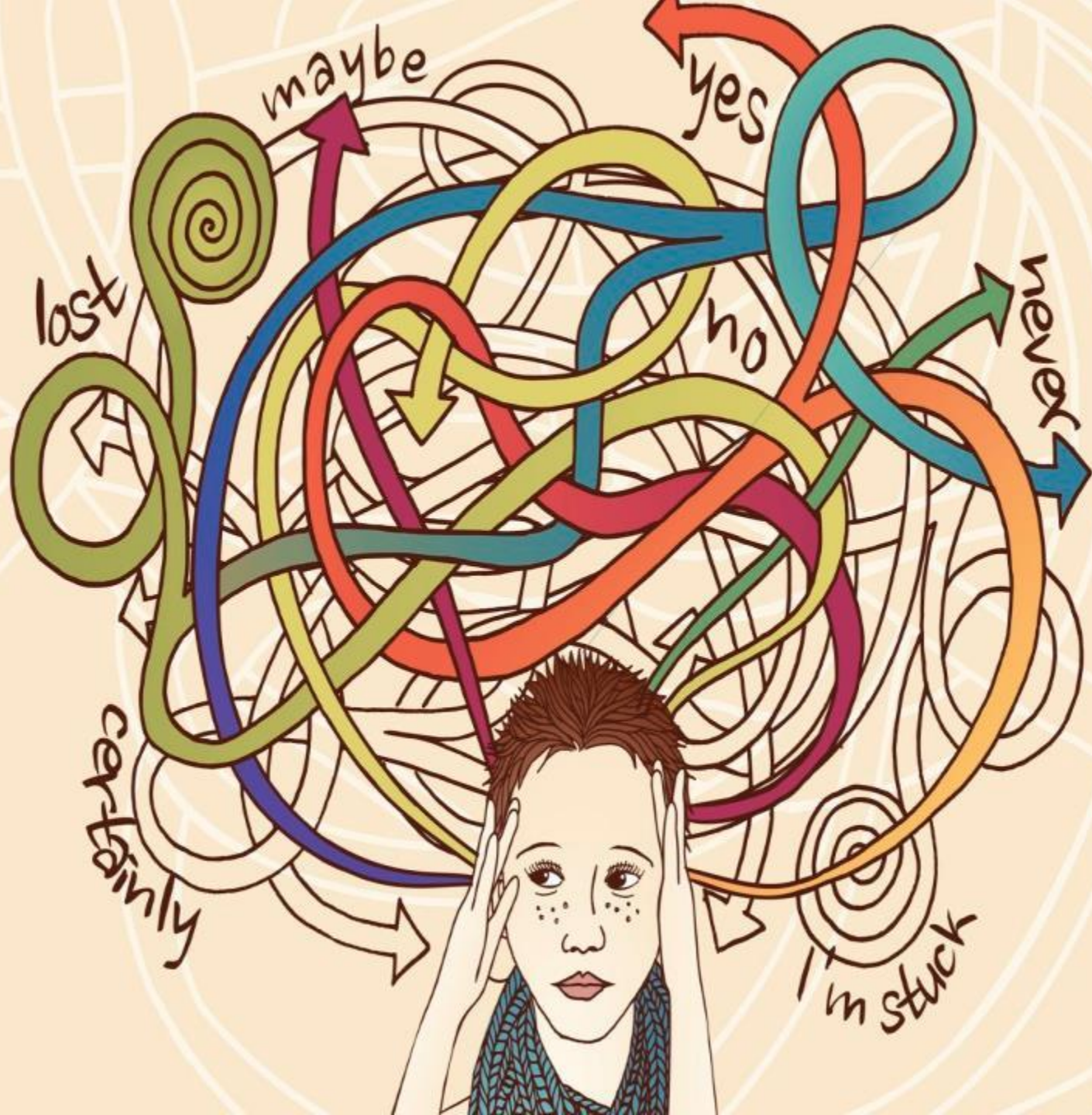
Kids with more “awareness” than we give them credit for & with an impressive ability to self-regulate

