



MAKING **S=P+A+C+E** FOR ME

Well Being Parents' Workshop

Always striving to be our best

Making **S=P+A+C+E** for learning





Last time we met.....

4 Priorities



**School
Improvement
Priorities 2019-20**



**Improved
mental health
and wellbeing
- Making
 $S=P+A+C+E$
for **ME****

**Improved
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S=P+A+C+E for ME





Time to think & reflect...

- Does your child worry about some of the everyday things they have to do?
- Does your child get easily upset or frustrated when things don't go according to plan?
- Does your child become anxious when trying out new things or going to new places?



Aims of this session

- Helping our children manage their worries and big feelings.
- Responding positively to our children when they feel worried, anxious or angry.
- Taking time to think, reflect & share experiences and ideas with each other.





A thought for all of us...

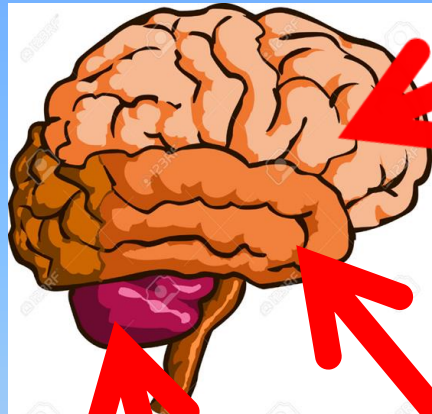
Young children
are going to
remember how
their family felt
during this
Coronavirus panic,
more than anything
specific about
the virus. Our kids
are watching and
learning about
how to respond
to stress and
uncertainty.
Let's wire our kids
with resilience,
not panic.



