

BE THE LEADER YOUR TEAM NEEDS IN COVID TIMES:
Understanding the emotional dynamics of the adults for whom you are responsible

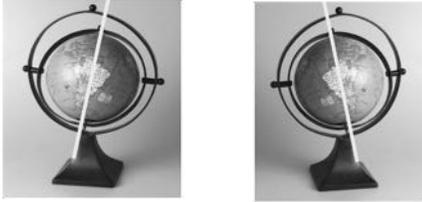
Eva de Gosztanyi, Psychologist
Martine Demers, Behaviour Consultant
Catherine Korah, Behaviour Consultant



Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management
www.cebm.ca edeagosztonvi@rsb.qc.ca

1

The world has shifted.



Covid-19 is stirring waves of emotions!



2

Votre gouvernement Québec
 MEES August 11, 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- Preschool and elementary school students will return to class according to the set educator/teacher-student ratios and the principle of stable groups (students will remain in the same group at all times).
- All subjects will be taught (including Arts Education and Physical Education & Health).
- At all levels, students who are part of the same stable group **will not be required** to follow **physical distancing** guidelines.
- The 1-metre physical distancing rule will have to be maintained between students from different stable groups when they move around common areas, including hallways.
- Although face coverings will not be mandatory for students from **preschool up to and including Elementary 4**, students are allowed to wear them in school and on school transportation vehicles.
- **Elementary 5 and 6 students** will be **required to wear a face covering** when they are in common areas, in the presence of students from other stable groups and when they use school transportation.
- For students in **Secondary I, II & III**, the schedules for courses and special projects will be reorganized based on the principle of closed groups. **Each student will stay in their group no matter what courses they are taking**

3

“This is not the vision of the school we hold in our hearts.”

Valerie Caya, VP, St. Johns Elementary School, RSB



4

Helping you to SEE in a world that has changed dramatically.



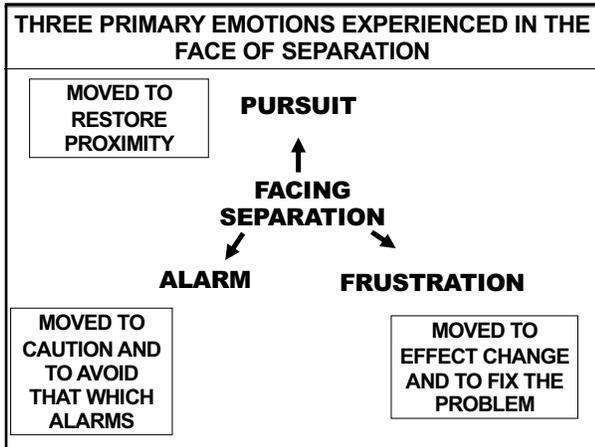
The way you SEE will help you to know what to do, even in uncertain times.

5

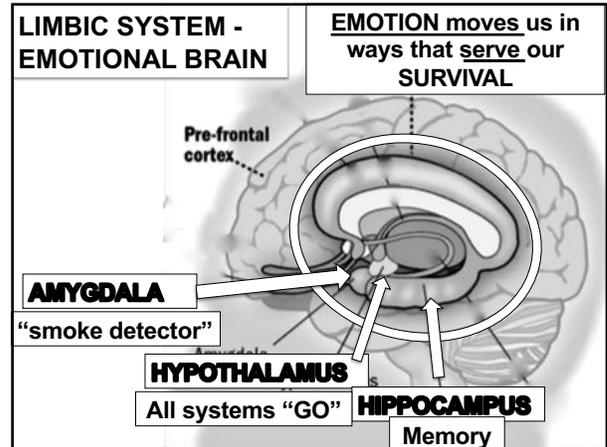
TOPICS

1. EMOTIONS AND BEHAVIOUR
2. ALLOWING FOR EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION
3. ADAPTATION
4. RESISTANCE
5. GETTING INTO THE LEAD
6. IDEAS FOR SCHOOLS IN COVID TIMES

