Welcome to the Early Childhood Forum on Mental Health
Supporting children through transitions during the coronavirus crisis
Presented by Building Bright Futures and the Department of Mental Health

BBF Mission: To improve the well-being of children and families in Vermont by using evidence to inform policy and bringing voices together to discuss critical challenges and problem-solve.

Wednesday, June 4th 2020
Mindful Moment

Volcano Breathing

mindfulness script from
https://copingskillsforkids.com/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids
Together by Zoom

- We are all home doing our best to tune in with lots of distractions. Take care of yourself. Babies, dogs, lunch are all welcome and important part of our lives.
- Please mute yourself when you are not speaking.
- Use the chat bar to introduce yourself and offer resources or ask questions.
- Adjust your view; use the ‘presenter view’ to have the speaker large on your screen, use ‘gallery view’ to see grid of participants.
In the chat bar,

Share your name and one small way you are supporting children and families right now.
Early Childhood Forum on Mental Health

Supporting children through transitions during the coronavirus crisis

Dave Melnick, LISCW—Director of Outpatient Services, NFI Vermont

Meagan Roy—Director of Student Support Services, Champlain Valley School District
Vermont Early Childhood Forum on Mental Health:
Tools for professionals to support children through transitions during the coronavirus crisis
~Hosted by Building Bright Futures

Dave Melnick, LICSW
Director of Outpatient Services
Northeastern Family Institute, Vermont (NFI)
Fellow and Trainer, ChildTrauma Academy

Low/No Stress
Rest, Restore, Repair

Mild/Moderate Stress
Optimize, Maximize

Moderate/High Stress
Overload, Exhaustion
Toxic Stress
Breakdown

Stress Response System
Stress Response System: Stressed Adults

1. "Stress Blindsness"  
2. Diminished Capacity to Parent/Blocked Care  
3. "Closed Brain" rigidly regressed  
4. Reactivity/short-tempered  
5. Blame, Complain/Blame  
6. Self-focussed  
7. Anxious, panicly, detached

Stress Response System: Stressed Young Child

1. clingy, anxious, fussy, picky, needy, fussy  
2. Aggression/rolling, biting, spitting  
3. Reactivity/short-tempered  
4. Self-focused  
5. Regression  
6. Eating, sleeping, toileting problem

Stress Response System: Regulating Stressed Young Child

1. Structure, Routine, Rituals  
2. Narrative inner world experience  
3. Empathy, Validation, Reassurance  
4. Physical nurturance/contact  
5. Play  
6. Dance, art, singing, drama  
7. 4 R's: Rhythmic, Repetitive, Relational, Rewarding (Bruce D. Perry)  
8. 3 R's: Regulate, Relate, Reason (B. Perry)
1. Structure, Routine, Rituals
2. Empathy, Validation,
3. Collaboration/Circles
4. Clear Communication
5. Relational Leadership
6. Reflective Practices

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Stress Response System: Regulating Adults

What Science Tell us about Crisis Recovery

Tier 3: Tertiary/Intensive 10%
Tier 2: Targeted/Early Intervention 20%
Tier 1: Universal/Primary 70%

Leaders should support, promote, and resource the well-being of the workforce. A workforce that has a collective "belonging" and mean quickly have positive relational outcomes with the kids.

Task: Check your own pulse….
Task: Develop or sustain Reflective Practices
Task: Prioritize Relational Leadership, Participatory Mngt.

Meaning Making opportunities at all levels

Meeting Making opportunities at all levels
1. 70% full recovery when the youth is provided universal resources (mundane) → Police, EMT, Fire → Medical care → Food shelf, camaraderie → Faith communities

2. Schools/MH/Provider Tasks: → Connections/Circles → Control… → Competence → Character/Consequences → Routines/Structure/Rhythm of the day

What Science Tell us about Crisis Recovery: Kids

Tier 3: Tertiary/Intensive 10%

Tier 2: Targeted/Early Intervention 20%

Tier 1: Universal/Primary 70%

1. 10% will struggle to heal even with our best efforts. May remain harmed by exposures.

2. Schools/Agencies: → CSP/ACT 24h → consultant, SW, Spec. Educ., IEP, Admin, accommodations → Alt educ., Specialized classrooms, RRTC, psychiatric

What Science Tell us about Crisis Recovery

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1. 20% will not heal effectively without targeted services.