Kelly's
Treehouse



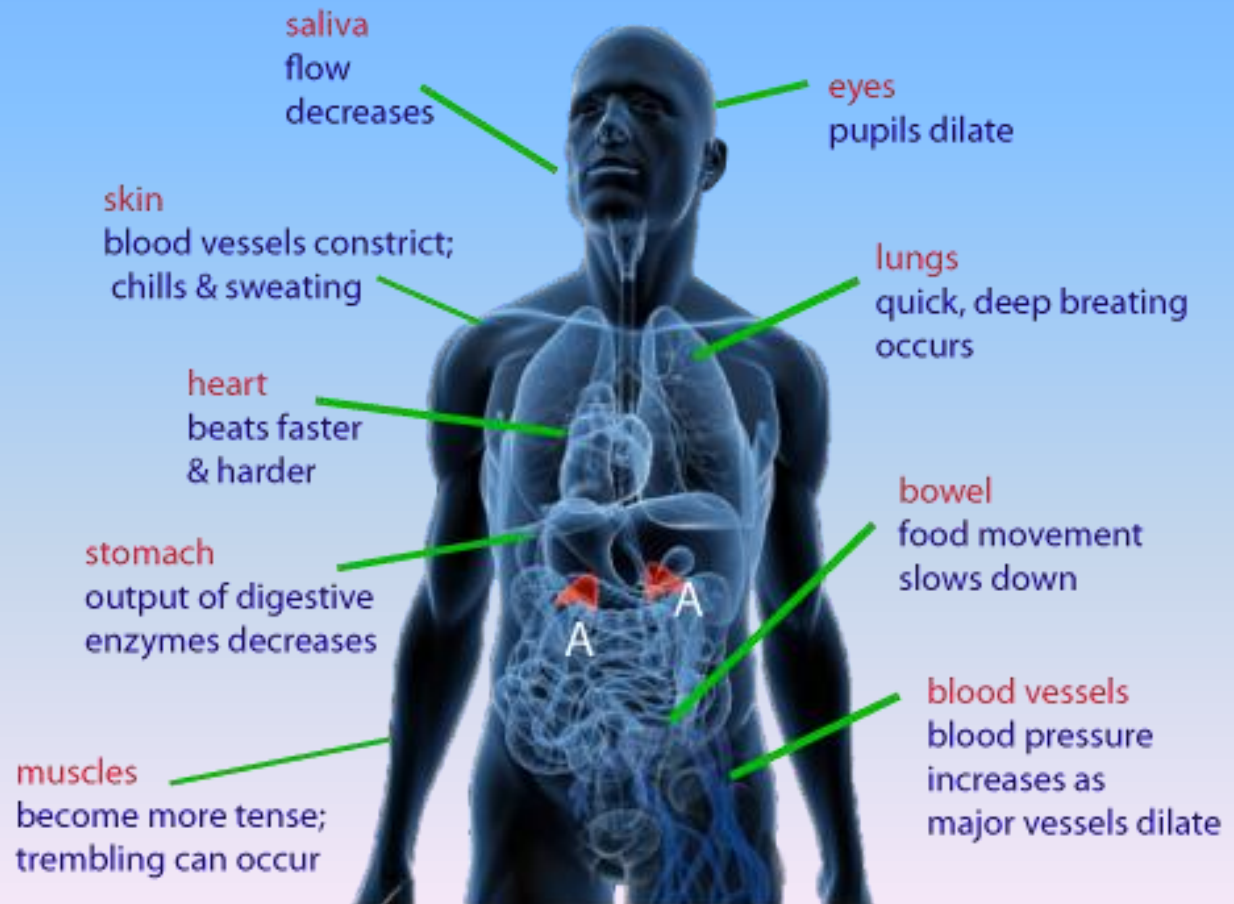
Physical Signs of Worry & Anxiety



**THINKING, REASONING,
LOGIC, PLANNING**

EMOTIONS

REFLEXES





Part 1 :

Helping our
children manage
their worries and
anxiety and how
we can respond
positively.





Emotional Signs of Worry & Anxiety

Physical Symptoms	Behaviour	Emotions	Thoughts
Stomach aches	Avoidance	Worry	'I'm going mad!'
Tiredness	Ritualistic/safety behaviours	Anger	'I'm going to faint'
Headaches	Pessimism	Panic	'I'm going to have a heart attack'
Feeling sick	Restlessness	Irritability	'People will think I'm stupid'
Feeling faint	Difficulties sleeping	Feelings of impending doom	'Something terrible is about to happen!'
Weight change	Perfectionism		'Everyone will laugh at me'
	Difficulties coping with change		



What's the difference between Worry & Anxiety?

- Worry is exact; anxiety is general
- Worry makes sense; anxiety is irrational
- Worry is limited/escapable; anxiety is everywhere
- Worry is verbal/mental; anxiety is physical
- Worry leaves us stressed; anxiety leaves us afraid
- We talk about worries but hide anxiety
- Worry is manageable; anxiety is beyond our control
- Anxiety affects your functioning
- Worry can leave you upset; anxiety can leave you distressed
- Worry eventually passes; anxiety stays or worsens



Everyday Feelings vs. Overwhelming Feelings

Everyday Feelings...

- Come and go...
- Are a normal reaction to what's going on in our lives...
- They are always changing and don't hang around for too long...

Overwhelming Feelings...

- Hang around for a long time...
- Change the way we feel and behave...
- May stop us from doing the things we want in life...
- Can lead to Mental Illness...



What do Our Children Worry About?

The Things Kids Worry About, At Every Age

We all worry about different things, and kids are no different. These are some of the most common anxieties in children.

Ages 2-4

- The dark
- Wardrobes
- Sleeping alone
- Loud sounds

Ages 5-7

- The dark
- Doctors
- Loud noises
- Insects & animals
- Friends' rejection

Ages 8-11

- Ghosts
- Losing a loved one
- 'Evil' people doing them harm
- Disappointing their parents

Ages 12-18

- Personal safety
- School presentations
- Death
- The future
- Self-image
- Abuse
- World events





Normal Age-Appropriate Worries & Fears

Age	Normal fear
Birth- 6 months	Loud noises, loss of physical support, rapidly approaching objects
7- 12 months	Strangers, unexpected objects, separation from parents
1- 5 years	Strangers, monsters, the dark, animals, separation from parents, toilets, loud noises
6- 12 years	Supernatural, bodily injury, disease, burglars, failure, criticism, punishment
12- 18 years	Performance in school, loss of peer relationships, appearance



**“I’VE HAD
A LOT OF
WORRIES
IN MY LIFE,
MOST OF
WHICH NEVER
HAPPENED.”**

Mark Twain



10 things NOT to say to your worried child

- Don't worry!
- It's no big deal...
- You'll be fine...
- There's nothing to be afraid of...
- You just need to sleep more...
- I'll do it...
- It's all in your head...
- Hurry up!
- Stop thinking about it!
- I don't know what you need...



