

SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE, NAVIGATING SCHOOL CHALLENGES

Megan Corcoran

12th April 2024

10am-11.30am

career • KAFÉ



Acknowledgement of Country

Carer Kafe acknowledges the Wurundjeri People whose traditional lands we operate on within the Kulin Nation.

We respectfully acknowledge all Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways where we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



WAGTAIL INSTITUTE WITH CARER KAFE

SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE



grab some paper and
a pen or open a doc on
your device.

Presented by Megan Corcoran

wagtailinstitute.com

Who is this?

MEGAN CORCORAN

DIRECTOR AT WAGTAIL INSTITUTE

Cares about wellbeing in complex settings.

Teacher, leader, facilitator + coach.

Bachelor of Ed, Masters in Applied Pos Psychology

Lecturer at Monash.

Boxing addict.

www.wagtailinstitute.com



VISION

The Wagtail Institute vision is for all children to have a safe and magical childhood with support from adults who believe in their future.

We recognise there are many adults who did not have this experience, and we need to work together to heal and do better for the next generation.

www.wagtailinstitute.com

MISSION

For all adults to be equipped with trauma-informed wellbeing knowledge and skills so they can best support young people and stay well while doing this important work.



Disclaimer

This educational session is designed for informational purposes only and does not constitute therapy or counselling. As a trauma-informed wellbeing consulting service, Wagtail Institute provides training to enhance awareness and knowledge.

Participants are advised to seek professional support if needed, and this session should not be considered a substitute for such services.

CARE AND HOUSE KEEPING

- There are activities. Pause the video, complete the task, and then press play again!
- We will discuss trauma, stress and behaviour



LIFELINE

13 11 14

lifeline.org.au



BEYOND BLUE

1300 22 4636

beyondblue.org.au

1



2



3



4



5



Which tree represents how you are feeling right now?

Check in



***DO YOU NEED
SOMETHING
BEFORE WE GET
STARTED?***



OUTCOMES

- Understand the rights of children and young people in out of home care with regards to educational access
- Learn effective strategies to support the young person to make positive connections with their school, increase (or maintain their attendance), and work together to increase their academic performance
- Strategies to use when interacting with school staff



AGENDA

**EXPERIENCE OF
SCHOOL**

**RIGHTS AND
ADVOCACY**

**STRATEGIES FOR
ENGAGEMENT**

Reflection


Write

What do you want most for
the young people in your
care?

Reflection

Write

What is educational
success?



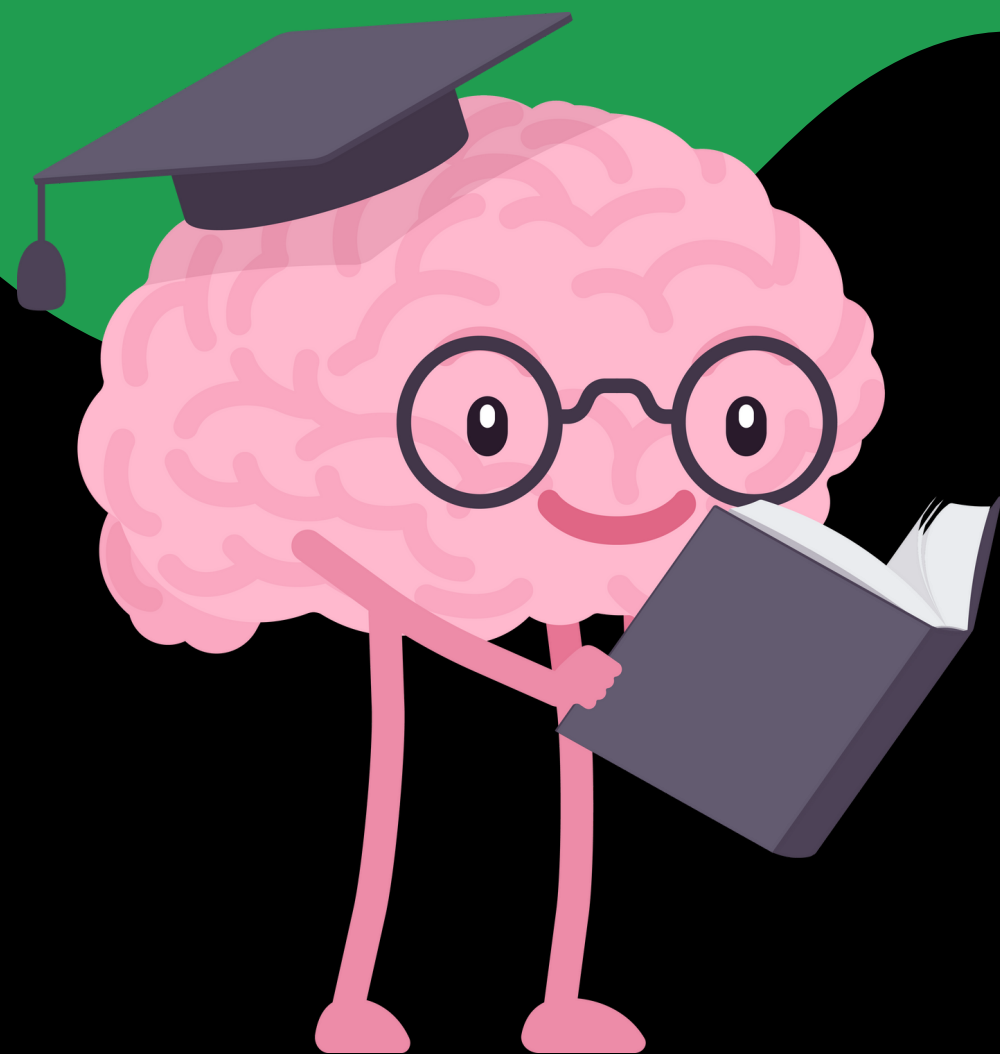
IN 2022, THE RATE OF
STUDENTS IN CARE
PROGRESSING TO YEAR 12
WAS ONLY **25 PER CENT**,
COMPARED TO 82 PER CENT
OF STUDENTS IN THE
GENERAL POPULATION.

CCYP, "LET US LEARN" INQUIRY

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



Student engagement is:

Cognitive engagement (completing tasks)

Emotional engagement (how they feel about school)

Behavioural engagement (following school norms and “rules”)

Boyking, A. W., & Noguera, P., 2020

Brainstorm

Brainstorm a list

What are the barriers for
young people in care
engaging in school?