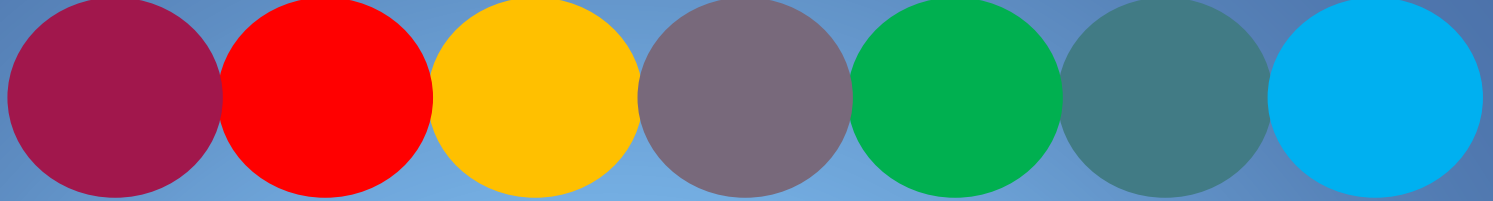
The growth of empathy among kids

More of this

Less of that







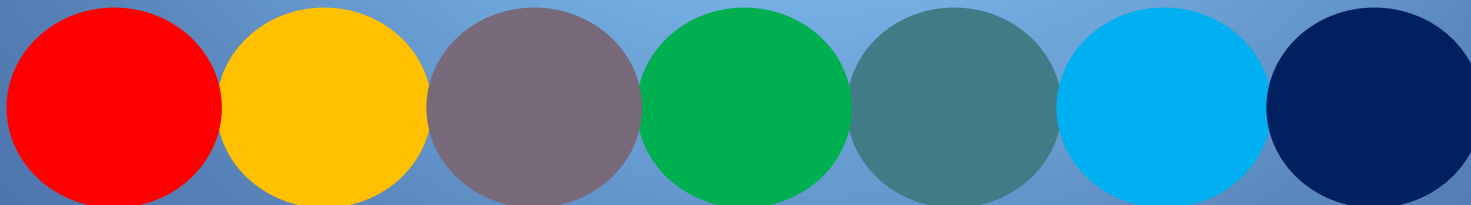
Every Day, You Want Your Children to Have Experiences at Home and at School to Nourish These Three Human Needs:



to belong
to develop
to contribute



Positive Social-Emotional Health is Central to This Work



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Back to the Basics: What's at the Foundations of Social-Emotional Health



We impact each of these foundational areas. How? And... How successfully, particularly for kids with greatest needs?

Which Stressors are Impacting our Children?