How can we support our children?



- **First respond to the ‘Primitive’ brain at the back: strong, slow, steady.** And *‘breathe’*.
 - ✓ Try *‘Hot Chocolate’ Breathing*
 - ✓ *Counting down slowly from 10 to 1*
- **Then the ‘Emotional’ brain in the middle: touch, validation, warmth.** *‘I’m here, I see you’.*
- **And hello ‘Thinking’ brain: move towards brave behaviour.** *‘You can do this, I know you can’.*
 - ✓ Be their *‘Emotional Regulator Coach’*
 - ✓ *Don’t take the worry away, acknowledge it, normalise it & de-catastrophize it*
 - ✓ *Practice problem-solving...what if?*
 - ✓ *Practice positive thinking: fixed or temporary?*

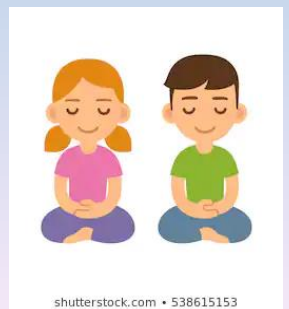


The question isn't so much, 'How do we make their anxiety go away?' but, 'How do we help them feel a little bigger in its presence?'



What else can we do?

- Make time to share and talk...a problem shared is a problem halved!
- Give the worry a name
- Read a 'Worry' book with them
- Make a 'Worry' box or jar
- Introduce a 'Worry' monster
- Write a diary: capture happy thoughts too
- Be positive, focus on things to be grateful for
- Practice breathing techniques, mindfulness
- Find your personal ways to relax e.g. listen to music
- Get active, get outdoors, Get good sleep
- Ensure media is age-appropriate so that it does not add to their worries or fears, or bring them 'alive'





Supporting Our Children to Cope

- Give them some strategies/ ways to solve the problem themselves first.
- If they do share a worry or concern give them the tools to solve it – (talk to the teacher) but equip your child too. As parents we cannot “solve” everything for them.
- Not to see negatives as “fixed” or permanent, avoid words like ‘always’ or ‘never’.
- Try not to catastrophize.
- See new things and changes as natural next steps.
- Support our children to reframe the way they see things... “I can’t do this...YET!”
- Try not to let your child see if you’re anxious about something- model confidence and model the confidence you have in your child.



Practical Problem Solving

- **Step 1:** Slow down, stop and think. Use cool thoughts, not hot thoughts.
- **Step 2:** Take the other person's perspective, stand in another's shoes.
- **Step 3:** What options have you got? Think/ talk through options and decide which would be the best way forward.
- **Step 3:** How did it go? If the solution did not work, try another...






The Power of Positivity



“Learning the skills of optimism not only reduces the risk of depression but boosts self-esteem and provides children with the self-reliance they need as they approach the teenage years and beyond.”

The Optimistic Child by Martin Seligman

- Model optimistic language
- Children most at risk believe negatives are permanent- by contrast children that bounce back from set backs believe causes of bad events are temporary
- Avoid words such as “always, never, none..”
- “Counting our blessings”/ being appreciative
- Notice all the interesting and beautiful things around you, however small these are, and take pleasure in them
- Role of exercise and keeping active
- Acts of kindness towards others- (help us to feel good about ourselves!)