STUDENT DISENGAGEMENT



Absenteeism

Truancy

Not completing learning tasks

Lack of interest in school

Disruptive behaviour

Withdrawal from social groups

Withdrawal from school

*Note: sometimes the school can influence a student to disengage from school, particularly when using punitive approaches to behaviour

STUDENT DISENGAGEMENT



You may hear the term “school refuser” being used to describe children and young people who are disengaging from school, however, this term insinuates the student is making a choice.



learning difficulties



social challenges or bullying

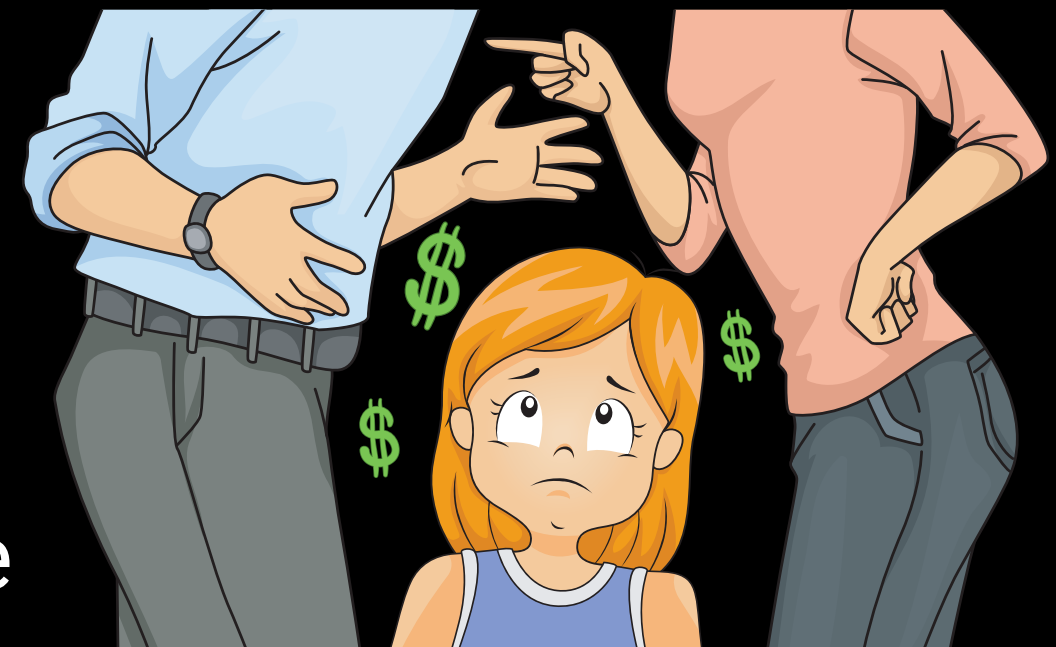
WHY DO THEY DISENGAGE?

mental health or
other illnesses



www.wagtailinstitute.com

unstable
home life



IMPORTANT TO NOTE.....

Behaviour can be a reason students disengage

Sometimes, disengaging is encouraged by the school....

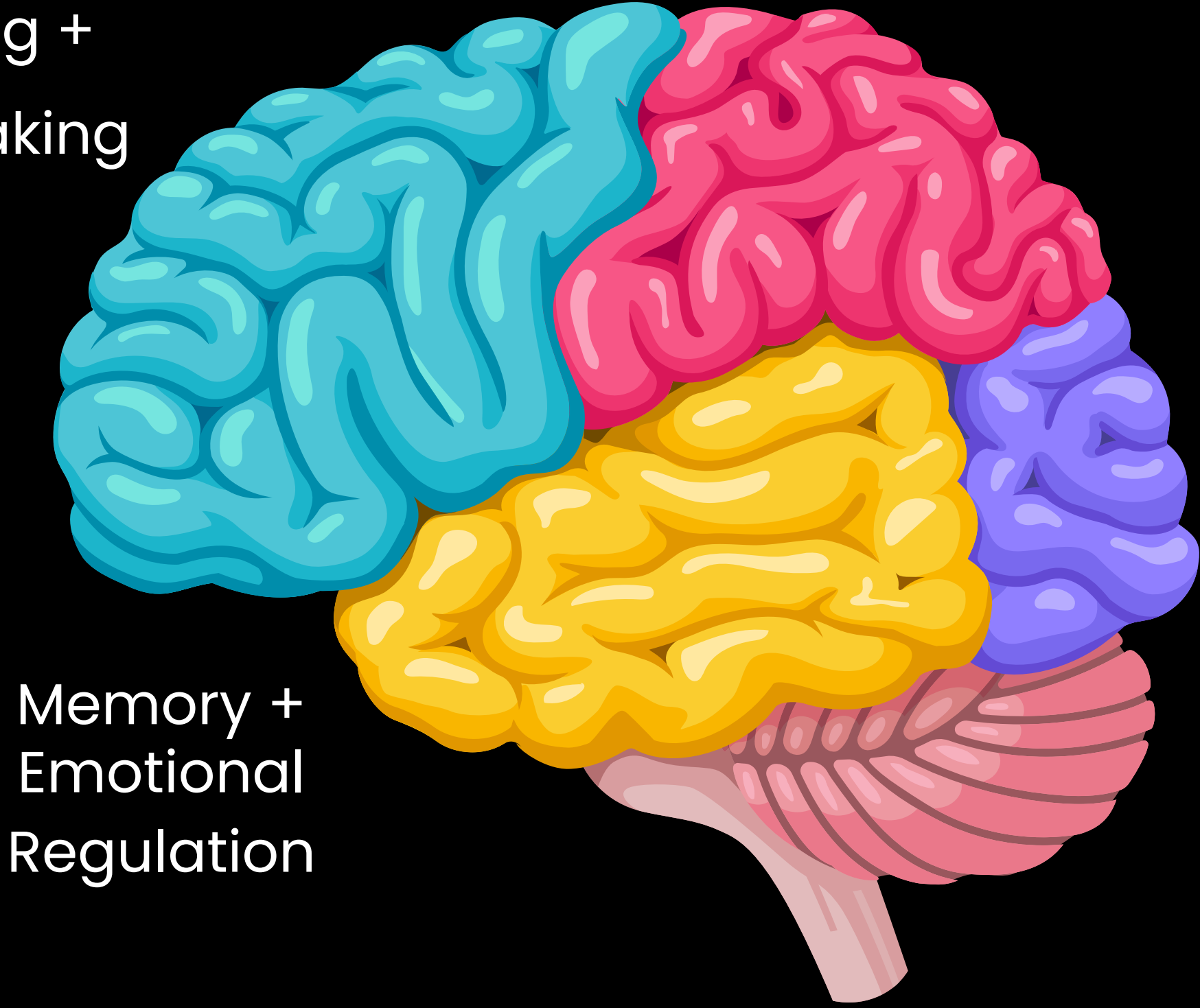
Sometimes, students get “stuck” in behaviour management processes.