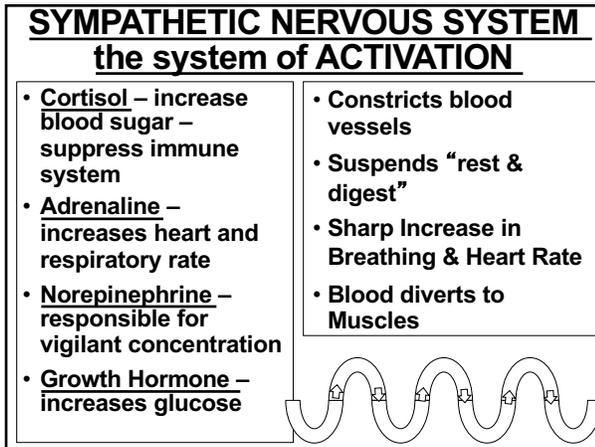
6



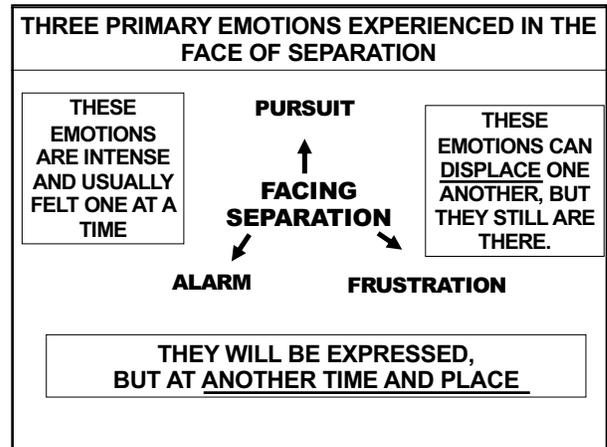
7



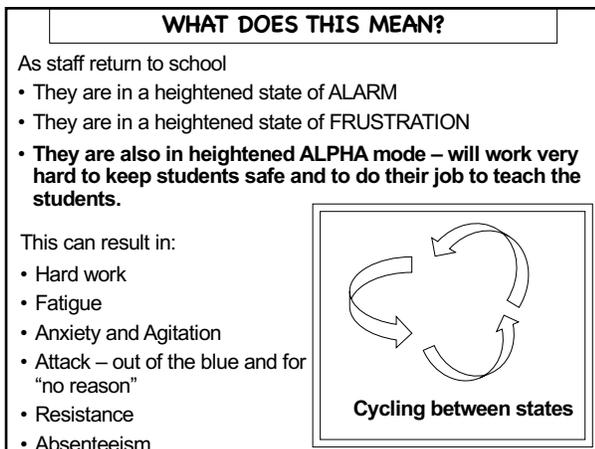
8



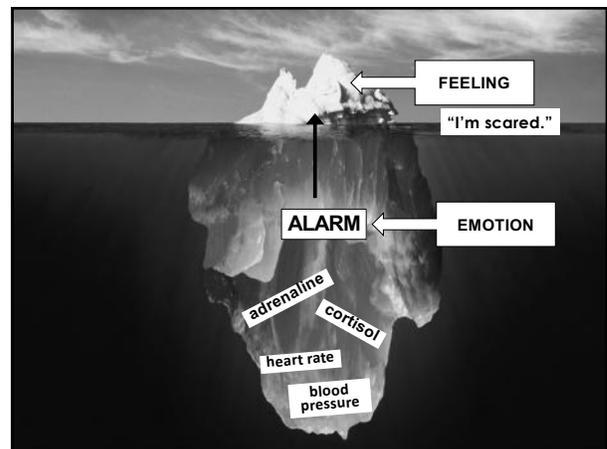
9



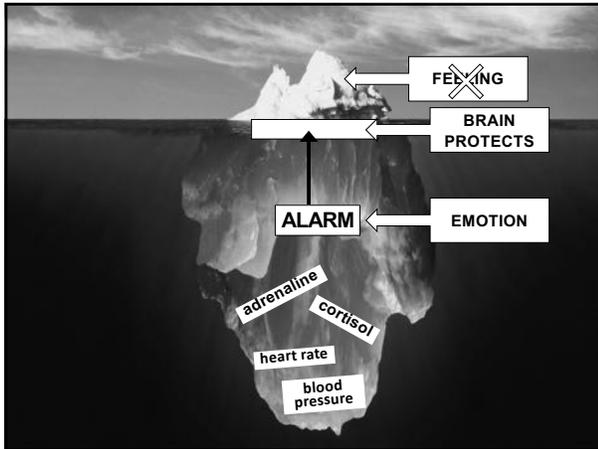
10



11



12



13

Why does our brain protect us?

It protects us from being overwhelmed by that which makes us feel

TOO VULNERABLE

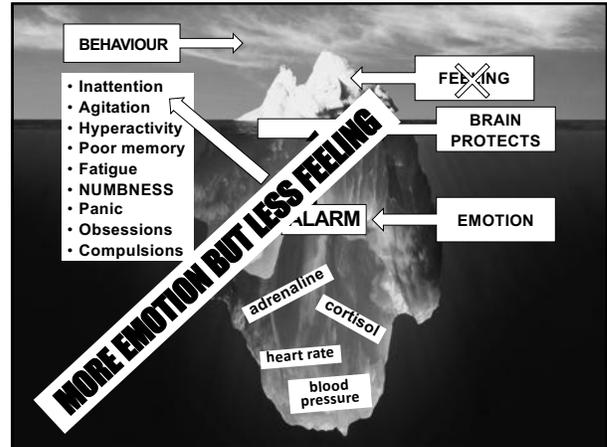
or

TOO WOUNDED.