YOU CAN'T
STOP THE WAVES,
BUT YOU CAN
LEARN TO SURF.
JON KABAT-ZINN



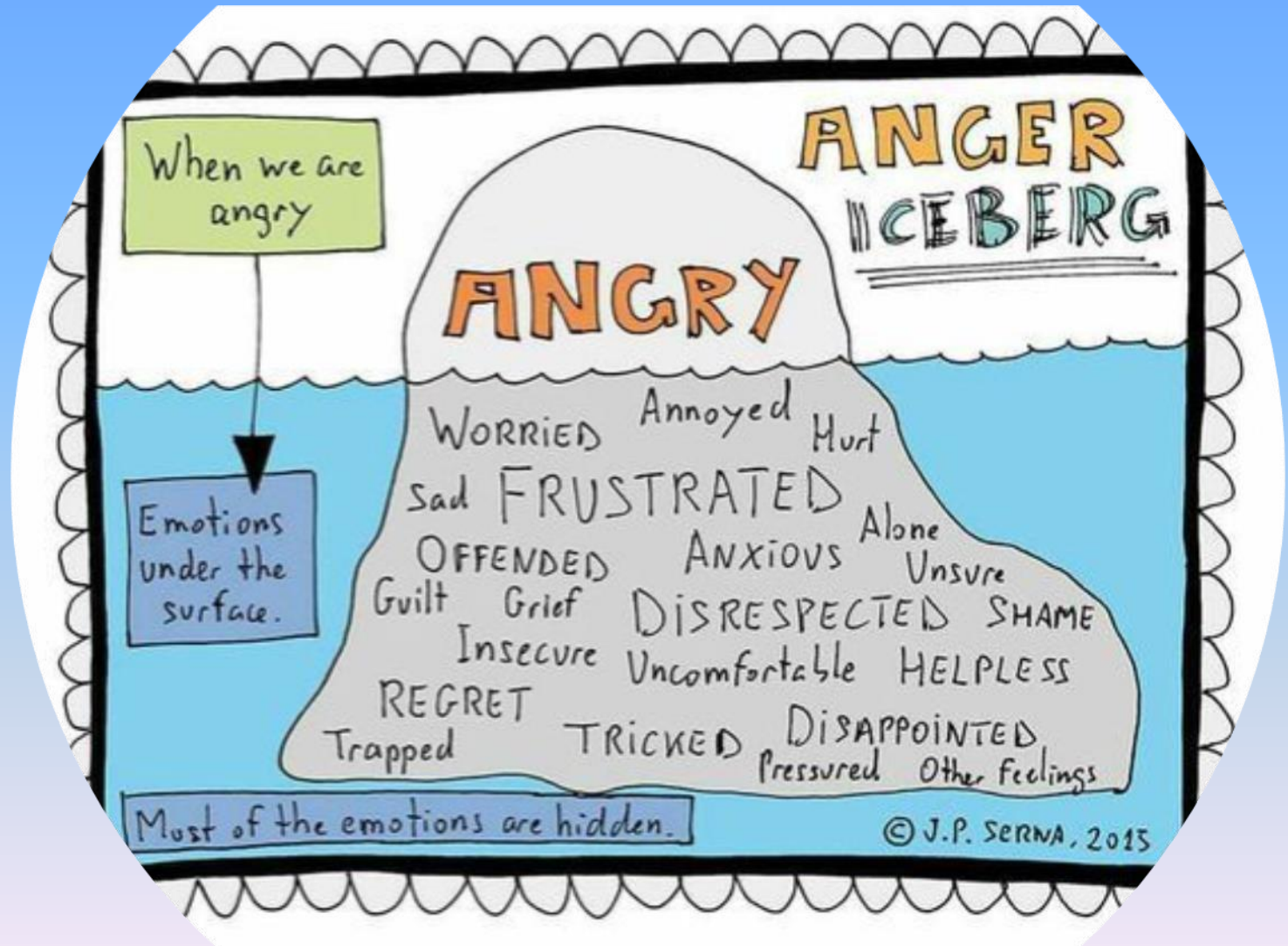
Part 2 :

Helping our
children manage
their anger and
how we can
respond
positively.





The Anger Iceberg



All behaviour is a child trying to communicate something to us.....



Understanding Anger

- It's ok to feel angry- we all do and sometimes anger is an appropriate emotion- e.g. in response to injustice.
- ...but if we feel angry it is not ok to respond physically- hurting others- shouting
- How to help when we do feel anger....



The Anger Rules



THE ANGER RULES

It's OK to feel **ANGRY**



but it's **NOT OK** to

Hurt others

Hurt yourself

Hurt property

DO



Talk about it!