IMPACT OF TRAUMA



Higher order thinking +
Rational decision making

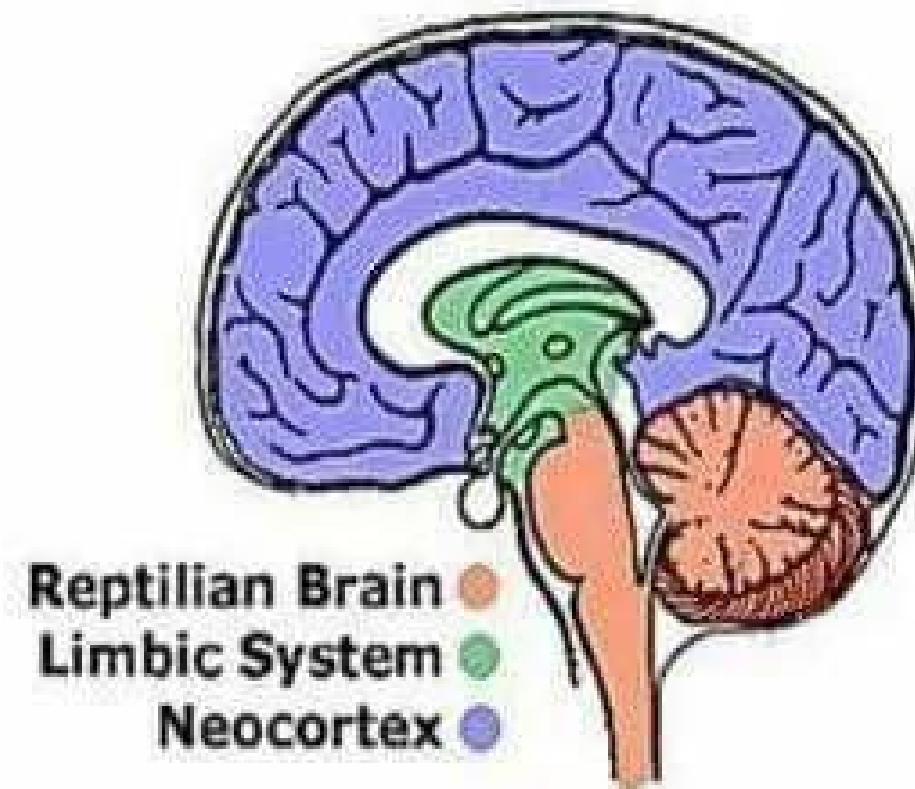


Memory +
Emotional
Regulation

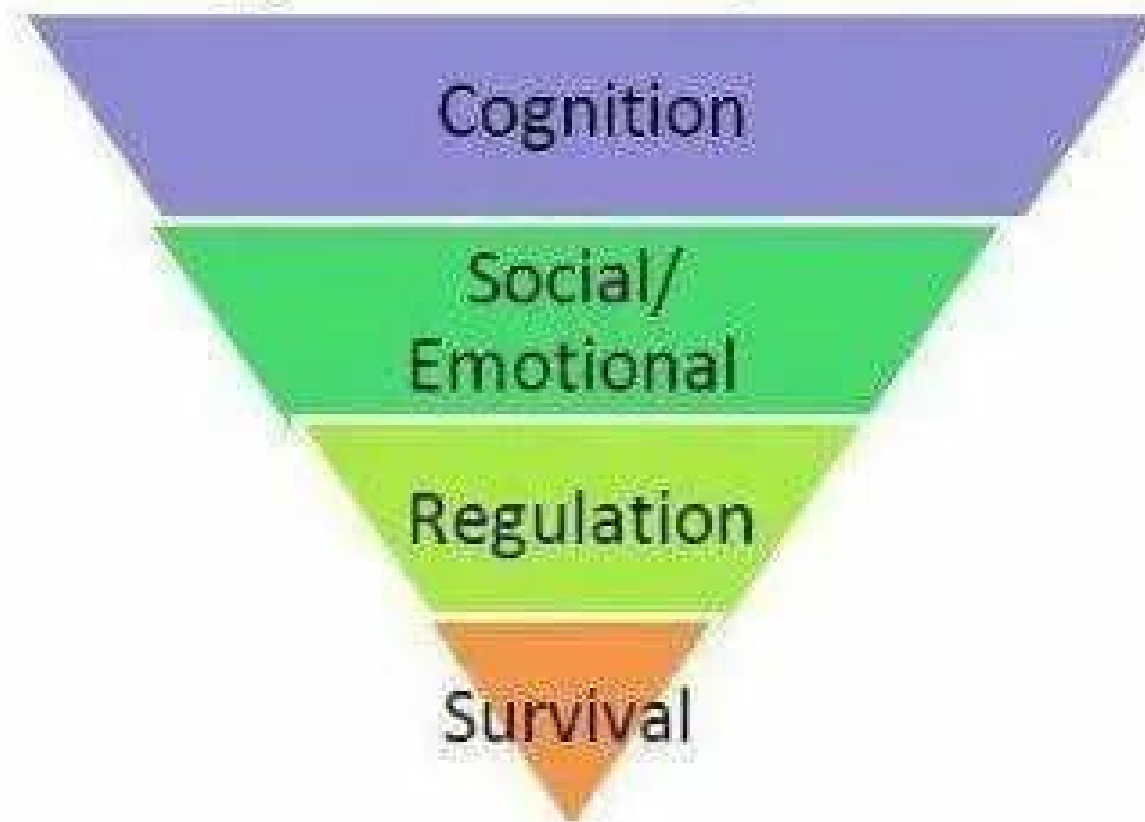
Relationships

Survival, sensory input and nervous
system

Trauma & Brain Development



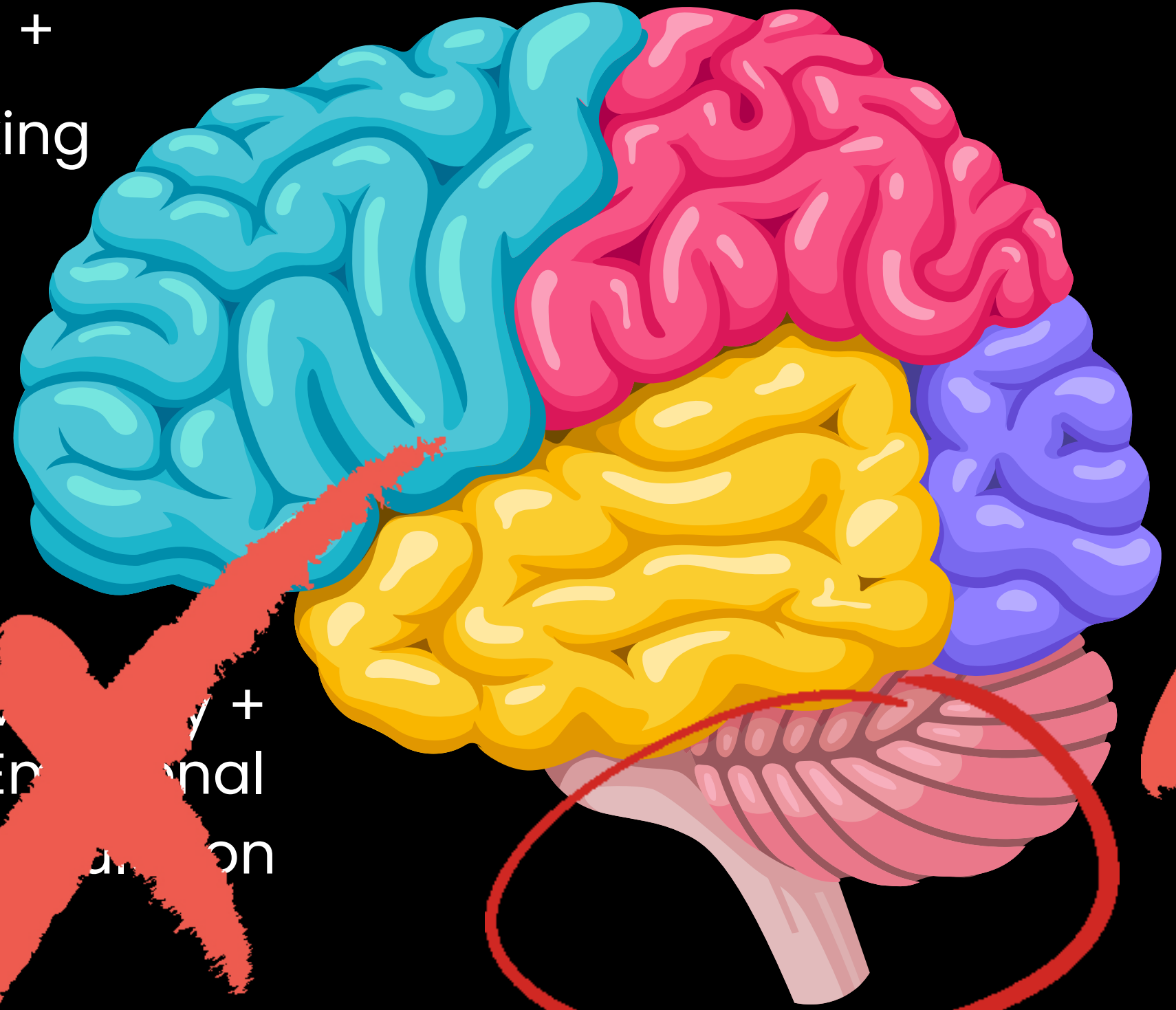
Typical Development



Developmental Trauma



Higher cognitive thinking +
Rational decision making



Relationships

Motivation +
Emotional
Reaction

Survival, sensory input and nervous
system

Reflect

Brainstorm- make a list

How is the school currently supporting the young person in your care?

PARTNERING AGREEMENT



PARTNERING AGREEMENT



The Partnering Agreement aims to ensure that:

- processes are in place to actively support the educational achievement of every child and young person in OOHC

PARTNERING AGREEMENT



The Partnering Agreement aims to ensure that:

- there is a coordinated approach to supporting the educational, health and social, cultural and emotional needs of children and young people in OOHC

PARTNERING AGREEMENT



The Partnering Agreement aims to ensure that:

- all parties understand each other's roles and responsibilities and work cooperatively and in the best interests of the child and young person

PARTNERING AGREEMENT



The Partnering Agreement aims to ensure that:

- strategies are implemented to improve outcomes related to student enrolment, attendance, educational achievement, case planning, retention and school completion and educational transitions.

PARTNERING AGREEMENT



The Partnering Agreement ensures schools provide:

A student support group (SSG)

Educational Needs Analysis (ENA)

Individual education and learning plans (IEPs and ILPs)

Enrolment within 24 hours

Priority for referrals

PRODUCTIVE

- Includes student agency in documentations and plans
- The goals set are realistic and important to the young person
- Strengths focused
- You and the young person know the IEP/ILP goals
- Strategies are tried and reviewed

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TOKENISTIC

- IEP/ILP goals are generic
- Student agency and voice is limited or overlooked
- Sticker charts or extrinsic reward systems are overused
- School staff are allocated, but without a relationship with the student
- Strategies for regulation are named but not used

PARTNERING AGREEMENT



The Partnering Agreement
“recommends”:

Trauma-informed training for
all schools and educators

Reflect

Write

How is the partnering agreement supporting the young person?

List any areas for improvement that you would like to discuss with the care team.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT SUCCESS



STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT SUCCESS



1 Communication

2 Feeling safe

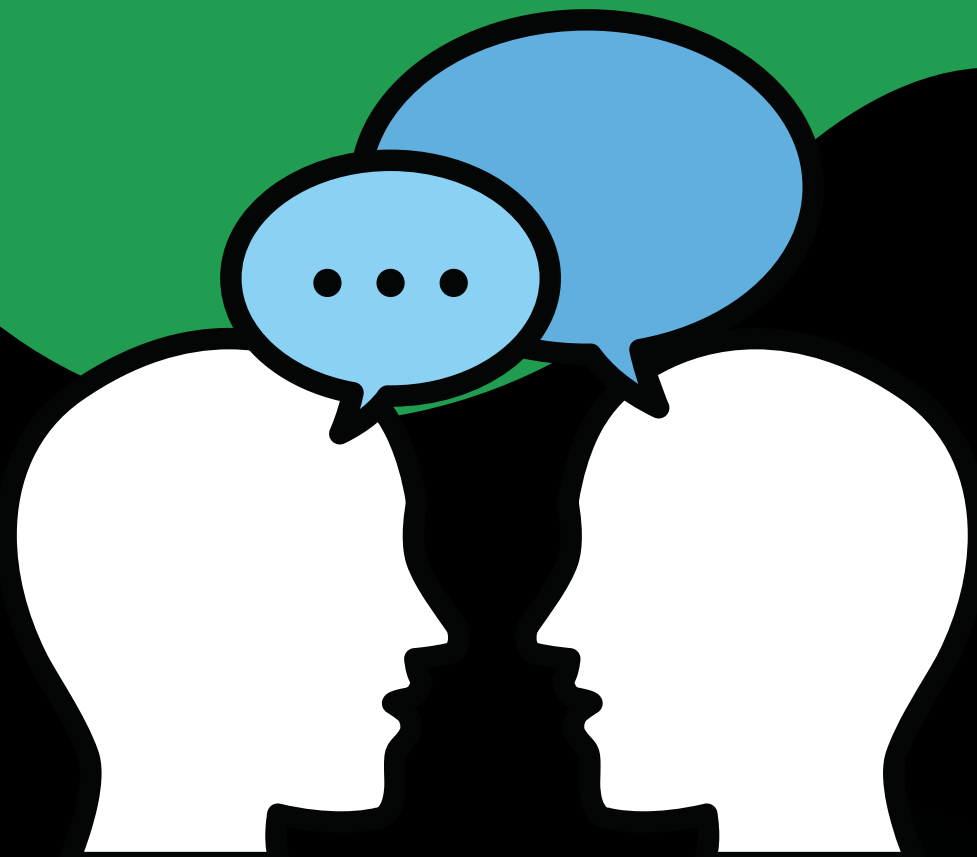
3 Regulation strategies

4 Strengths

5 Relationships and social skills

6 “Behaviour” plans

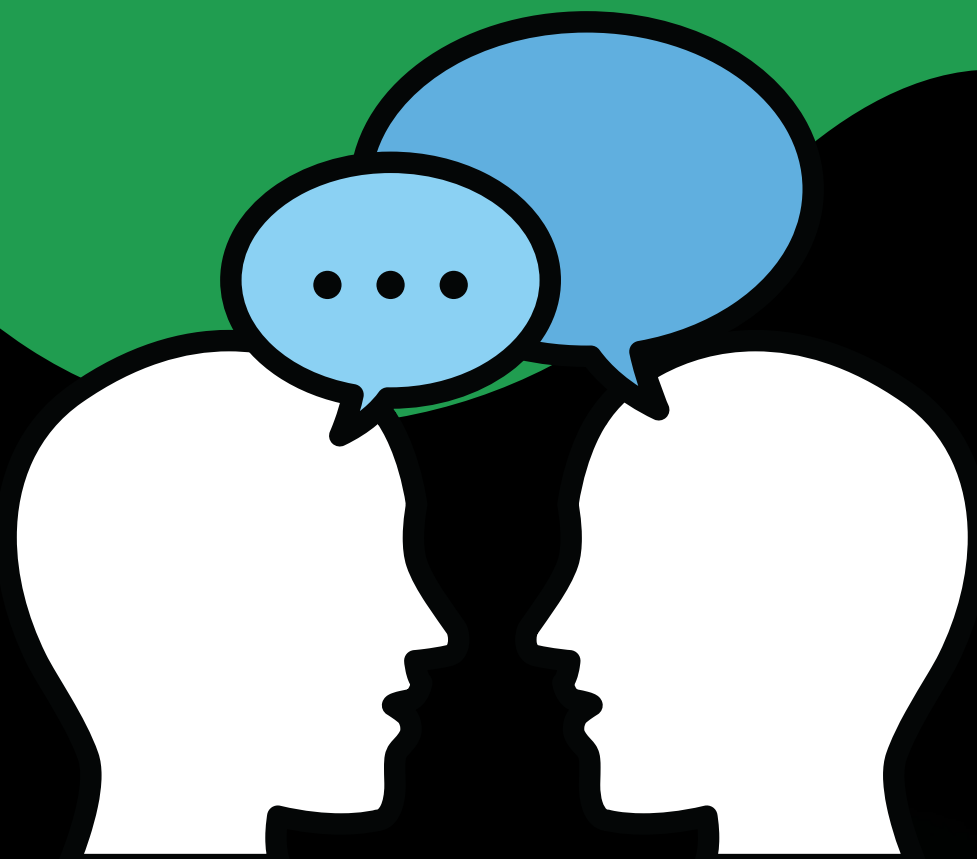
COMMUNICATION



Reflect

What were the last 3
correspondence shared between
home and school?

COMMUNICATION

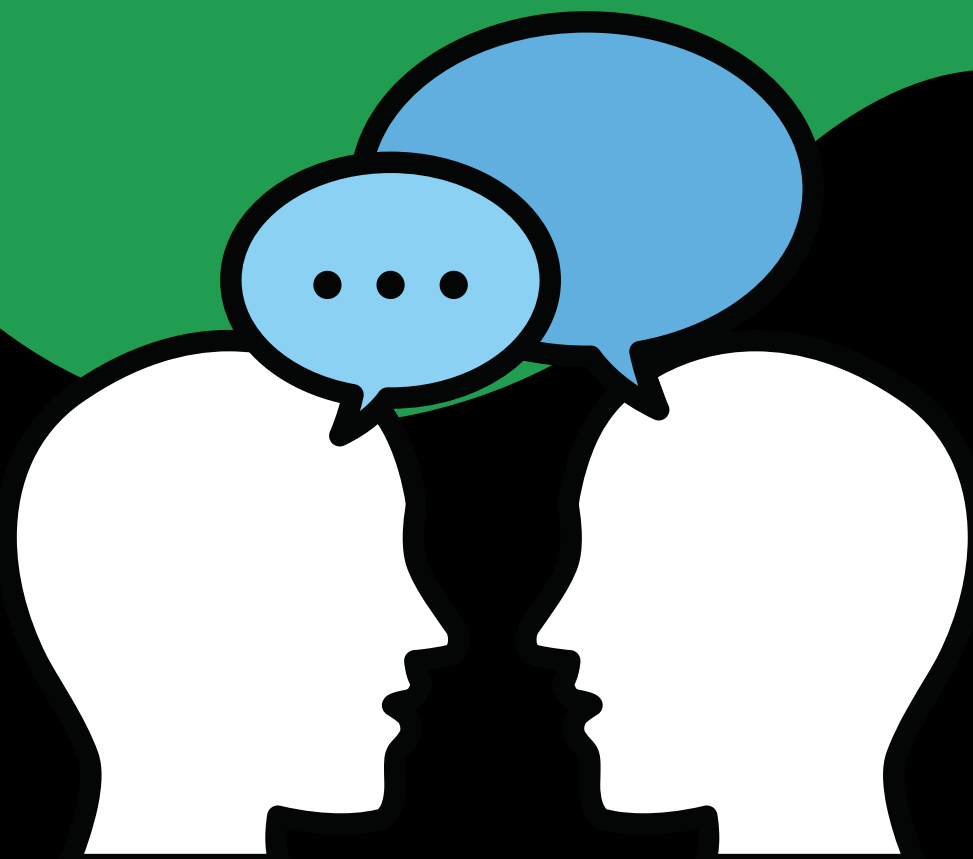


Reflect

Were they positive or negative?

Were they solutions focused?

COMMUNICATION



Strategies:

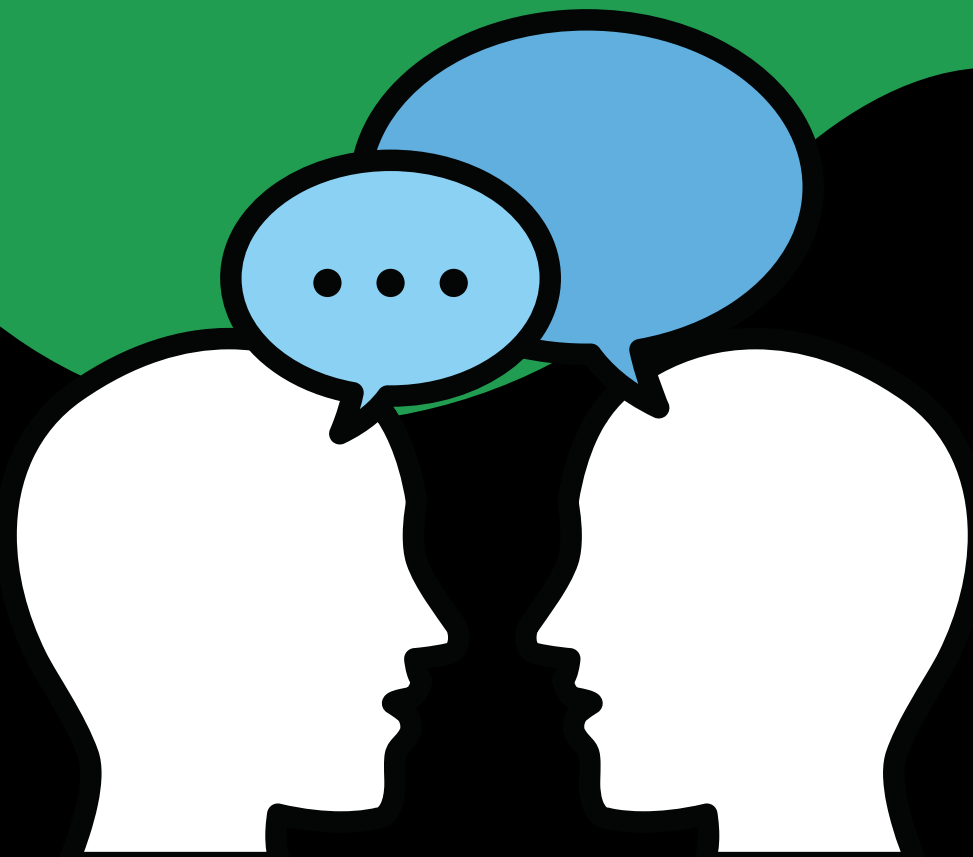
Agree on preferred modes of communication

Request positive updates

Provide updates eg. morning support needed?

