The Next Step: Building on Strengths in the Schools and Community
“Self – Regulation”

Looks Like, Sounds Like, Feels Like

Many of the Slides Within This Presentation
Are From a Presentation in Lethbridge on October 7, 2015.
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The Beginning...
Success Requires:

• Creativity
• Flexibility
• Self-Regulation

All of these qualities are “executive functions” supported by the Prefrontal Cortex.

- EF’s are more important for school readiness than IQ.
- Predict math and reading competence thro’ school years.
Engagement in Self-Regulation

- We all know and feel the stress.
- We see many students with problems in mood, behaviour, attention, and physical well-being as a result of excessive stress.
- The burden carried by educators and parents as a result of child/youth stress.
- The dramatic advances in our understanding of the impact of excessive stress.
- The effectiveness of Self-Reg.
Brain Development – Brain Stem – Survival or Reptilian Brain

Controls the rhythms of life: heartbeat, waking, sleeping, breathing, cyclical release of hormones

Arousal systems

Reaction to threat: fight, flight or freeze.
Brain Development – Limbic System – Emotional Brain

1. Attaches an emotional meaning to experiences
2. Based on reward vs. threat
3. Stores emotional memories and uses them to signal the Survival Brain
Brain Development – Neo-Cortex – Thinking Brain

- Evaluates emotions in a more sophisticated manner
- Impulse control, planning, organization
- Making meaning – making sense of the world
POSITIVE STRESS
A healthy part of development

- A mild stress response
- Caring adults offer support so the duration is short
- Positive in the presence of caring adults
- Prepares the brain and body for stressful situations later in life
TOLERABLE STRESS

Not harmful with support from caregivers

- A more severe stress response
- Not good for development, but;
- Won’t do lasting damage if caring adults are present to buffer the stress response
TOXIC STRESS

Weakens brain architecture

- Intense, repeated and prolonged response to stressful event
- No caring adults around to buffer the stress response
- Disrupts brain architecture and increases lifelong health risks
Stress Performance Connection

- Low: Sleep
- Medium: Alertness
- High: Optimal, Anxiety, Disorganization, High Performance

Performance Scale:
- Low
- Medium
- High

Stress Scale:
- Low
- Medium
- High
Stress Response System: “Fight, flight, freeze”

- **Fight** – physiological arousal
  - Aggression
  - Irritability
  - Trouble concentrating
  - Hyperactivity or “silliness”

- **Flight** – withdrawal and escape
  - Social isolation
  - Avoidance of others – sitting alone in class or at recess
  - Running away

- **Freeze** – stilling and constriction (Submission, Collapse, Dissociation)
  - Constricted emotional expression
  - Stillness of behaviour
  - Over-compliance or denial of own needs
Amygdala and Hippocampus
When Calmly Focused and Alert

• modulate emotions
• pay attention and ignore distractions
• inhibit impulses
• assess the consequences of an action
• understand what others are thinking and feeling
• the effects of their own behaviours
• feel empathy for others
5 Domains of Self-Regulation

- biological
- emotional
- cognitive
- social
- pro-social
5 Domains of Self-Regulation

- **Biological** – level of energy
- **Emotional** – feelings and moods
- **Cognitive** – mental processes
- **Social** – social cues and social appropriateness
- **Prosocial** – behaviours that promote social acceptance and empathy

“To work on any one domain …of self-regulation, we have to work on all of the domains.”

p 104
Paradigm Revolution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FROM</th>
<th>TO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problems</td>
<td>Possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stressed</td>
<td>Calm, Focussed and Alert</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 Steps of Self-Regulation

1. Reframe
2. Recognize the stressors
3. Reduce the stress
4. Reflect
5. Respond
What’s Happening In Our Jurisdictions
Big Idea

Self-regulation is the ability to:

• Modify energy and emotions to match the situation,
• ignore distractions,
• have meaningful social interactions,
• and empathize with others.
What do you currently

• Do to support children in learning how to self-regulate?
• Change in the environment to reduce children’s stress levels?
• Do to support children in recognizing when they are under or over-stimulated?
• Do to help children recognize what sorts of activities help them to become calmly focused and alert and what activities they need to limit?

Are we embedding self-regulation into our daily practice?

Think – Pair -- Share
Future Learning

• Peer Learning
• Peersite
• www.self-reg.ca
• http://developingchild.harvard.edu/
• http://www.albertafamilywellness.org/
• 2 Day Institute
Process For Southern Alberta

- Existing Need Identified
- Steering Committee Jurisdictions, RCSD AHS Consortia
- Collaborative Day
- Work Within Jurisdictions
- Shanker Self Regulation Day
What might be your next steps as a jurisdiction?

What support do your system leaders, your school leaders, your teachers, your support staff, your community partners, or your parents need?

Who should be at the table as you move forward to de-stress and to self-regulate?

What support can CASS members provide regionally or provincially?

Think – Pair -- Share