How to help with Anger

1. Teach Your Child About Feelings

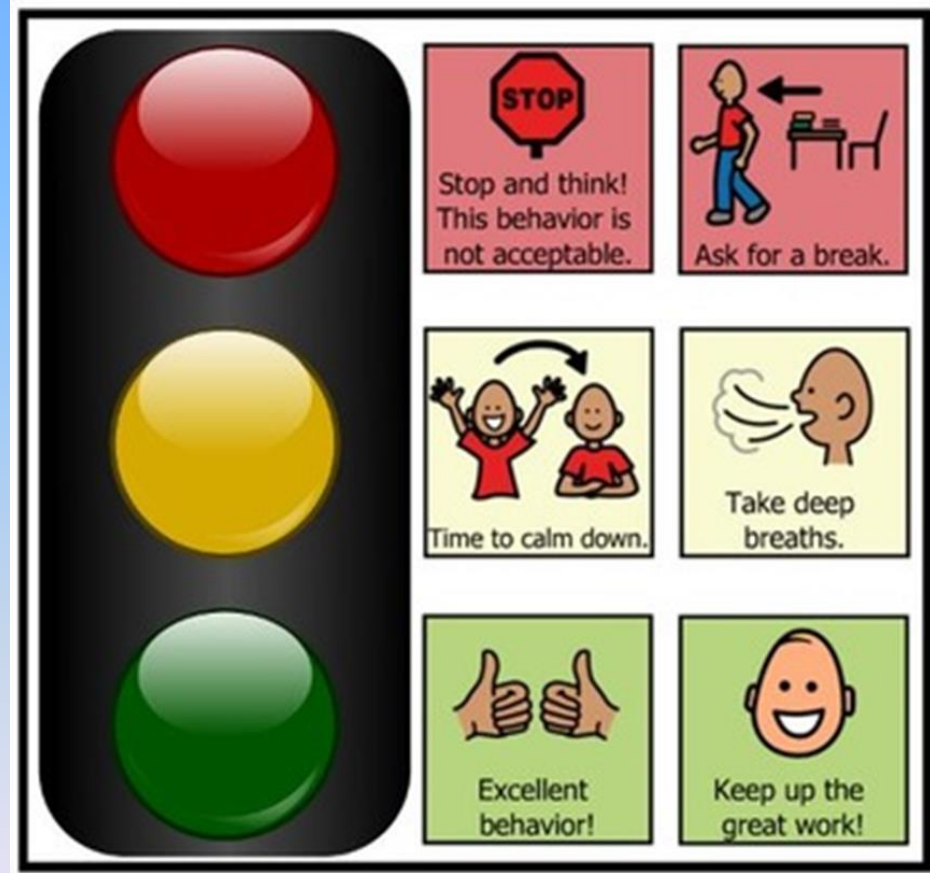
- Children are more likely to lash out when they don't understand their feelings or they're not able to verbalise them. A child who can't say, "I'm angry," may try to show you they're angry by lashing out. Or a child who isn't able to explain that they are sad may misbehave to get your attention.
- Help your child learn to identify and label their feelings.
- Begin teaching your child basic feeling words such as mad, sad, happy, and scared. Label your child's feelings for them by saying, "It looks like you feel really angry right now." Over time, they will learn to label their emotions.
- As your child develops a better understanding of their emotions and how to describe them, teach them more sophisticated words such as frustrated, disappointed, worried, and lonely.



How to help with Anger

2. Create an Anger Traffic Light System

- **Green:** staying calm, keep it up, lots of praise!
- **Amber:** starting to feel a change in our mood, feelings and/or body; time to use our calming strategies to prevent us reaching red.
- **Red:** STOP and THINK!!!





How to help with Anger

3. Develop a Plan to Help Your Child Calm Down

- Teach children what to do when they begin to feel angry. Rather than throw toys when they are frustrated or hit their sister when they are annoyed, teach them healthier strategies that help with anger.
- Encourage children to take 'time to calm down'. You may need this too!
- Encourage them to colour, read a book, or engage in another calming activity until they are calm enough to resume their activity.
- You might even create a 'calm down kit'. A kit could include your child's favourite colouring books and some crayons, a fun book to read, stickers, a favourite toy, or cream that smells good, sensory objects like feathers or soft material.
- When they are upset, you can say, 'Go and get your calm down kit,' and encourage them to take responsibility for calming themselves down.



How to help with Anger

4. Teach Specific Anger Management Strategies

One of the best ways to help an angry child is to teach them specific anger management strategies e.g.

- Asking for a break, take 'time to calm down' (for both of you!)
- Going for a quick walk.
- Deep breathing exercises.
- Counting to 10 slowly and back again to 0.
- Repeating a helpful phrase might also help.
- Physical exercise.
- Clenching fists.
- Ripping up paper...