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Stress Response System
VT Early Childhood Forum on Mental Health

How can we help ourselves and our staff as they help our families and children?

Meagan Roy, Director of Student Support Services, Champlain Valley School District
What we hear from families...

Feeling overwhelmed at the idea of remote learning - many opting out

Uncertainty about the Fall - What will school look like? Will it work for my family? Will we be safe?
What we hear from teachers...

We’re overwhelmed! Missing our students...developing remote learning...teaching our own children...
Uncertain about the future - what will school look like? How do we plan if we don’t know? Will the structure work for me and my own family/situation?
Workforce wellbeing: *Fill their empty cups!*

- Communication, communication, communication!
- Flexibility in how work gets done
- Provide tools & resources - but beware of unintended pressure to use them!
  - [How Helping the Helpers can Help Us All!](#)
  - [Tips for Supporting Yourself During the Pandemic](#)
Supporting Families:

Providers feel better when families feel better!

- Normalize the uncertainties for kids and their parents
  - Social Stories - BBF Blog Post
  - Communicating contingency plans
- Take families where they are
  - Support gentle structure
- Fears about impact on “readiness”
  - Remind families that schools/programs will be ready for their child!
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<td><strong>Social &amp; Emotional</strong></td>
<td>Social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are vital for school, work, and life success.</td>
<td>Think of a fond memory you have about your child and tell them a story about your memory and how it makes you feel.</td>
<td>Play a cooperative game that supports turn taking. Could be as simple as tossing/kicking/rolling a ball back and forth to each other.</td>
<td>Play a listening game like Simon Says or Red Light-Green Light.</td>
<td>Play Rose, Bud, Thorn. Rose - what is something you enjoyed today? Bud - what is something you are looking forward to? Thorn - what made you frustrated/sad/mad today?</td>
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<td><strong>Language &amp; Literacy</strong></td>
<td>Young children are learning to express themselves through language and beginning to understand the sounds of language like rhyme and syllables. Regular exposure to books, stories &amp; conversations help children build their language and literacy skills.</td>
<td>Have your child make a scavenger hunt for items that begin with the same sound as ___ (choose any word).</td>
<td>Remind yourself of some good old fashioned nursery rhymes and teach them to your child.</td>
<td>Have your child make letters out of items they find around the house or outside. (ie create their name w/sticks)</td>
<td>Ask your child how many books they want to read together, then gather a stack of that # of books, and make a plan to read them! (This is math too!)</td>
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<td><strong>Play</strong></td>
<td>Play is essential to the development of children. Play helps support responsive relationships, strengthens core life skills (ie executive functions/planning, following rules), and reduces stress.</td>
<td>Play &quot;Animals Move...&quot; Say an animal name and have your child move like that animal.</td>
<td>Go on a &quot;Listening Walk&quot;.</td>
<td>Ask your child what they want to play and follow their lead (do ONLY what they went) for 20 minutes.</td>
<td>Play &quot;Follow the Leader&quot; inside or outside. Add fun body movements like hopping, skipping on one foot, etc.</td>
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<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td>Young children begin to explore patterns and shapes, compare sizes and count objects. This is MATH! When it comes to preschool age children, they use a variety of methods to problem-solve and talk about their findings. Math play is evident in pretend play, block play, literacy play, outdoor play and science play...so have fun!</td>
<td>Build something with blocks, legos, boxes from the pantry, etc.</td>
<td>Have your child create a color pattern with blocks, toys, or other objects from around the house.</td>
<td>Divide your day into parts based on when you eat. (e.g. breakfast, snack, lunch, snack, dinner) and make a &quot;meal plan&quot; for the day.</td>
<td>Ask your child how many books they want to read together, then gather a stack of that # of books, and make a plan to read them! (This is literacy too!)</td>
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**Weekly Activities for PreK Remote Learning**

(CVSD Remote Learning)
Thank you!

- Resources and recording will be posted to https://buildingbrightfutures.org/

- To receive Northern Lights PD credit, immediately following the forum please email info@buildingbrightfutures with your name, place of employment and BFIS#

- Use #vermontstrongkids to share your story, photo and/or video on social media OR send us your story here: bit.ly/vtstrongkids

- Who do I call? Help Me Grow at 211 ext. 6