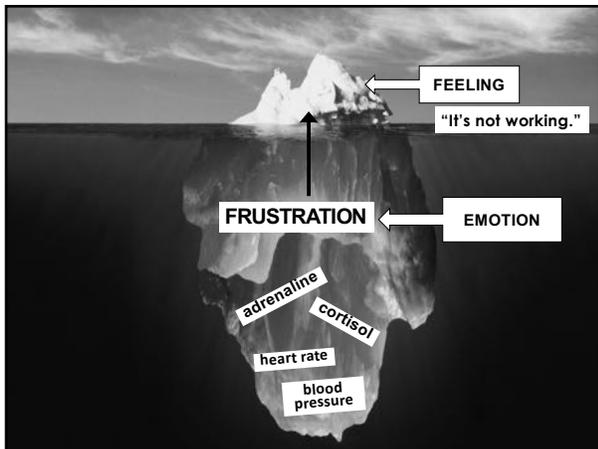
14



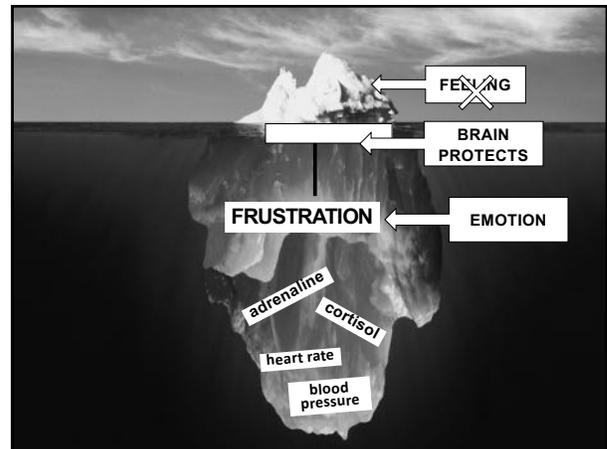
15



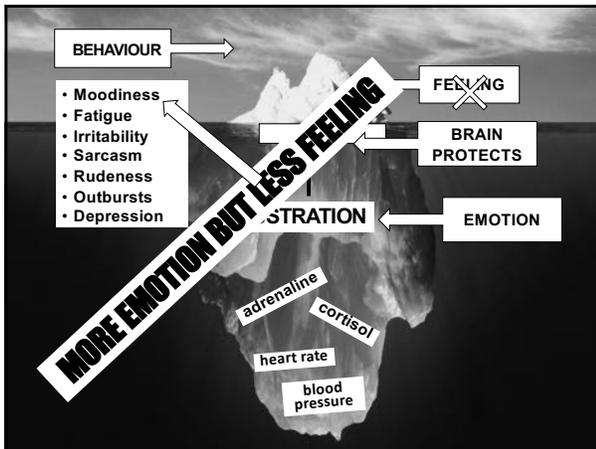
16



17



18

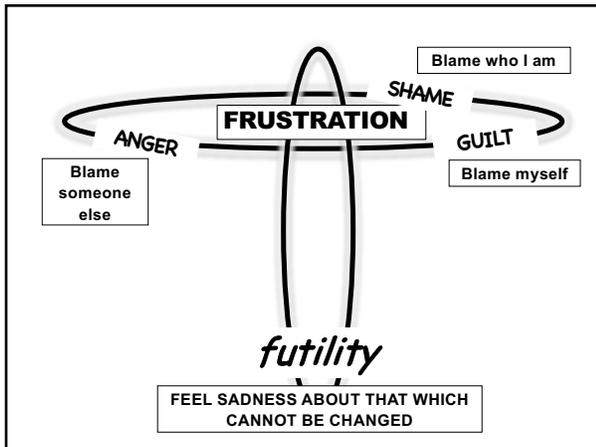


19

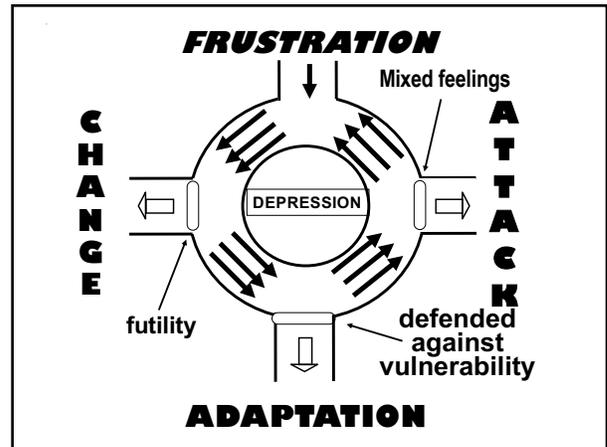
Typical signs of elevated frustration

- A desire to change things, even if they don't need changing
- A need to find BLAME
 - others = anger
 - self = guilt and/or shame
- An impulse to attack
- A need to vent forcibly
- Depression

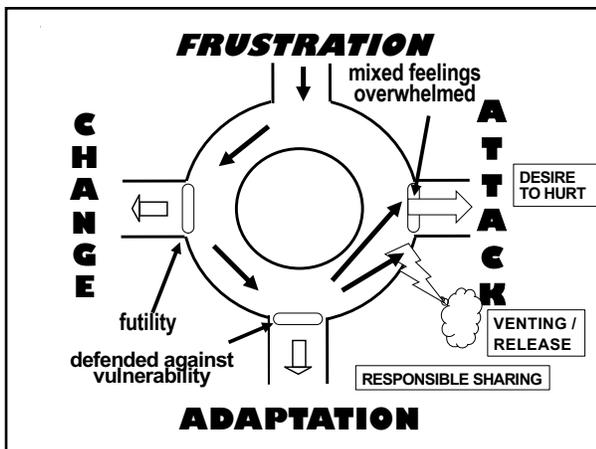
20



21



22



23

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

- Provide some opportunities for **venting**.
 - 2 minutes – share with partner or write down all that is upsetting you. Share what you wrote with a partner.
- Lead your staff in some "Release activities".

REMEMBER EMOTION has to move through – otherwise it gets "clogged up".

24

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

IDEAS FOR PLAYFUL RELEASE

- Frustrations into paper balls or paper planes to throw
- Bubble wrap stomping
- Dance party
- Drumming party
- Table top “expressive art” (banner paper on a table with crayons)
- Mural for expression
- Egg carton crushing
- Water balloon throwing
- Spray-bottle painting with staff on paper
- Pool noodle sword fighting
- Snowball fights

BE CREATIVE!

EMOTIONAL RELEASE WITH YOUR STAFF AT THE END OF THE DAY, THE END OF THE WEEK OR ON A PD DAY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

25

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Come alongside the FRUSTRATION :

- This is not how we used to do it.
- This is not what we want to be doing.
- This isn't working the way you want it to.

