


HELPING THE STUDENT WHO IS DISRUPTIVE AND ALARMED



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"Building the Capacity of the English School Boards of Quebec"

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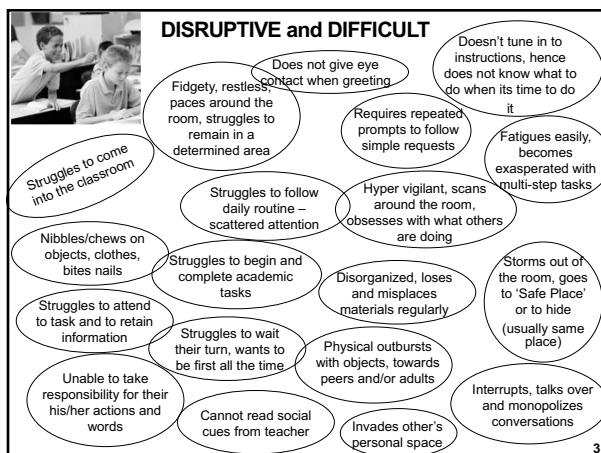
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NEUFELD DEVELOPMENTAL PARADIGM

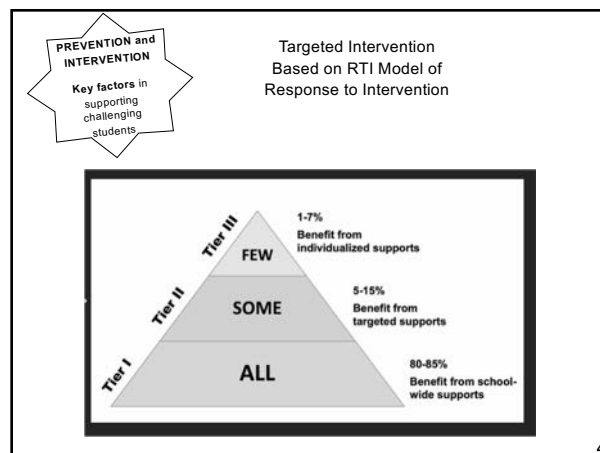
Maturation Vulnerability Attachment Emotions

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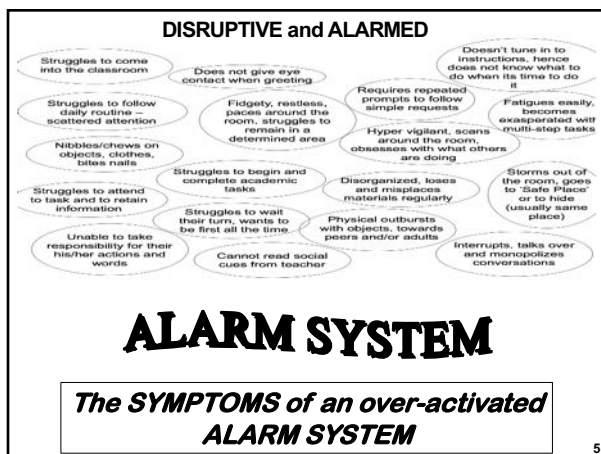
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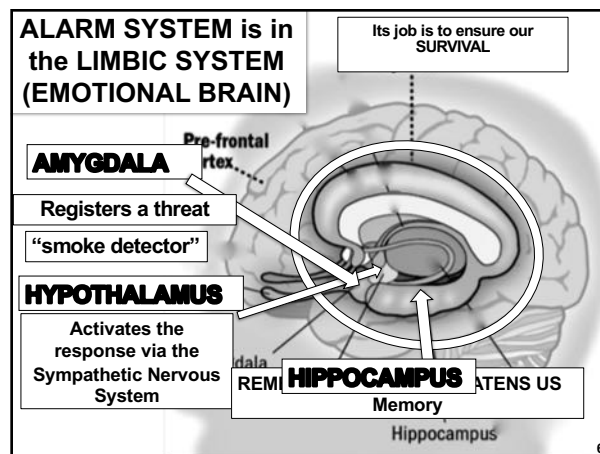
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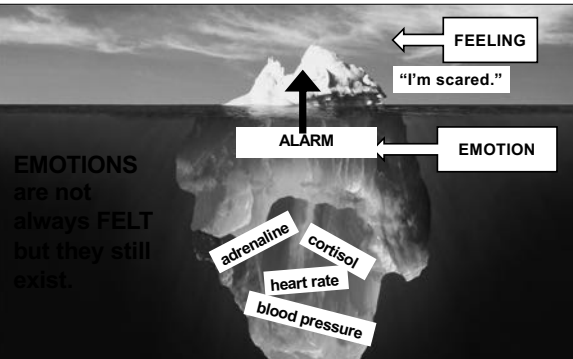
SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM **the system of ACTIVATION**