Cyber

Family Economic Pressures

Social Belonging

Global issues

Affluenza

Current or Intergenerational Trauma

Urgency to Succeed

Fear of Failure

Media frenzy

Our Unique Biology

Healthy/Unhealthy Routines: Nutrition & Sleep



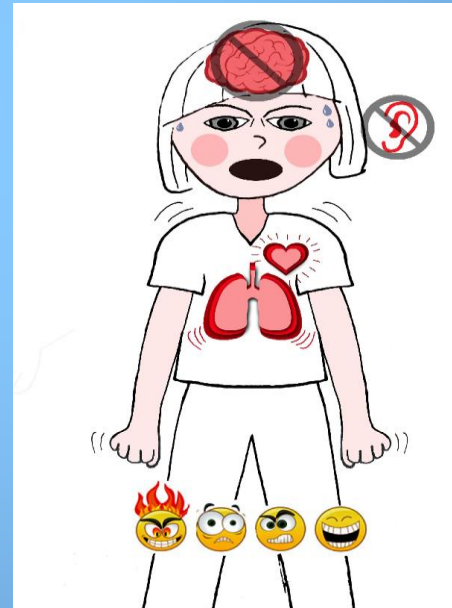
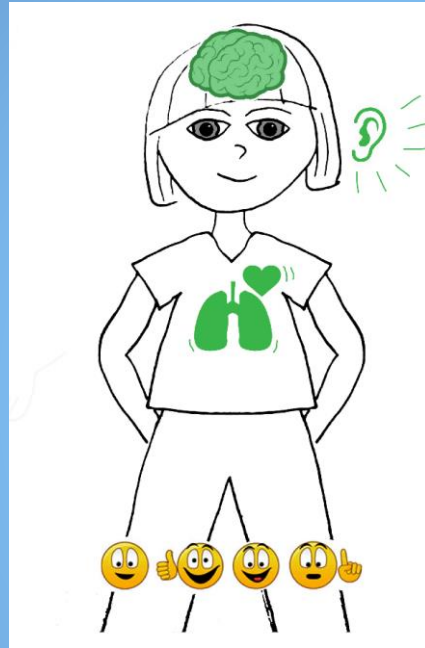
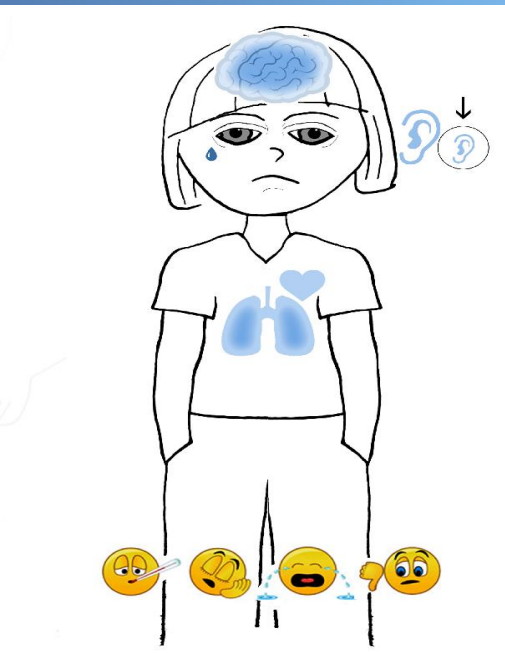
Stress...Anxiety...Trauma... Have Visible or Invisible Impacts on Our Kids

What are we doing to moderate the intensity?

What's Happening with YOUR "Self" in Self-Regulation

1. How am I reacting to this situation and why?
2. What is my adult perspective?
3. How is the environment influencing the situation?
4. What is the child's need?
5. How can we strengthen our relationship?

How do we support our kids in developing the language and awareness to participate in their own social-emotional problem solving and growth?



...Name it to tame it

Sometimes, We Have Two Kids Responding to the Same Inputs:
One is Overwhelmed, the Other is Thoughtful
What is Making the Difference?

What are the variables that make a difference?

It's NOT About:

*Good Kid/Bad Kid
Fixed Mindset
Just Try Harder
Why Are You Choosing to...*



As the adult in the situation, remember to be the thermostat not the temperature
(or the furnace)