Come alongside the ALARM

- This is worrisome.
- This feels unsafe.

Help move towards sadness

26

ADAPTATION

The EMOTIONAL PROCESS whereby we are changed by that which we cannot change

TRANSFORMATION

The journey of adaptation is a journey of **SADNESS** and **TEARS**

27

The Healing Power of SADNESS

Gordon Neufeld, PhD

28

COPING IS NOT ADAPTATION

Coping is about MANAGING in the situation (Powering through)

Adaptation is an **EMOTIONAL JOURNEY**

If we allow ourselves to pass through sadness, it results in RESILIENCE

29

THE PROBLEM WITH “RIGHT” THINKING ALL THE TIME

- focusing just on being positive
- resisting the ‘let-down’
- gratefulness
- pursuing calmness & tranquility

30

Fruits of Adaptation
RESOURCEFULNESS
RESILIENCE

- The confidence that we will be able to handle things even when it is not what we thought would happen or the picture we had in our mind
- The growing confidence in one's ability to cope with challenging situations

31

Adaptation requires
a soft heart and
a safe place to cry

a soft heart = able to tolerate feelings of vulnerability



a safe place to cry = someone who will keep you safe while you are vulnerable

32

ALLOWING FOR SADNESS

- ❖ When the tears start: **SIT QUIETLY with compassion**
- ❖ Trust in the healing power of sadness and tears



- Don't try to reassure too quickly.
- Resist the Alpha instincts to make things better or to problem solve
- Give lots of space to **SADNESS** and **TEARS**.
- Wait to problem solve until well after the tears – IF needed

33

ALLOWING FOR SADNESS

- ❖ Create and respect opportunities to feel **your own** sadness



- Movies
- Music
- Stories

One step removed is often easier.