Request care team meetings and SSGs

COMMUNICATION



After school conversation starters with young person:

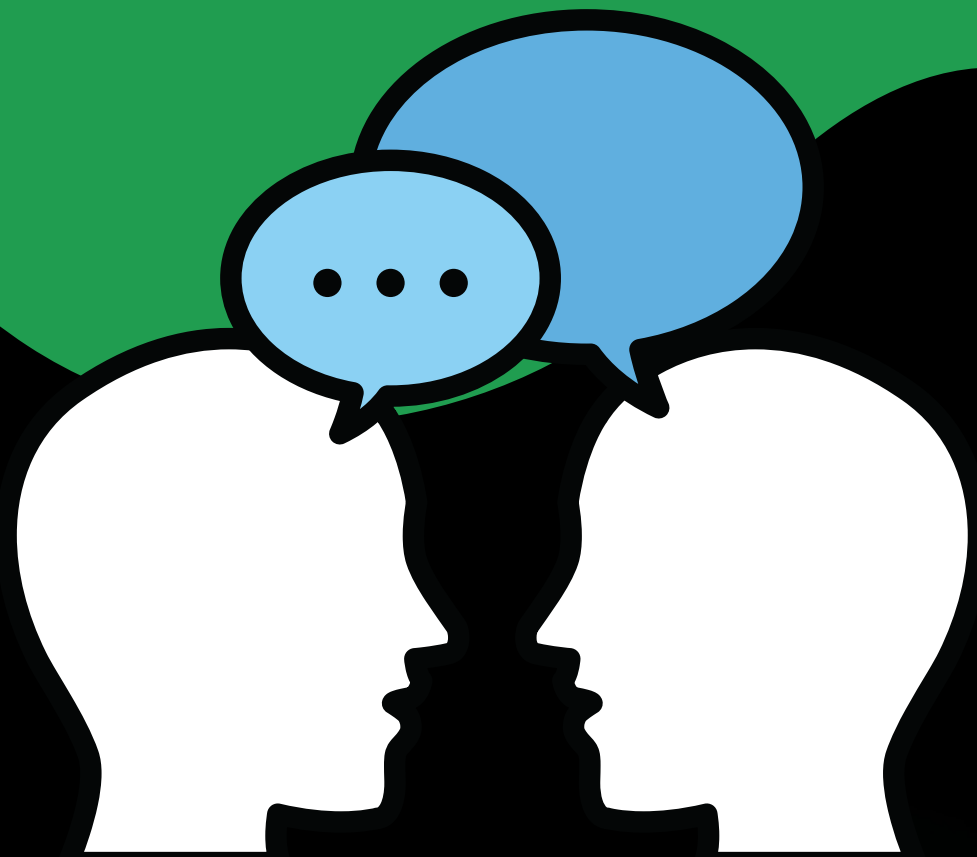
What well well today and why?

Which subjects are you enjoying and why?

Which teachers are helpful and why?

Who did you play with today?

COMMUNICATION



Write down 1 communication strategy you are going to implement

FEELING SAFE



Reflection

Does your child feel safe at
school?

How do you know?



How Can Therapists Help Children with School Refusal? Mona Delahooke, PhD

Psychotherapy
NETWORKER



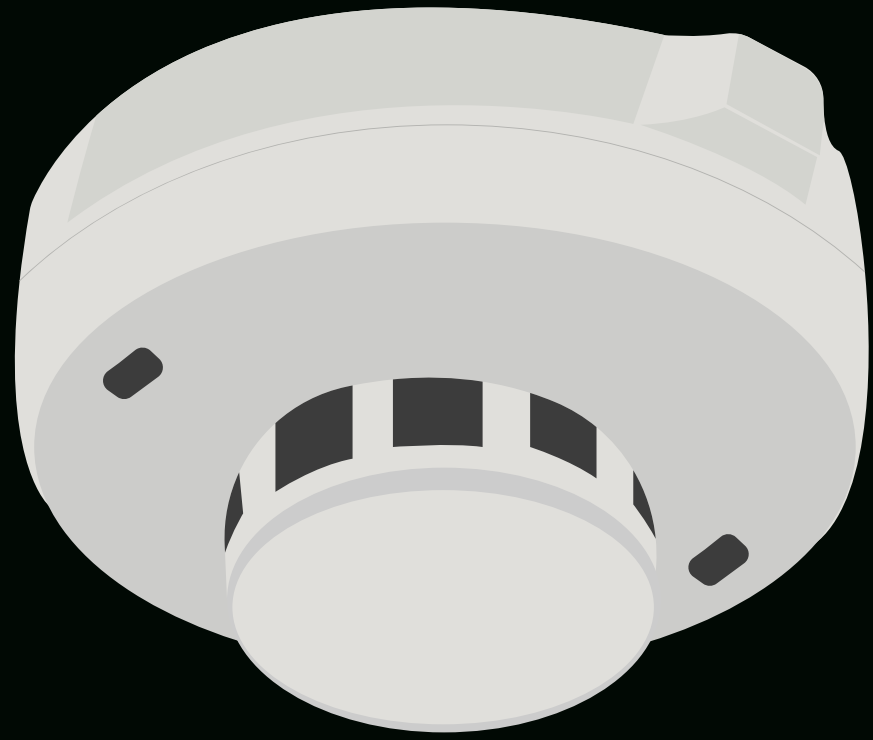
Share



HOW DO YOU HELP CHILDREN WITH SCHOOL REFUSAL?

Mona Delahooke, PhD

Watch on YouTube



**FEELING
SAFE**



Strategies:

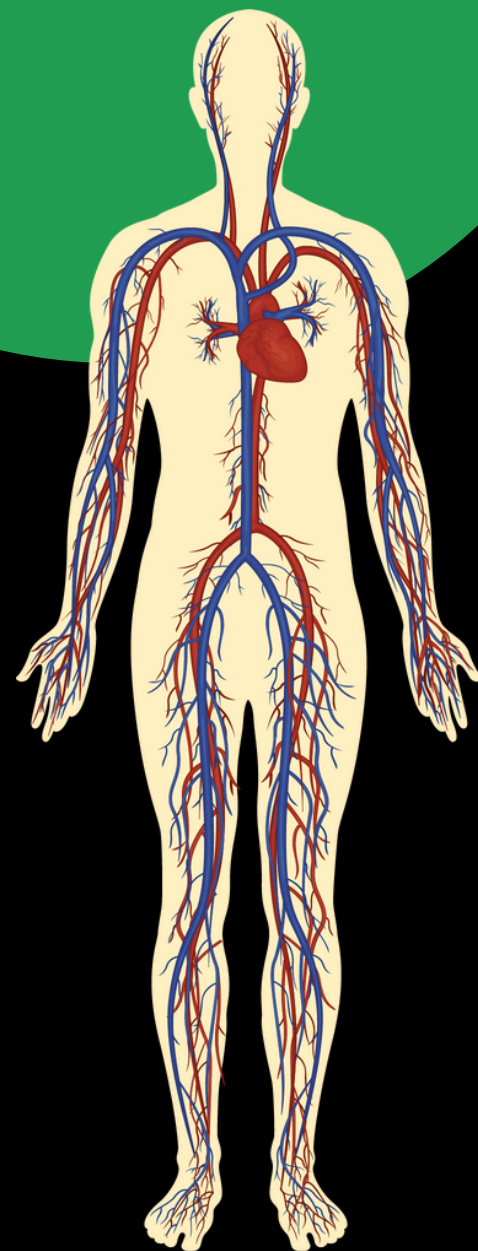
Work together to identify triggers
and high stress moments

Predictable routines

Identify consistent adults at school

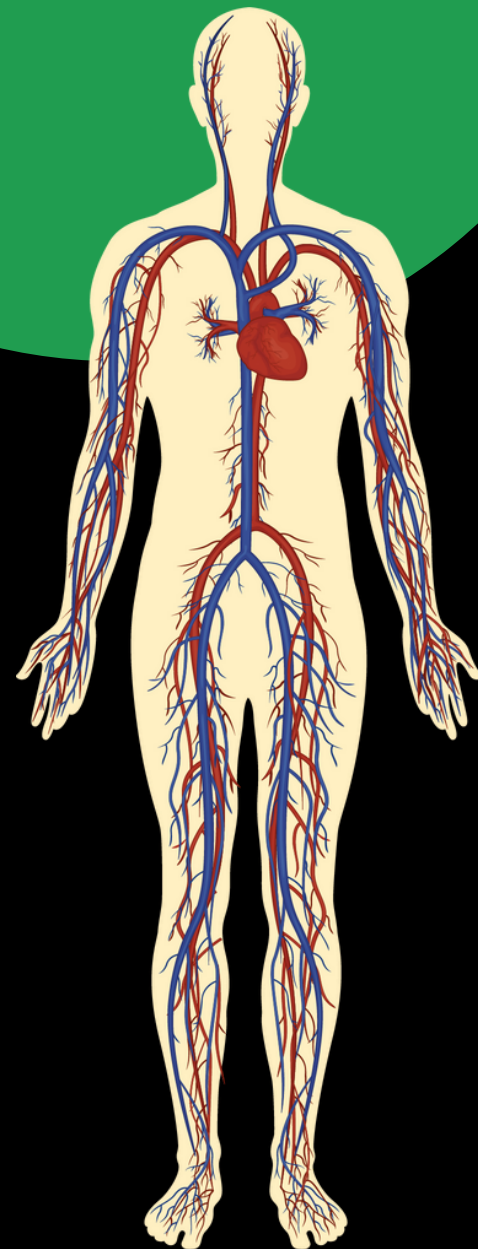
Compassion!!!!!!

REGULATE



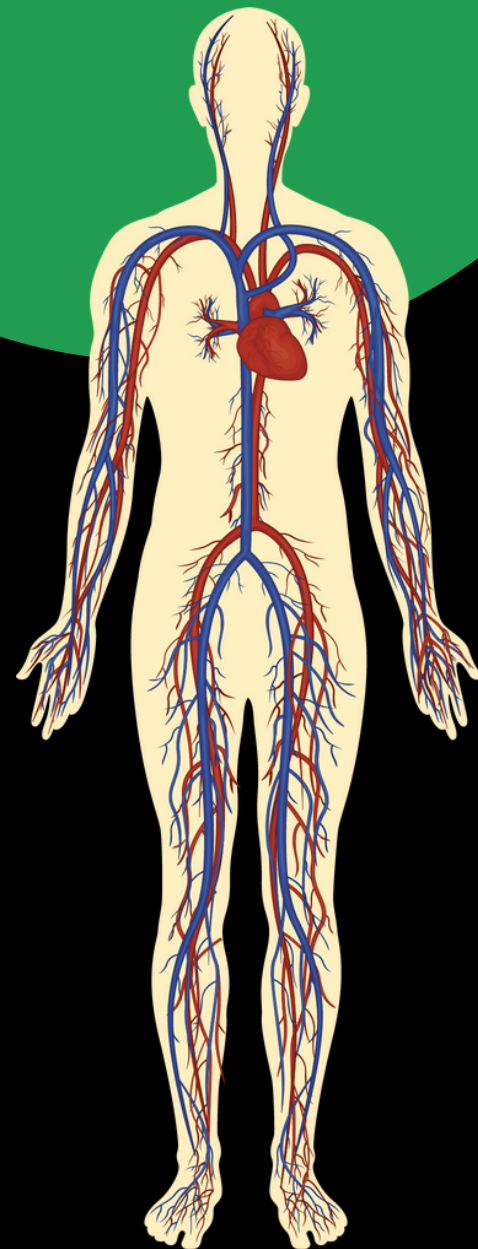
Lower stress and support regulation before and after school.

REGULATE



Share regulation strategies they can easily use during the school day.

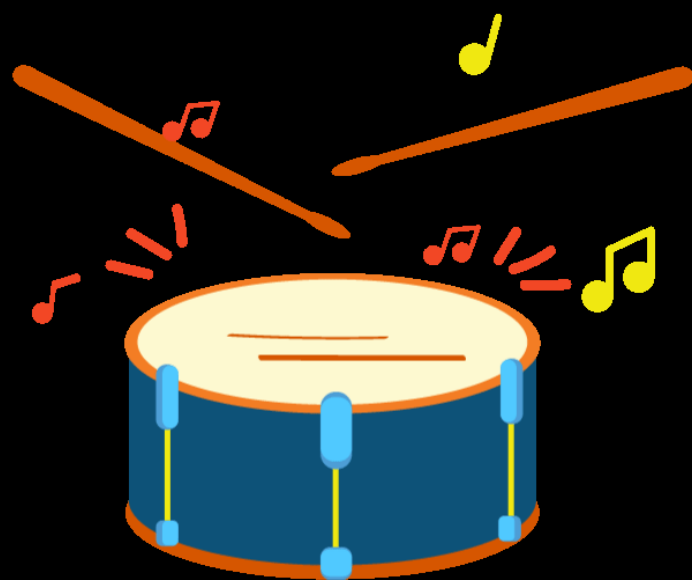
REGULATE



Breathing
Doodling
Walking
Running
Listening to music
Cycling
Mindfulness
Guided imagery
Grounding exercises
Tapping (EFT)
Sensory and movement breaks
Calm zone at home

PATTERN REPETITIVE RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES

Perry, 2014



Our nervous system responds to PRRAs, letting the brain know we are safe.

PRRAs- anything that has repeated pattern.

Eg. Music, dancing, boxing, running, painting, skipping, swings, trampoline, colouring in, breathing.