- **Cortisol** – increase blood sugar – suppress immune system
- **Adrenaline** – increases heart and respiratory rate
- **Norepinephrine** – responsible for vigilant concentration
- **Growth Hormone** – increases glucose
- Constricts blood vessels
- Sharp Increase in Breathing & Heart Rate
- Blood diverts to Muscles
- Suspends “rest & digest”



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Emotion becomes **FEELING** when it is **FELT** or becomes conscious



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THE ALARM SYSTEM

When **SURVIVAL** is at stake,

- the **AROUSAL** and **ATTENTION** systems are highly involved
 - **ALARM** is given **HIGH PRIORITY**
 - Emotions are activated
 - We now **MUST** pay attention to
 - what is threatening us and
 - what could save us

We are usually **MOVED** to:
CAUTION or **FLIGHT**

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What is it that **ALARMS** us the **MOST**?

facing separation

EXPERIENCING OR FACING
THE LACK OF OR THE LOSS OF
CLOSENESS
WITH THOSE TO WHOM WE ARE
ATTACHED

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EXPERIENCES OF SEPARATION

- parents not living together and not getting along
- parent having a new partner or multiple partners
- being removed from home – foster care
- frequent hospitalizations
- family member very sick
- adoption
- arrival of a sibling
- death in the family
- high sensitivity that is not understood
- never feeling “good enough” - focus on fixing – going from specialist to specialist
- adverse family conditions (ACES study – trauma)

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What happens when there is too much separation?

Our brains protect us
from seeing that which would make us
feel
TOO VULNERABLE
or
TOO WOUNDED.

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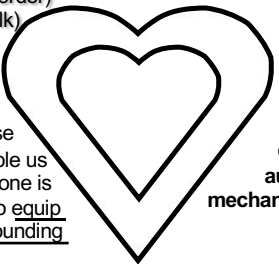
Brain's Mechanisms of Defense

the brain is designed to protect its host from a vulnerability too much to bear (this is not disorder) (Bessel van der Kolk)

defenses work best when employed situationally and temporarily – there needs to be an “end of the day”

the purpose of these defenses is to enable us to do our work (no one is defenseless) and to equip us to function in wounding environments

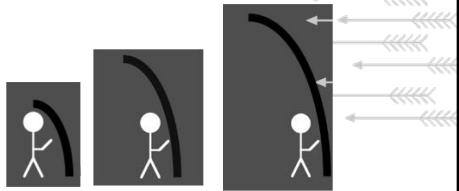
defenses are automatic and mechanistic and are not willfully controlled



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Lines of Defense against Vulnerability



MECHANISM of defense	numbing vulnerable feelings	tuning out perceptions that lead to vulnerable feelings	reversing instincts that set the stage for vulnerable thoughts & feelings
resulting DEFICIT	EMOTIONAL deficits	ATTENTIONAL deficits	MOTIVATIONAL deficits

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Defending against vulnerable feelings

EMOTIONAL DEFENSE – *numbing out of vulnerable feelings*

Not aware of emotions that should move us

- Alarm (“I’m scared”) which should move to **caution**
- Frustration (“This isn’t working”) which should move to effect **change**
- Sadness (feelings of futility) which should move to **adaptation**

EMOTIONS ARE STILL THERE, BUT NOT “FELT”

‘highly agitated’ as if highly alarmed
but *‘without apprehension’ as if not at all alarmed*
Chemistry of alarm is present: cortisol and adrenaline

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Defending against vulnerable feelings