34

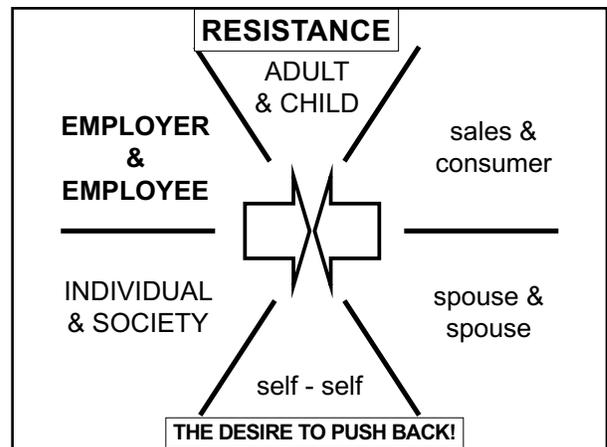
RESISTANCE

***the CounterWill* instinct**

... is a pushing back against the will of others

or a defensive reaction to perceived control and coercion

35



36

ATTACHMENT & COUNTERWILL

When Attachment is strong,
Counterwill diminishes

When attachment instincts are engaged, we are naturally moved to care for and please those to whom we are attached. We will be willing to do many things for the other.

37

COUNTERWILL IN PANDEMIC TIMES

- COUNTERWILL can be "kept at bay" by Alarm and Alpha
 - Adults will comply to keep safe and to care for
- BUT COUNTERWILL will manifest itself when safety is not an issue or in the presence of someone "safe"

When there are too many "have to's" there will be push back somewhere!

- adults may
 - not want to do certain kinds of work
 - outright refusal
 - "work to rule"
 - not follow directions as expected
 - undermine some initiatives
 - seem unmotivated

38

Handling Resistance

Our **ROLE** as the leader

HR **DG**
Principal
Professional
Consultant
Daycare Technician
Director

Adjusting our VIEW

- Take things **LESS PERSONALLY**
- Recognize **INSTINCT** is involved

Adjusting our STANCE

- Normalize by conveying that some pushback is part of this situation

Making ROOM for

- the staff to make decisions about what best meets the needs of their class group

GET INTO THE LEAD

39

GET INTO THE LEAD

CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

... TAKE THE LEADER ROLE

step into the leadership role and take charge of the situation; be the one who "knows", be willing to make the hard decisions

... ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY

to **make things work**, to make sacrifices for, but also know that you will feel **guilty**

... CARE FOR AND TO CARE ABOUT

to **be concerned about**, to help, to bear the burdens of, to **meet the needs of**, to provide what is needed

40

seeking

DEPENDENT INSTINCTS

providing

ALPHA INSTINCTS

to get one's bearings

to seek assistance

to look up to

to belong

to follow

to look for guidance

to orient and inform

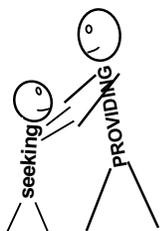
to protect & defend

to guide and direct

to look out for

to possess

to lead



41

seeking

DEPENDENT INSTINCTS

providing

ALPHA INSTINCTS

to get one's bearings

to seek assistance

to look up to

to belong

to follow

to look for guidance

to orient and inform

to protect & defend

to guide and direct

to look out for

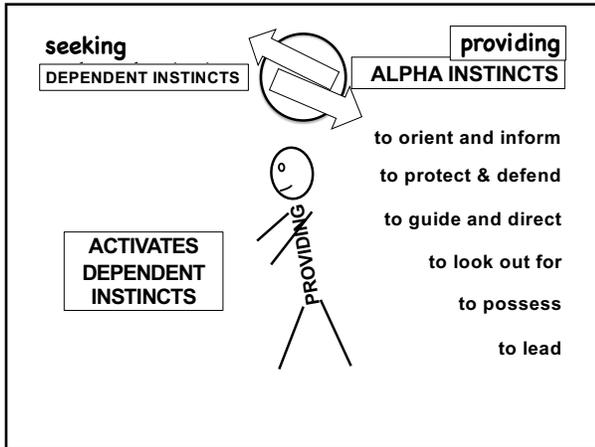
to possess

to lead

ACTIVATES ALPHA INSTINCTS



42



43

GET INTO THE LEAD

CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

PROVIDE REASSURANCE

- Communicate confidence in the ability to get through these times.
 - We'll figure it out.
 - It will be OK

When you DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO

- Act **CONFIDENT**
- Do not convey your own insecurities and frustration with "Ministry", "the Board" etc. too often

44

GET INTO THE LEAD

CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

COMMUNICATE OFTEN

- Regular but short staff meetings
- Regular but short weekly information memos via email
 - All staff are informed at the same time
 - Provide important information in one send-out vs several emails in a short period of time
 - Create a format so information is easy to find
 - Because it is written makes it easier to refer back to
 - Will likely prevent numerous requests for the same information