How to help with Anger

5. Make Sure Angry Outbursts Aren't Effective

Sometimes children exhibit angry outbursts because it's an effective way to get their needs met. If a child throws a temper tantrum and their parents give them a toy to keep them quiet, they will learn temper tantrums are effective. Don't give in to your child to avoid a meltdown. Although that may be easier in the short-term, in the long run giving in will only make behaviour problems and aggression worse.

6. Giving Choices and Consequences

Used well, Choices and Consequences keeps you in charge while your child keeps some power too. If children are given no choice, they will feel powerless, which usually brings with it a host of other feelings – and results in hard-to-handle behaviour. This approach supports the 'Authoritative' Parenting Style and helps build our children's self-esteem.

Key Steps for giving Choices and Consequences:

1. *Be clear and specific about the positive and negative choice of behaviour, and the positive and negative consequences that will follow.*
2. *Relate the consequences to the behaviour.*
3. *Choose consequences that mean something to the child.*
4. *Use a calm, clear voice; threats, a threatening manner, ultimatums are counter-productive.*
5. *Only give choices if it's the right situation e.g. would you like an apple or a banana? What game would you like to play?*
6. *Choose consequences you can keep to (without 'punishing' yourself)*
7. *Give the child a few moments to reflect before asking for a decision.*



How to help with Anger

7. Avoid Violent Media

If your child struggles with anger, exposing them to violent TV shows/films or games is not going to be helpful. Prevent them from witnessing violence and instead, focus on exposing them to books, games, and shows that model healthy conflict resolution skills.



The Five Languages of Love





The Languages of Love

“When children feel genuinely loved, their whole world looks brighter. Their inner spirit is more secure and they are far more likely to reach their potential for good in the world.”

Dr Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell

Authors of ‘The Five Love Languages of Children’.