PERCEPTUAL DEFENSE – *attention is directed away from that which would give rise to vulnerable feelings = defensive blindness*

- inability** to **see trouble coming** or to see what’s wrong
- difficulty **focusing or concentrating when at risk for vulnerable feelings**
- can lead to **significant attentional deficits**
- blindness to rejection** including the invitation to exist in another’s presence
- blindness** to one’s **shortcomings, failures or mistakes**
- lack of **memories** or thoughts that could evoke vulnerable feelings

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Impact of defendedness on teachability

- a resistance to attending to that which distresses or seems difficult
 - undermines interest and curiosity
 - a reticence about seeking assistance
- a reluctance to take risks in learning
 - interferes with the development of a sense of agency
- filters out the feelings of futility
 - interferes with the ability to learn from mistakes, from trial and error, and from correction.
 - interferes with the development of the resilience required to handle failure.

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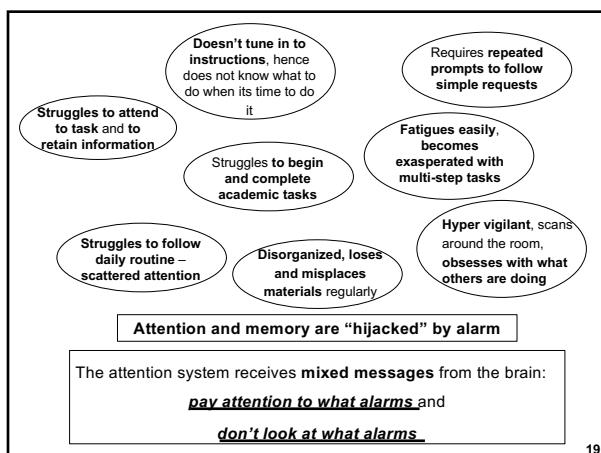
Impact of defendedness on teachability

- affects the development of integrative functioning, especially causing prefrontal cortex developmental delay
 - interferes with problem solving
 - interferes with self-control
 - interferes self-regulation
 - interferes with self-reflection

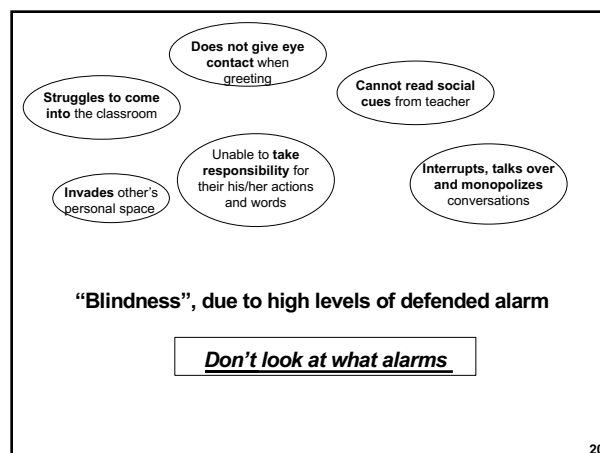
Erin E. Edmiston et al., Yale Univ. 2011 – Prefrontal Cortex Development affected by childhood abuse – Impulsivity in males and emotional regulation in females