We all do better when we feel we are informed, especially in a time of great change

45

GET INTO THE LEAD

CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

HAVE A VISIBLE PRESENCE

- School **walk about** - be seen **often** throughout the school
- Check in with the **ADULTS**
 - Notice what might be needed and provide it if you can e.g. cart for materials, help with classroom set-up

- The adults feel supported
- Allows you to notice what is happening – keep a finger on the "pulse"
- Can alert you to a staff who is struggling

46

GET INTO THE LEAD

CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

ACKNOWLEDGING STAFF CONCERNS

- Note the concern (notebook)
- **BUT do not feel** you need to respond or react immediately
- Thank the person for their input
- If you are able to follow-up – jot quick note to let the person know what action you have taken – use **coloured** Sticky Notes – and leave in a "public" place. e.g. "Phone call made – everything is OK" OR "I have info – come see me."



Staff can "see" all that you do to support them

47

GET INTO THE LEAD

CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

REASSURE ABOUT ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

- **Priorities for Fall 2020:**
 1. Reconnecting with students
 2. Keeping everyone healthy
 3. Identifying situations of concerns with students
 4. Keeping students academically engaged
 5. Teaching the curriculum

Allow for and encourage flexibility on the part of teachers

- frequent brain breaks with groups
- taking children outside
- play time

To ensure physical and emotional well-being

48

GET INTO THE LEAD

CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

PROVIDE EXTRA SUPPORT FOR SOME STAFF

NEW STAFF

- Mentorship

SUBSTITUTE STAFF

- Introductions to students

SPECIALISTS

- Provide time for “overlap” to share important information

LUNCH MONITORS

- Extra support

DAYCARE STAFF

- Extra support

49

CASCADING ALPHA
Caring for the adults who care for the children

50

WHAT ABOUT ME?

- Identify your own **support system**, your “village”
 - at the board
 - other administrators
 - at home
- Give yourself permission to **vent**
- Find your own **tears**
- Nurture your **passions** – have some “play time”

51

IDEAS FOR SCHOOLS IN COVID TIMES

LEAD - PLAY - LEARN TOGETHER

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These principles are meant to help the adults:

- maintain their ability to keep children and themselves safe
- convey to the children that they are there to take care of them
- create the conditions for learning

52

LEAD - PLAY - LEARN TOGETHER

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Set up the environment to guide and maximize acceptable behaviour
2. Use play and playful activities to guide and change behaviour
3. Establish and practice routines
4. Put academics into perspective
5. Get into the LEAD
6. Have a plan for challenging behaviours
7. Have a plan for difficult situations

53

I. SET UP THE ENVIRONMENT TO GUIDE & MAXIMIZE ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

A CHECKLIST FOR SETTING UP A CLASSROOM DURING A PANDEMIC

SETTING UP YOUR CLASSROOM DURING A PANDEMIC

NOTE! These suggestions are made taking into consideration the parameters outlined by the Ministry of Education and Child Health officials

Before the beginning of the school year

1. Make contact with your new group of students:
 - a. Telephone contact with each student
 - b. “Welcome card” sent to each parent’s email address
 - c. Remind parents that each student needs to come to school with a mask (if as required for their age group)
2. Invite challenging or highly anxious students to come and visit you at school, during a P.E. Day. These 2-3 visits help you to get to know each other, reduce anxiety and for the student to know where their classroom will be. This gives a long way to seeing into the new school year!

Preparing the classroom

1. Determine the physical layout of the room and desk/table configuration
 - a. Set-up your “Teacher Area” in a corner of the room - delineate the space with tape on the ground
 - b. Set-up a hand sanitization station at the entrance of your classroom - have a sign that will prompt students to use it each time they enter and leave your room
 - c. Create a desk/table configuration that will have students sitting side-by-side instead of face-to-face
 - d. Set-up a table that will serve as a “handing out/picking up” of materials. Exclude lockers that are blocked for each purpose
 - e. Ensure that students have a space to keep their personal belongings (in a soft bag, lunch box, etc.) in their physical proximity to help reduce traffic in hallways
2. Color-code and/or label materials that can be accessed by students (think *Disinfectant* Fluorescent) Keep things clear, simple and organized.
 - a. All group materials, books to be organized even though students are expected to have their own materials
 - b. Pringle bins, small rolling bookshelves and desk-top cubbies (for those who need them)
 - c. Alternative work station options - clipboard, standing station option, etc. - where possible
 - d. Alternative seating options - stools (Gorham, Ikea), etc. & surf. from Ikea
 - e. Quiet time activities
 - f. Building & Drawing community activity
3. Cover up any area that will not be accessible to students.
 - a. Use room dividers using light, solid colors (plastic, tablecloths or fabric) as these will provide the most protection than “light colors and busy patterns”
4. Remove as much clutter as possible - think of it as removing the edge of your room from the middle. Everyone will benefit from more floor and air space!
5. Have a “Welcome” sign as your classroom door with each child’s name on it. We recommend having your picture, in the middle, as a great way to welcome them into this new year with you!