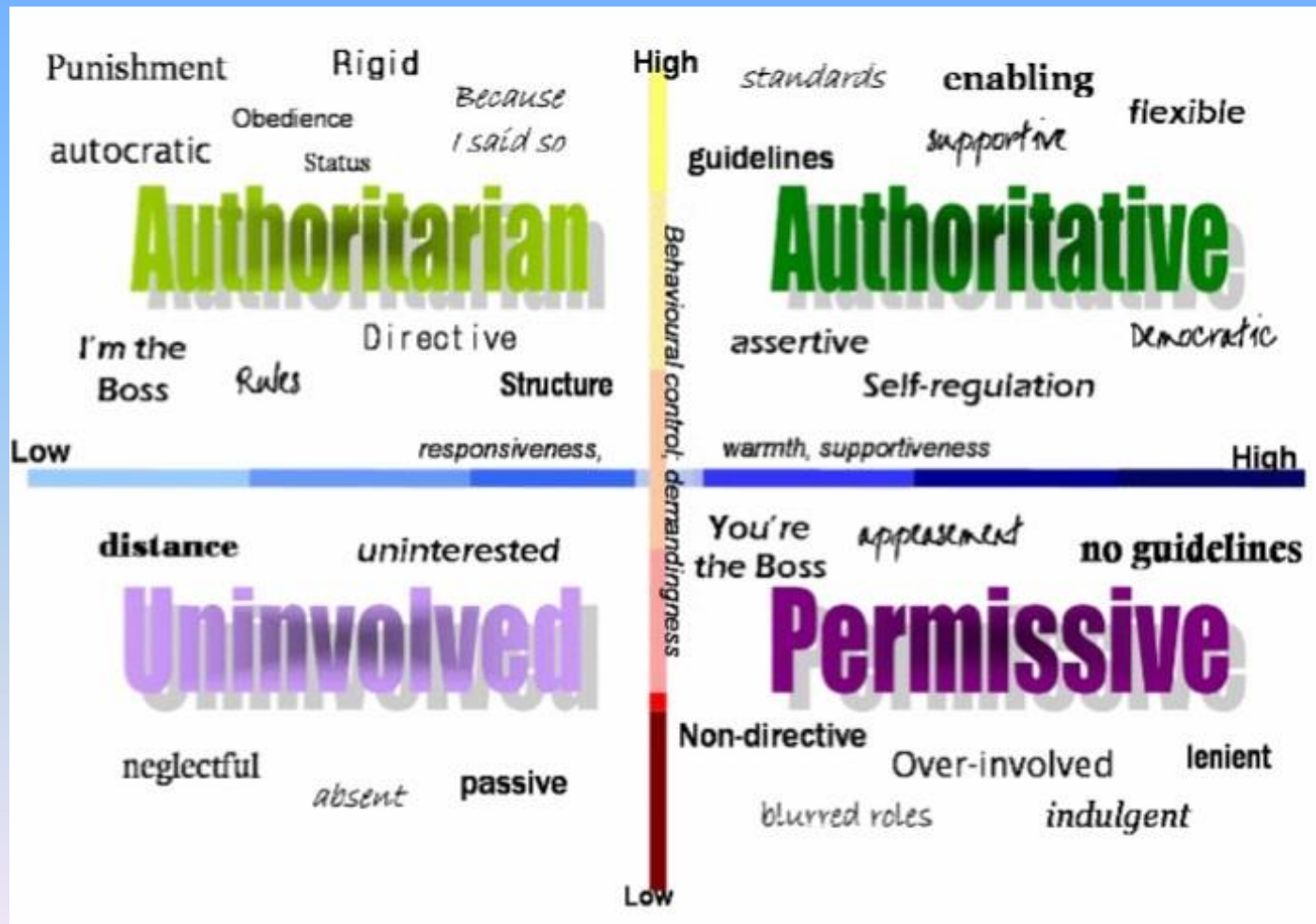


The Languages of Love

- I don't like your behaviour but 'I still love YOU.....'
- Unconditional love....
- Our children need to feel it....
- When a child is struggling/ through adolescence they can find it hard to accept love...but they still need to know it's there.



Knowing our Parenting Style(s)





Home Environment

















































- Unconditional love- they need to feel it
- I may not always like your behaviour but I always love you
- Being the best they can be (not THE best)
- Seeing a child as a whole child- celebrating **who they are** and their skills avoid focus being just the academic
- Avoid drawing comparisons between your children
- Use of purposeful praise- praising effort rather than attainment
- Choosing battles
- Remaining calm
- Encourage children to foster friendships and relationships
- Encourage hobbies/ interests/ activity
- 1 to 1 time
- We are helping our children move from parental control to self-control





The Resilience Framework

BASICS	 Good enough housing	 Enough money to live	 Being safe	 Access & transport	 Healthy diet	 Exercise & fresh air
	 Enough sleep	 Play & leisure	 Being free from prejudice & discrimination			
BELONGING	 Find somewhere for the child/YP to belong	 Help child/YP understand their place in the world	 Tap into good influences	 Keep relationships going	 The more healthy relationships the better	 Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope
	 Get together people the child/YP can count on	 Responsibilities & obligations	 Focus on good times and places	 Make sense of where child/YP has come from	 Predict a good experience of someone or something new	 Make friends and mix with other children/YPs
LEARNING	 Make school/college life work as well as possible	 Engage mentors for children/YP	 Map out career or life plan	 Help the child/YP to organise her/himself	 Highlight achievements	 Develop life skills
COPING	 Understanding boundaries and keeping within them Instil a sense of hope	 Being brave	 Solving problems	 Putting on rose-tinted glasses	 Fostering their interests	 Calming down & self soothing
	 Remember tomorrow is another day	 Lean on others when necessary	 Have a laugh			
CORE SELF	 Instill a sense of hope	 Support the child/YP to understand other people's feelings	 Help the child/YP know her/himself	 Help the child/YP take responsibility for her/himself	 Fostering their talents	 There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them
NOBLE TRUTHS	 Accepting	 Conserving	 Commitment	 Enlisting		



The Healthy Mind Platter





At Our School...

If this is not a place where tears are understood...

... where do I go to cry?

If this is not a place where my spirits can take wing...

... where do I go to fly?

If this is not a place where my questions can be asked...

... where do I go to seek?

If this is not a place where my feelings can be heard...

1. ... where do I go to speak?

If this is not a place where you'll accept me as I am...

... where can I go to be?

If this is not a place where I can try to learn and grow

... where can I just be me?

William J Crockett



...and in Our Homes...

If this is not a place where tears are understood...

... where do I go to cry?

If this is not a place where my spirits can take wing...

... where do I go to fly?

If this is not a place where my questions can be asked...

... where do I go to seek?

If this is not a place where my feelings can be heard...

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