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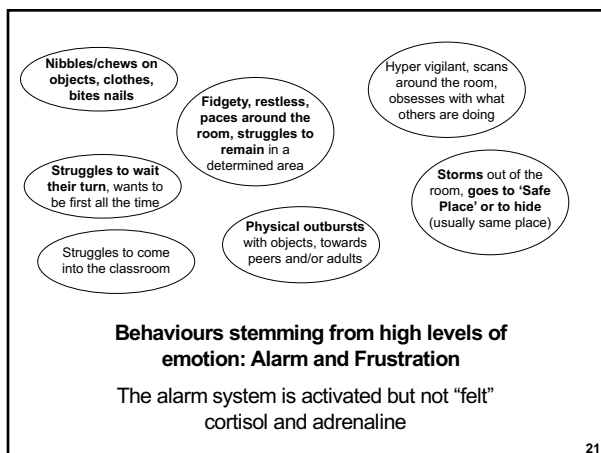
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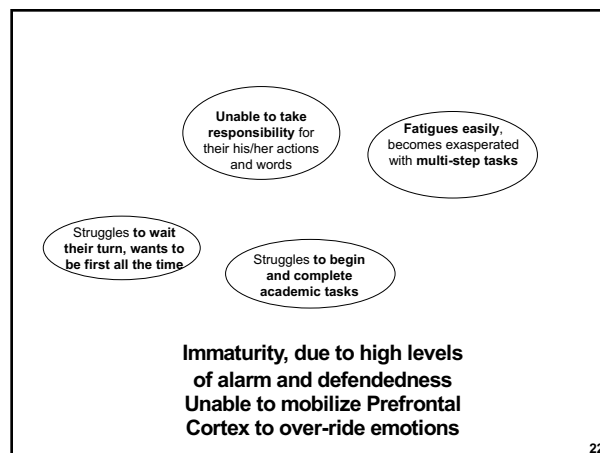
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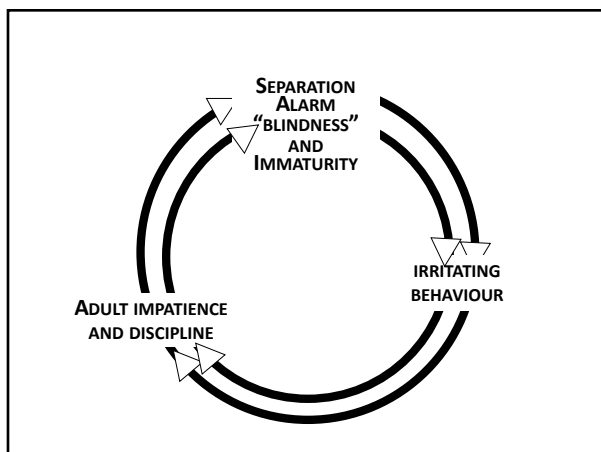
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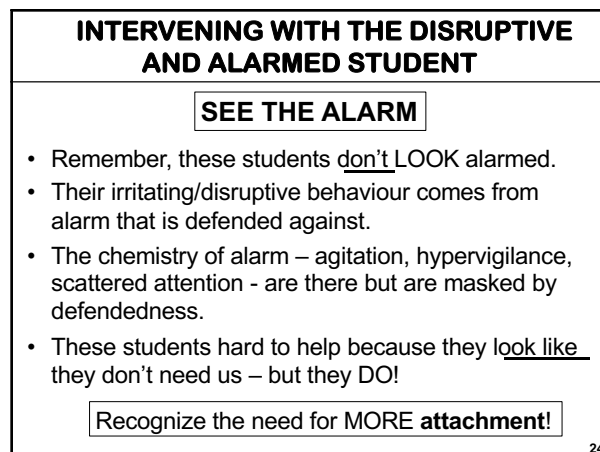
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INTERVENING WITH THE DISRUPTIVE AND ALARMED STUDENT

- Reduce alarm by increasing **attachment**
- Compensate for an **immaturity** by providing the external structure their brain is not yet ready to provide naturally
- Reduce agitation by increasing opportunities for **physical and emotional release**
- Be patient with their development, protect their **vulnerability**

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INCREASE ATTACHMENT

ENGAGE THE ATTACHMENT INSTINCTS BEFORE GIVING A DIRECTIVE

COLLECT BEFORE YOU DIRECT

space - eyes - a smile - a nod

How can I get the student to look at me and **smile**?

- Say name gently
- Have a smile ready in your eyes

DOES THIS CHILD GIVE ME PERMISSION TO EXIST IN HIS/HER PRESENCE?



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INCREASE ATTACHMENT

BREAK THE "VICIOUS CYCLE"

Because of their "blindness" these students are slow to respond or often are not doing what is expected.

This is the adult face they see much of the time:



Disapproval means separation. Separation alarm leads to more defendedness – more trouble.

INSTEAD

Even if frustrated – when the student looks at you provide a attachment face.



Adult who cares

Help the student feel safe.