54

I.SET UP THE ENVIRONMENT TO GUIDE AND MAXIMIZE ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Suggestions for Teachers

Help students recognize YOU:

- Send a welcome video or photo via email explaining that you will be wearing a mask at different times of the day
 - Have them 'see' you 'with' and 'without' a mask
 - Show that you will also have a photo of yourself at the door of your classroom (inside and outside)



55

I.SET UP THE ENVIRONMENT TO GUIDE AND MAXIMIZE ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Suggestions for Teachers

MASKS:

- Find ways for each student to keep track of his/her mask
- Identify clear times when mask must be worn
- Develop routines around mask wearing
- Keeping track of masks
 - String attached to mask so it can be worn around the neck
- Extra masks for lost or damaged masks



56

I.SET UP THE ENVIRONMENT TO GUIDE AND MAXIMIZE ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Suggestions for Teachers

MAKING MASKS MORE ENGAGING:

- Make it fun!
 - ❖ Super hero



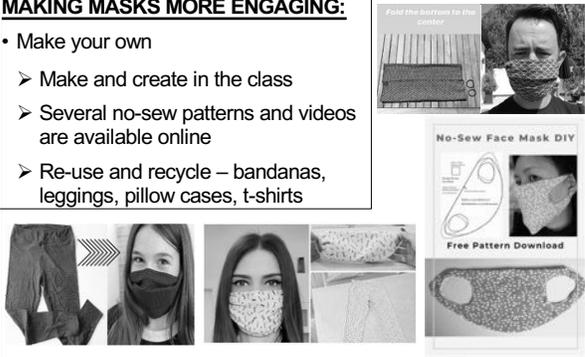
57

I.SET UP THE ENVIRONMENT TO GUIDE AND MAXIMIZE ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Suggestions for Teachers

MAKING MASKS MORE ENGAGING:

- Make your own
 - Make and create in the class
 - Several no-sew patterns and videos are available online
 - Re-use and recycle – bandanas, leggings, pillow cases, t-shirts



58

I.SET UP THE ENVIRONMENT TO GUIDE AND MAXIMIZE ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Suggestions for Administrators

Help students recognize the staff who will take care of them:

1. Have a **photo wall**, of your whole school team, near the front entrance of the school
 - Have them 'see' each adult 'with' and 'without' a mask
2. Set-up photos of the adults at the **entrance of each room**.

59

I.SET UP THE ENVIRONMENT TO GUIDE AND MAXIMIZE ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Issues for Administrators

MASKS:

- Facilitate the making of masks by providing materials needed
- Extra masks for lost or damaged masks
- Make mask wearing fun – be creative with your own masks
- Managing refusal to wear masks
 - Work at managing the CounterWill instinct
 - Implement Board guidelines



60

4. PUT ACADEMICS INTO PERSPECTIVE

- Don't be too distressed about what students have "missed".
- While they may have missed out on academic skills, brain development and learning continued to happen even when at home.
- Skills will need to be taught and practiced, but comprehension and problem-solving ability has likely improved because of brain maturation.
- Use September to assess where each student is at using observation and work samples.
- A student Portfolio will be very useful this year to track progress.
- Assessment this year will likely be about improvement and progress and not about "test performance".
- Consider using a "Learning Continuum":
 - ❖ This makes it easier to know where each student is at, what they have mastered and what they need without a formal assessment.

61

5. GET INTO THE LEAD

When the world feels unsafe what do our children need?

"The most important message our kids need to hear right now is not about what co-vid19 is but about WHO THEIR ADULTS ARE – the people who will care for them and carry them through this storm." Dr. Deborah MacNamara

INFORMATION DOESN'T MAKE A CHILD FEEL SECURE – RELATIONSHIPS DO



62

5. GET INTO THE LEAD

PROVIDE LOTS OF OUTDOOR PLAY and EXERCISE

Obstacle courses Hula-hoops Tag games





Outdoor target throwing and kicking



63

What Play Offers Emotion



- a work-free space for growth and development to take place
- protection for feelings
- expression of emotion without repercussion