Supporting Healthy Social-Emotional Environments

- Decrease power/authority relationships
- Give children choice



- Teach self-regulation
- Up-regulate/down-regulate as needed



- Recognize “dysregulating” variables
- Introduce classroom tools



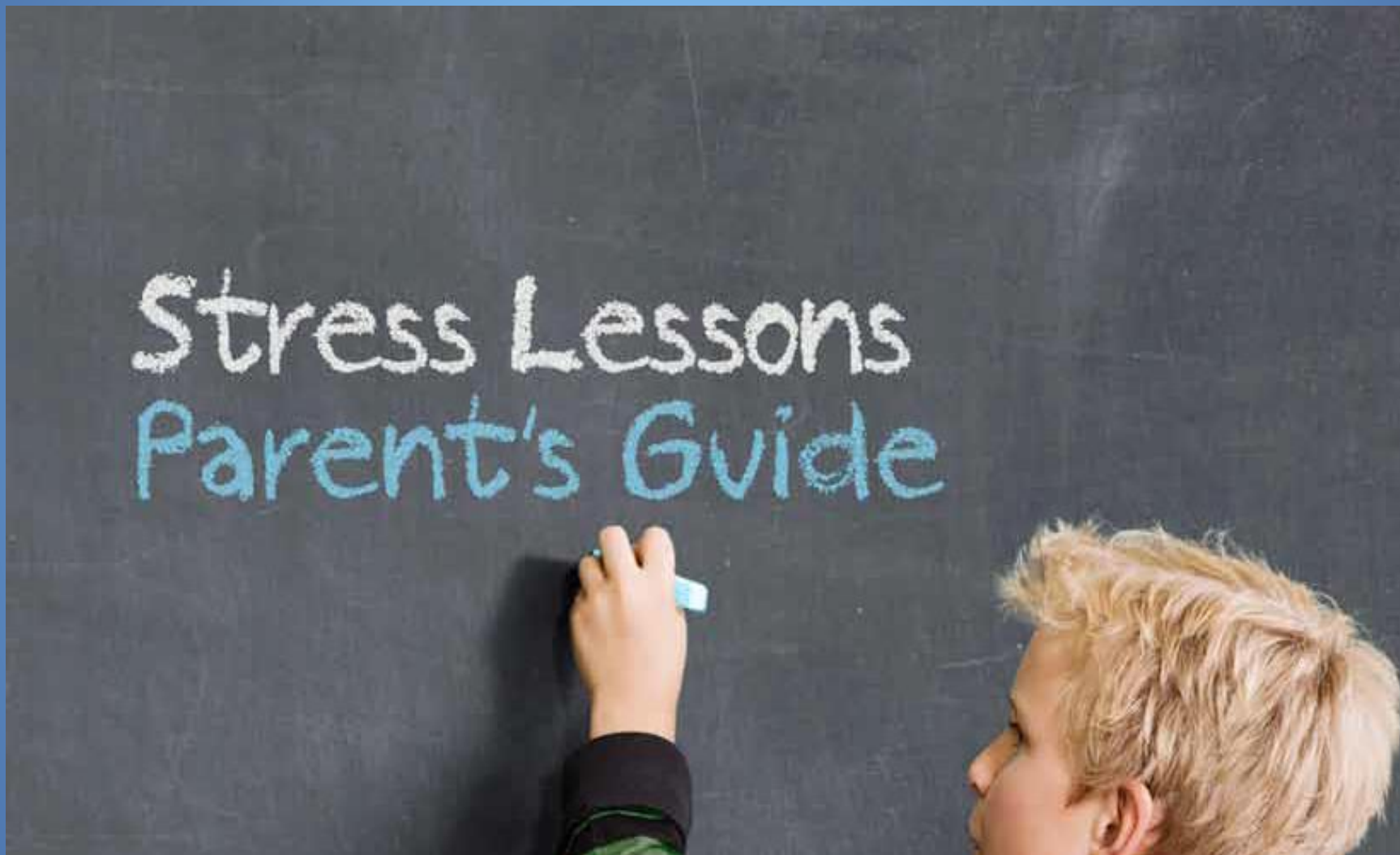
- Increase activity time
- Change classroom design



A Great Resource: Psychology Foundation of Canada

www.psychologyfoundation.org

Stress Lessons
Parent's Guide



Each of Your Kids Is Made Up of All of These Attributes:
Which Ones Grow and Which Ones are Stuck?