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INCREASE ATTACHMENT

CULTIVATE A STRONG RELATIONSHIP: to ATTRACT ATTENTION

- Greet with warmth
- Engage in a pleasant activity – puzzle table
- Redirect instead of correcting
- Remember that attachment creates vulnerability – be patient with "rejection"



Reassure with connection as early and often as possible

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USE TIME AWAY INSTEAD OF TIME OUT

KNOW YOUR LIMITS AND WORK WITHIN THEM

If you are starting to "reach your limit" with a student:

1. Send the student to another place
 - ❑ The "Quiet Area" in the classroom
2. Send the student **TO SOMEONE** with a "task"
 - ❑ a book or an envelope
 - Another adult – Counsellor, Support worker, secretary
 - Nurturing Support Centre
3. Always go to the student and let them know that the **relationship is still intact** and that you will take care of them the next day.

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BUILD A VILLAGE OF ATTACHMENT

1. Surround the student with as many caring adults as possible
2. Help student form attachments to adults and adults to form relationships to the student.
3. Create a positive relationship with the parents
 - Positive phone calls/notes home
 - Welcome parents warmly even when there is "trouble".
 - Avoid sending daily evaluations home with the student

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COMPENSATE FOR IMMATURITY	
PROVIDE EXTRA ORGANIZATION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide routine and structure – with visual schedule/prompts • Organize tasks and materials – minimal materials in desk • Make it easy to access necessary materials – pencils, work folder, paper, scissors etc. – have extra at hand • Help with time management – break tasks into manageable steps • When doing groupwork, strategically choose groups • Provide extra time and help for organizing assignments and studying for tests • Homework – keep to the essential – identify what must absolutely be done 	<p>Help the student get through their day as successfully as possible.</p>

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COMPENSATE FOR IMMATURITY
<p>Elementary– seat work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide work into small chunks • When focus wanders – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ redirect to completing <u>one small step</u> ❖ fold the paper ❖ highlight the ones you want completed • Provide encouragement and support – swing by often • Prioritize the important work • Accept that some work won't be completed <p>It is more important that the student gets a feeling of accomplishment and senses that you value his/her EFFORTS.</p>

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COMPENSATE FOR IMMATURITY
<p>Short work periods to complete essential tasks may be all this student can handle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When focus wanders – redirect to completing <u>one small step</u> / fold the paper / highlight the ones to be completed. • When the student becomes agitated – provide an alternate activity – Personal Bin or permission to use the Kinesthetic hallway – if other children ask why he gets to “not work” – say, “He completed his work.” This may help the student so that he/she does not disturb the group. <p>Better to be busy than in trouble</p>

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COMPENSATE FOR IMMATURITY
<p>ANTICIPATE</p> <p>REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY FOR GETTING INTO “TROUBLE”</p> <p>Adjust the circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take charge of decisions • Prevent problematic situations • Limit time with peers <p>BE a TRAFFIC DIRECTOR who directs <u>away</u> from trouble rather than the POLICE who gives a consequence for troubling behaviour.</p>

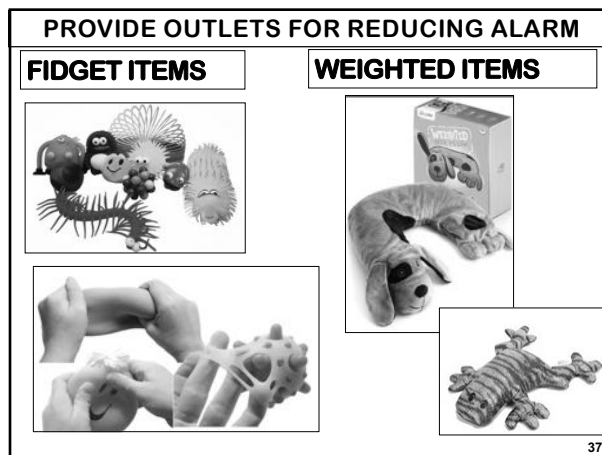
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COMPENSATE FOR IMMATURITY	
<p>When? Where? With whom?</p> <p>Work with your <u>school team</u> to change the <u>circumstances</u> rather than just trying to control or change the student.</p> <p>REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY FOR GETTING INTO “TROUBLE”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recess / Breaks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ With extra supervision ✓ Organized activity • Hallways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Away from other students • Bathrooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Under supervision • Lunch time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In a quieter space • Substitute teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make introductions or ✓ have an alternate “person” the student can be with