64

6. HAVE A PLAN FOR CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

USE YOUR SCHOOL TEAM TO CHANGE THE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR STUDENTS WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS RATHER THAN JUST TRYING TO CONTROL THE STUDENT

ANTICIPATE & PREVENT

- **Recess / Breaks**
 - ✓ With extra supervision
- **Hallways**
 - ✓ Away from other students
- **Bathrooms**
 - ✓ Under supervision
- **Lunch time**
 - ✓ In a quieter space
- **Substitute teacher**
 - ✓ Make introductions or have an alternate "person" the child can be with



BE a TRAFFIC DIRECTOR (who directs away from trouble) rather than the POLICE (who gives a consequence for troubling behaviour)

65

6. HAVE A PLAN FOR CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

USE TIME-AWAY instead of TIME-OUT

if a child needs to be away from the other children OR if staff are starting to "reach their limit" with a child

1. Send the child to a safe place
 - The "quiet corner" within the room
 - Behaviour Technician
 - the Office
 - **Nurturing Support Centre**
2. Send the child **TO SOMEONE** to deliver something
 - a book
 - an envelope
 - "You've got mail"

QUIET CORNER



66

6. HAVE A PLAN FOR CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

A DOCUMENT FOR ANALYSING PRECURSORS AND PLANNING PREVENTATIVE INTERVENTIONS FOR AN EXPLOSIVE AND CHALLENGING STUDENT

PLANNING WITH THE EXPLOSIVE and CHALLENGING STUDENT IN MIND			
Name of student:		Teacher:	
Page:	Grade:	Teacher:	Date:
ANALYSIS			
1. WHEN			
2. WHERE			
3. WITH WHOM			
4. PRECURSORS (WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE?)			
5. WARNING SIGNS			
6. TRIGGERS (WHAT SETS THE CONFLICT?)			
INTERVENTION			
1. IDENTIFY SAFE ATTACHMENT POINTS FOR INTERVENTION			
2. PLAN "IF" FOR A SPECIFIC DAY			

67

7. HAVE A PLAN FOR DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

When a student or adult has **symptoms**:

- Follow the school emergency protocol for isolating the student or adult.
- Process the situation with the staff and students



Don't be afraid to talk about what is happening –

- Remember, the students will talk with each other – better that they process their reactions and their emotions with an adult.
- Reflect back the emotions they are most likely to be feeling:
 - ALARM (fear) "It's scary when someone gets sick."
 - FRUSTRATION "It's really frustrating that Covid won't go away!"
- When EMOTIONS are shared, they move.
- When emotions move, **emotional well-being** improves

68

7. HAVE A PLAN FOR DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

If a student or adult **dies**:

- Follow your School Board protocol for a "critical incident"***
 - **** review your intervention plan at the Board level**
- Process the situation with the staff and students

Don't be afraid to talk about what is happening –

- Remember, the students will talk with each other – better that they process their reactions and their emotions with an adult.
- It is appropriate to talk about death and the need to grieve
- Normalize tears and sadness**
- Provide extra time and support for individual students affected by this situation
- Encourage students to create tokens with messages of support for those experiencing the loss.**

When EMOTIONS are shared, they move. When emotions move, **emotional well-being** improves.

69

BE THE LEADER YOUR TEAM NEEDS IN COVID TIMES

You are not alone.



70

LEAD - PLAY - LEARN TOGETHER: SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND TEACHERS RETURNING TO SCHOOL IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

ELEMENTARY AND EARLY SECONDARY

AUGUST 25 9-11 AM
AUGUST 26 1-3 PM
AUGUST 27 9-11 AM

www.cebm.ca/news-events

UNDERSTANDING THE EMOTIONAL WORLD OF OUR CHILDREN IN COVID TIMES: HOW IT AFFECTS THEIR BEHAVIOUR AND WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP THEM

ALL

AUGUST 25 1-3 pm
AUGUST 26 9-11 am
AUGUST 27 1-3 pm

71

RESOURCE GUIDE

LEAD - PLAY - LEARN TOGETHER: SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND TEACHERS RETURNING TO SCHOOL IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

Eva de Gosztanyi, Psychologist
Martine Demers, Behaviour Consultant
Catherine Korah, Behaviour Consultant



Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management

www.cebm.ca edegosztanyi@rab.on.ca

RESOURCE GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING THE EMOTIONAL WORLD OF OUR CHILDREN IN COVID TIMES: HOW IT AFFECTS THEIR BEHAVIOUR AND WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP THEM

Eva de Gosztanyi, Psychologist
Martine Demers, Behaviour Consultant
Catherine Korah, Behaviour Consultant



Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management

www.cebm.ca edegosztanyi@rab.on.ca

72