PATTERN REPETITIVE RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES

Let's try it! Game of 7's

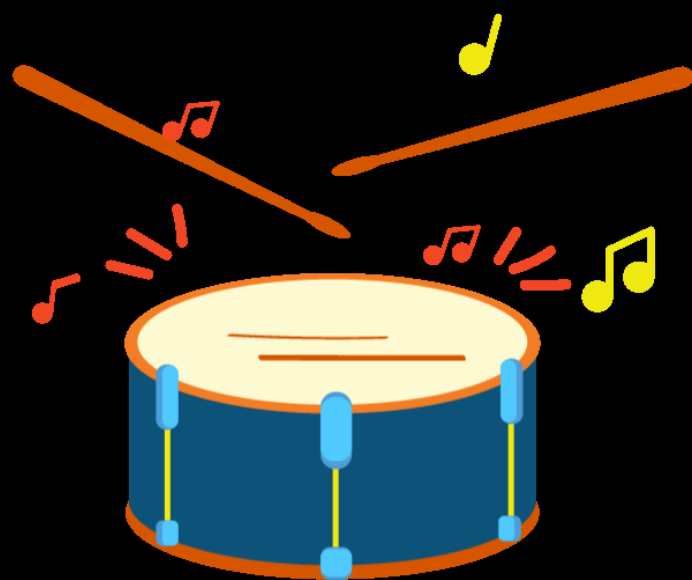
Round 1: AAAAAAA

Round 2: ABABABA

Round 3: ABCABCA

Round 4: ABCDABC

etc..



STRENGTHS



Does the child know their strengths?

VIA character strengths:
www.viacharacter.org

STRENGTHS

Do you know your strengths?

VIA character strengths:
www.viacharacter.org





Creativity



Curiosity



Judgment



Perspective



Bravery



Perseverance



Zest



Honesty



Social Intelligence



Kindness



Love



Leadership



Fairness



Teamwork



Forgiveness



Love of Learning



Gratitude



Spirituality



Self-Regulation



Humility



**Appreciation
of Beauty**



Prudence



Hope



Humor

Write

What are your top 5 strengths?

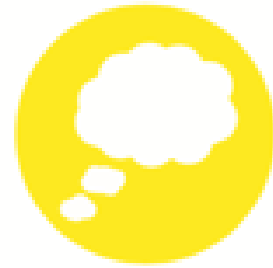
Write them down.



Creativity



Curiosity



Judgment



Perspective



Bravery



Perseverance



Zest



Honesty



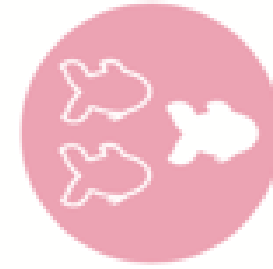
Social Intelligence



Kindness



Love



Leadership



Fairness



Teamwork



Forgiveness



Love of Learning



Gratitude



Spirituality



Self-Regulation



Humility



**Appreciation
of Beauty**



Prudence



Hope



Humor

Write

What are the young person's top strengths?

Write them down.

STRENGTHS



Strengths conversation starters:

“Which strengths did you use today?”

“Did you know you just showed the strength of _____ when you said/did _____?”

“What do you think your top strengths are?”

RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL SKILLS



Consider

What strategies are being used to support the child socially at school?

Any challenges?

RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL SKILLS



Relationships are the most important part of our wellbeing.

Good relationships will help us to feel we belong at school.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL SKILLS



Wellbeing = Academic
success

Low wellbeing =
Academic challenges

Relationships = wellbeing

RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL SKILLS



Strategies for relationships:

Identify at least 1-2 trusted adults at school

Support young person to repair relationships after conflict

Use social stories to build skills

Model positive relationships with school



Sometimes, my body gets a little too high. This could be
Zones Of Regulation and Autism : Animated Social Sto...
when i m feeling super silly, excited, or annoyed.

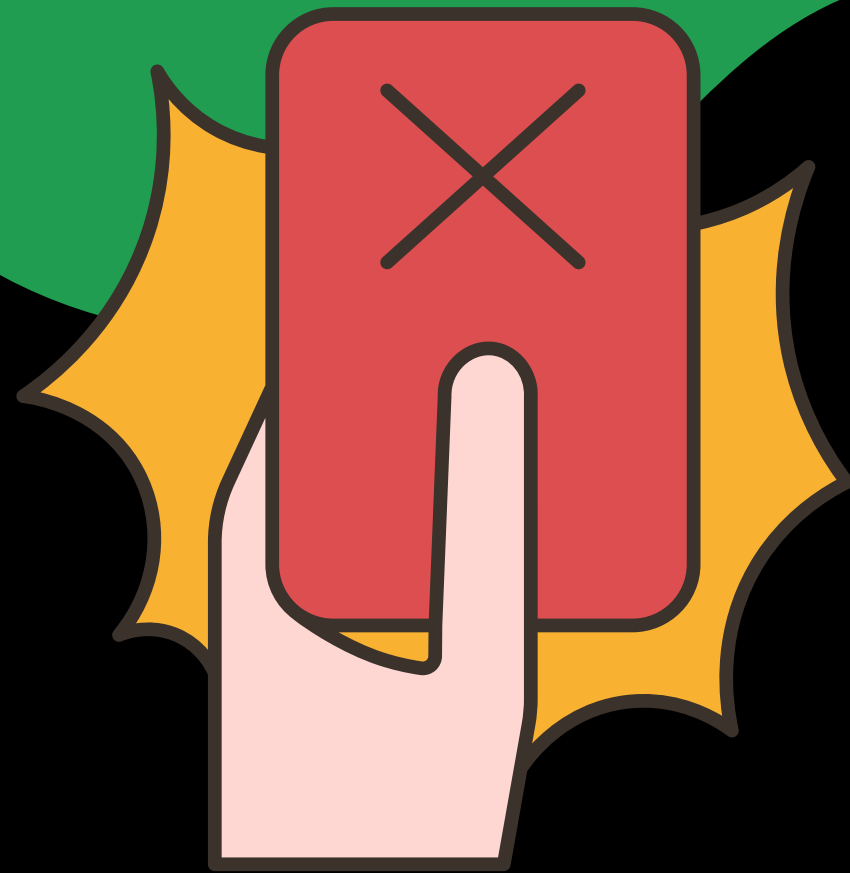


Copy link



Watch on YouTube

"BEHAVIOUR" PLANS



Advocate for:

Recognising and enhancing the wellbeing of the young person

Regulation strategies to lower stress

Focus on "why" a behaviour occurred and prevention

Solutions over consequences

**KEY
TAKEAWAY?**



Thank you!

For training visit: carerkafe.org.au

Follow us on Facebook for updates



The Carer Kafe program is hosted by three agencies working in partnership: **The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)** and **Kinship Carers Victoria**. Carer Kafe is supported by a Governance Group, which includes the following organisations:



Keep in touch

The Wagtail Institute is
dedicated to supporting
wellbeing in complex settings

megan@megancorcoran.com.au

wagtailinstitute.com

Instagram: [wagtail.institute](https://www.instagram.com/wagtail.institute)