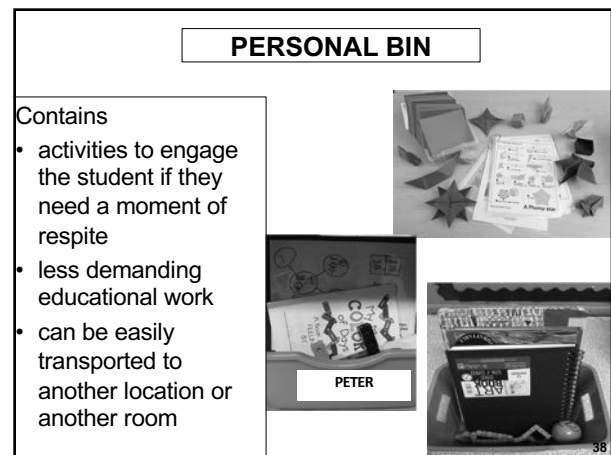
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WORK WITH THE ALARM & AGITATION
<p>Provide the student with an environment that is necessary for THEIR level of functioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerate movement – allow for pacing or squirming • Provide acceptable fidget items (Personal Bin) • Offer weighted objects • Provide sufficient “elbow room” • Offer alternate seating options and alternate workstations • Allow for frequent movement breaks – Active Corner or Kinesthetic hallway • Give active jobs • Provide time in the Quiet Corner • Use “Brain Breaks” – all the class will benefit

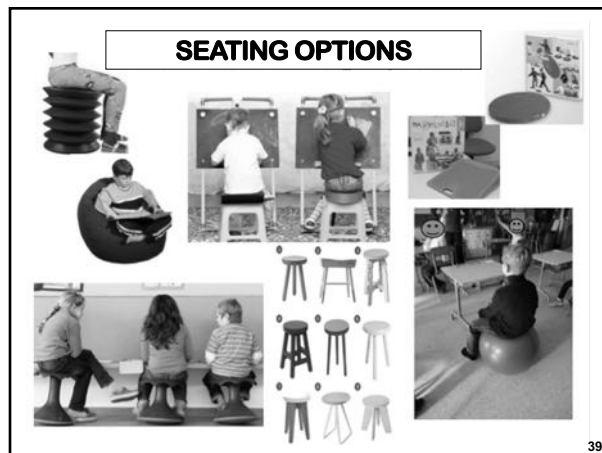
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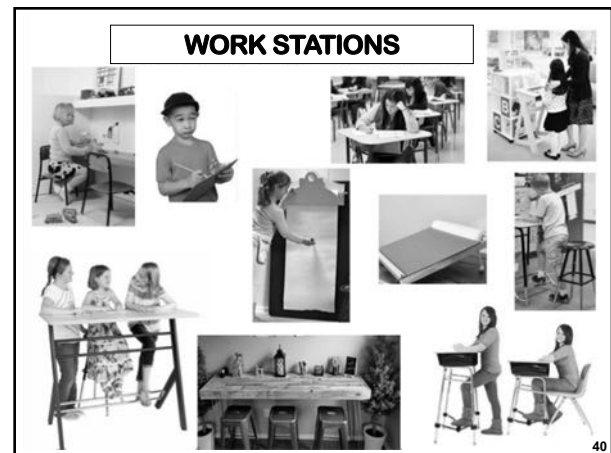
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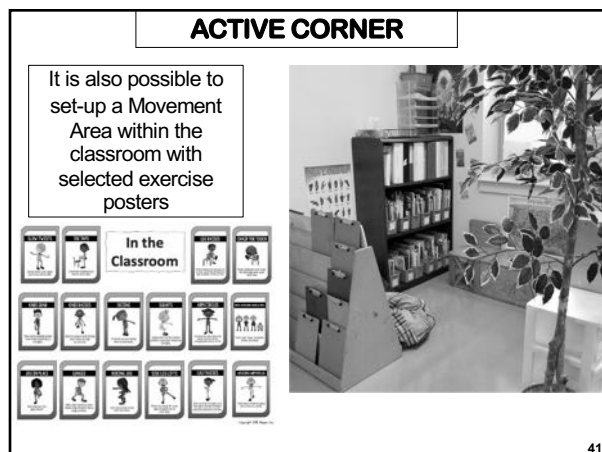
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QUIET CORNER