unique

Pattern-
seeking

physical

adaptive

social



sponges

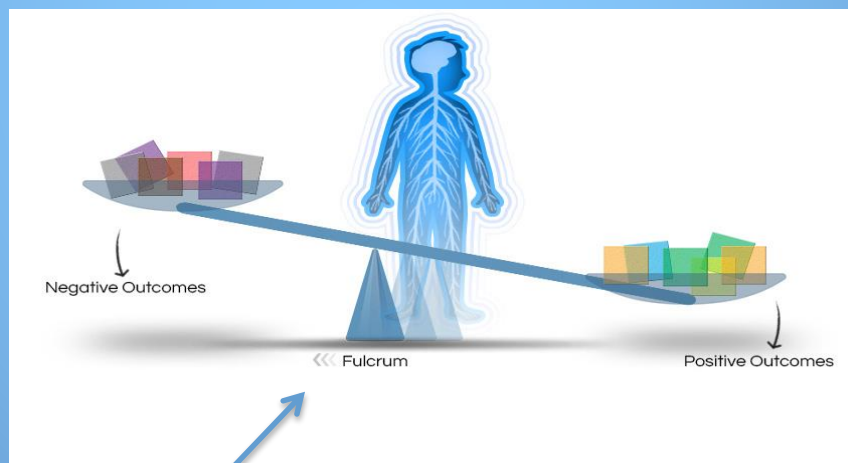
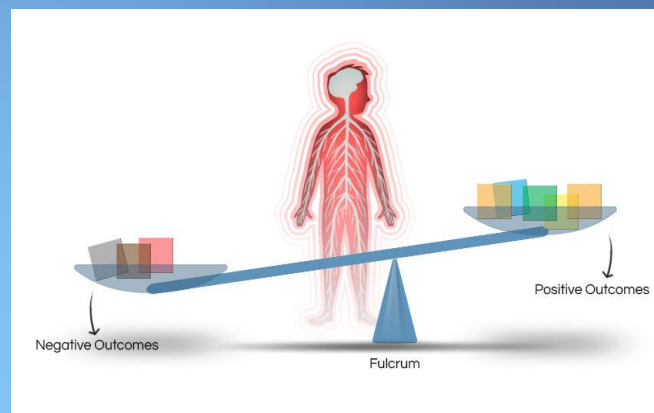
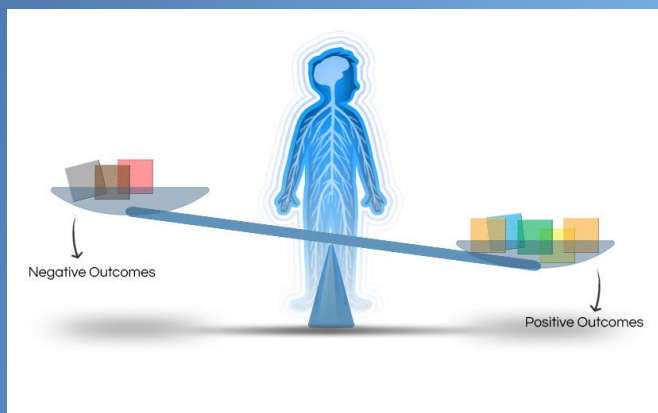
curious

self-
centric

hungry for
connection

spontaneous

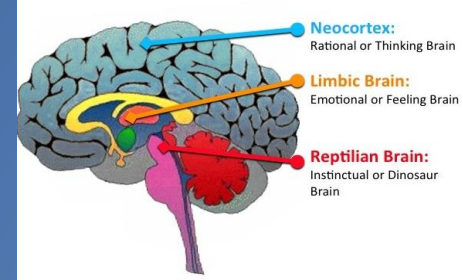
“The Best Time to Plant a Tree Was 20 Years Ago. The Next Best Time is Now” How do We Impact Kids’ Life Chances by Being the Fulcrum?



This fulcrum can move. We help that to happen.

Time to Share...Thoughts and Questions





Thank You

Together, Let's Use a
Social-Emotional Development Lens
So That All Kids Can Thrive



**Mike McKay, Director
Canadian Self-Regulation Initiative**

www.self-regulation.ca

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Introducing Dr. Mike Evans