- A resource available for all students in the group
- Benefits for:
 - the student
 - the group
 - the teacher
- Adapted to the age group/grade level




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Classroom Brain Breaks

As movement is incorporated into the daily classroom routine

- the brain is able to function at higher levels,
- Stress and anxiety are reduced



- Improves **STAYING ON TASK**
- Increases **ATTENTIVENESS**
- Restores **ENERGY AND MOTIVATION**

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MORE WAYS TO DECREASE ALARM

1. **Bridge** any separation from one time of connection to the next – these student struggle to hold on to adults. Adults need to go the extra mile to hold on to them and keep them in connection with them. **“Looking forward to...”**
2. Reassure the student that you will continue to help and support despite their “short comings”. **“We’ll try again tomorrow.”**

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MORE WAYS TO DECREASE ALARM

If possible:

1. Reconsider the use of a behaviour chart
 - Since the student cannot “see” his short comings, the chart doesn’t really help, except to increase a sense of alarm and shame
2. Reconsider the use of a reward system
 - Since the student’s behaviour is because of immaturity and/or defenses time and softening of defenses is how behaviour will change – rewards are “stressful” and add alarm and shame.
3. Reconsider the use of “notes home” at the end of the day – causes separation alarm and upsets the evening with the parents

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IDEAS FOR PLAYFUL EMOTIONAL RELEASE

- Dancing to “loud” music
- Write/draw frustrations on paper - make balls to throw
- Paper snowball fights
- Pool noodle drumming
- Clapping games
- Stomp dancing
- Drumming on the table
- Play fighting – pool noodles
- Attack games with toys

BE CREATIVE!

EMOTIONAL RELEASE THROUGH PLAY WITH YOUR STUDENTS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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INTERVENTION PRINCIPLES

1. Preserve and maximize the **Attachment** relationship
2. Respect and compensate for the level of **Immaturity**
3. Protect the **Vulnerability**
4. Come along-side the emotional experience by allowing **Emotional Expression** and encouraging **Play**

Working with behaviour at its roots for lasting change.

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HOW BEHAVIOUR CHANGES

Maturation

Behaviour changes as the brain matures

Vulnerability

Behaviour changes when vulnerability is protected

Attachment

Behaviour changes when students are attached to adults

Emotions

Behaviour changes when emotions are felt

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Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management

www.cebm.ca

Members site password: CEBMmembers

ABOUT US PROJECTS THEMES RESOURCES ARTICLES LIBRARY EVENTS

MEMBERS

THE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT (CEBM)

Welcome to our site! As a support to the 10 English School Boards of Quebec, the CEBM aims to enable boards and their staff to find developmentally friendly and trauma-informed interventions that are effective in helping students who are struggling with behavioural challenges in the school setting.

WELCOME BACK!

Upcoming Events 2021-2022

A website that helps schools to use a developmental-trauma-responsive-attachment friendly approach

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DISRUPTIVE AND ALARMED

www.cebm.ca/disruptive-and-alarmed-behaviour **

- Consult the Placemat for how to identify and to find ideas for intervention
- Explore relevant parts of the website

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Challenge: Disruptive and Alarmed Behavior
Making Sense of What is Unfolding and Mapping Interventions to Support a Student

What are the behaviors that you see?	Suggested Interventions:	Understanding 'WHERE' this might be coming from:	Practices to AVOID and WHY
<p>In the Classroom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Struggles to come into the classroom – hyper-activation Does not give eye contact when greeting Struggles to attend to task and retain information Struggles to follow daily routine – scattered attention Requies repeated prompts to follow simple requests Physical outbursts with objects, towards peers and/or adults Cannot read social cues from teacher Interrupts, talks over and monopolizes conversations Struggles to wait their turn, wants to be first at the front Disorganized, loses and misplaces materials regularly Unable to take responsibility for their/her actions and words Overly sensitive to instructions (hence does not know what to do when told to do something) Hedges easily, becomes exasperated with multi-step tasks Struggles to follow directions, goes to 'Safe Place' or to hide (usually in some place) Can be extremely difficult to manage by substitute teachers <p>In the School/On the Playground:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Struggles to follow directions or rules, will often break rules Struggles with managing their space, when lining up, use of locker, lunchbox Many temper tantrums, tantrums with others and/or Disrupts their games when not invited Are surprised that others are upset with them, not understanding the impact of their actions and/or words Struggles to play – get home game, to another, to another 	<p>In the Classroom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on nurturing a significant attachment with this student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities to have 1:1 connection Establish and follow structure and routine – predictability helps them feel safe and know what is expected of them Use a visual schedule – this provides predictability Minimize material in desk – teacher supports their organization When using group work, strategically create groups Breakdown tasks into manageable steps – start intervals of 5-10 minutes Be consistent with expectations, expectations must be productive with on-task time Allow additional time to process teacher requests Offer alternatives, suggestions and alternate workstations to Notice, name and recognize efforts – focus on small steps If possible, have a Movement Station within the classroom to expend energy and then return to task Have a 'Challenge Station' or 'Quiet Activity Area' this helps model the energy and focus Organize a Personal Bin with the student – include items they enjoy touching, smelling and holding when they need a break Include a 'Safe Place' activity Change items periodically to maintain engagement Matchmake the student to the adults who are caring for them – build a village of attachments Begin any separation by giving time of connection to the next By the end of the day, give them a 'Safe Place' activity By the end of the day, give them a 'Safe Place' activity Consider alternate arrangements when substitute teacher is present In the School/On the Playground: Schedule and set Physical Movement Stations – inside and outside Provide student with passes to visit the Technician Room to work, to talk, to have supervised 'alone time' Go to Quiet Classroom – provide a break from the classroom It's essential that this be set up as an intervention prior to use, that the student and parents are informed of this intervention strategy Participate in a 'Safe Place' activity Sheltered recess and/or sheltered lunch in a predetermined location and/or movement and follow a routine activity 	<p>Understanding 'WHERE' this might be coming from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overload of other states of activation and inability to regulate their body and emotions Feeling too much separation from (or too much connection to) a significant other Move (parent) and struggles to move forward with their day Alarmed and overwhelmed with school experience – especially if happening or being asked of Not feeling safe Lack of secure attachments with adults at school Insecurity in emotional development due to emotional difficulties Adverse family conditions Learning difficulties Challenged conditions Hyperactivity, hyperemotional Sensory issues, etc. 	<p>Practices to AVOID and WHY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DO NOT follow the 'wait' time, space and 'wait' – the wait time that parents come down Overload of other states of activation and inability to regulate their body and emotions Focus on the child's struggles rather than their good attempts and efforts May increase engagement May increase alarm & anxiety May increase separation alarm If using the agency to support behavior, do not use the agency to support behavior For more details please see: www.cebm.ca/attachment

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RESOURCES - CEBM website: www.cebm.ca

Members website: Password: CEBMmembers

- * Disruptive and Alarmed: www.cebm.ca/disruptive-and-alarmed-behaviour
- * Anxiety and Alarm Resource page: www.cebm.ca/anxiety-and-alarm
- * Attention Problems Resource page: www.cebm.ca/attention-problems
- * Brain Breaks: www.cebm.ca/brain-breaks
- * Quiet Corner: www.cebm.ca/cocoon-area
- * Emotion and Play: www.cebm.ca/emotion-and-play
- * Attention Problems: www.cebm.ca/attention-problems
- * Managing Behaviour without Rewards: www.cebm.ca/common-practices-to-avoid
- * Emotional Release: www.cebm.ca/emotion-and-play

BOOKS:

- * Gabor Maté – Scattered Minds
- * Sandra Rief – How to Reach and Teach Children with ADD/ADHD
- * J. Gantos – Joey Pigza Swallowed a Key

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