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Schedule


0915 - 1000 hr	Presentation (45-min)
1000 - 1015 hr	Questions (15-min)



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Presenter Disclosure


- Faculty: Michael Cheng, M.D., FRCPC
- Relationships with financial sponsors (within past 2-years):
 - Speakers Bureau/Honoraria:
 - Metis Nation of Ontario (2021, 2020)
 - Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) (2021, 2020)
 - Ottawa Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) (2021)
 - uOttawa CPD (2021)
 - Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB) (2021)
 - Health Canada (2021)
 - ON-BPD (2022)
 - REACH Canada (2022)
 - Other:
 - Member of an Ontario Ministry of Health Alternate Funding Plan



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Disclosure of Financial Support

- Financial support / honoraria for this presentation: None
- In-kind support from Health Canada in the form of infrastructure.
- Potential for Conflicts of Interest:
 - None identified.
 - The speaker is involved with eMentalHealth.ca, which may be mentioned as a resource;



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Mitigating Potential Bias

- Recommendations are consistent with published literature.
- Recommendations are consistent with current practice patterns.
- Treatments or recommendations in this presentation are unrelated to products/ services/treatments involved in the disclosure statements.



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Learning Objectives

- By the end of this session, participants will be able to describe:
 - What we need for mental health, wellness and resiliency.
 - How to foster self-regulation in our children and ourselves;
 - Embed daily activities and routines that wellness, resiliency and self-regulation in **2022 and beyond.**



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Let's Start with a Story



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Story

- You are the parent of a school-aged child.
- When happy, your child is the most awesome kid in the world.
- But the past few years have been tough.
- They're more:
 - Stressed out,
 - Anxious and moody
 - Complaining about going to school
 - Whining about usual chores / responsibilities.




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Case

- When they get home from school, they rush to their electronic screens.
- On the one hand
 - You would like them to do their homework, and contribute to the household...
 - So half of the time, you get annoyed that they aren't helping, but all that seems to do is get them annoyed at you, and all they want to do is rush to their devices anyways.




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Case

- On the other hand
 - You've had a long day with work and household responsibilities yourself.
 - You just don't have the energy to fight.
 - So the other half of the time, you just let it go, and let them use their devices.
- Before you know it, its bedtime, and they haven't done any work or chores.
 - So they whine as you pry the screens away.
 - You ask yourself if its like this for everyone and if it gets any easier...




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Pre-Quiz


Q. What is your best hope for your kids?

- a) I just want them to be happy.
- b) I just want them to be able to self-regulate.



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A History of Resiliency



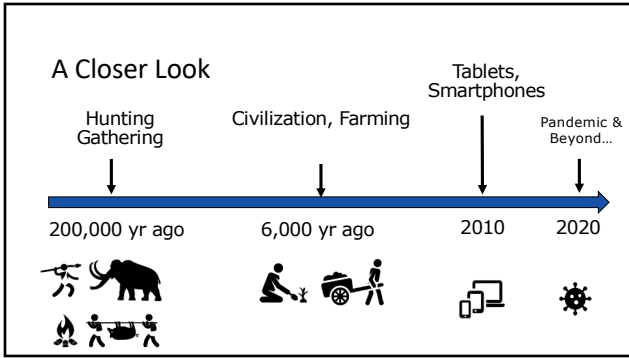
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Humans are quite resilient

- 2 M years ago
 - First early humans emerged in Africa.
- 300,000 years ago
 - Homo sapiens (us!) appear in Africa.
- 70,000 years ago
 - Human population apparently dropped to its lowest point 3,000-10,000 people.
 - Luckily for us, we survived.
- Today
 - Humans (for better or for worse) dominate the planet.



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This Explains Why Human Brains Are Wired to Require...

- Basic needs
 - Face-to-face connections
 - Nature / Movement
 - Nutrition
 - Sleep
- Belonging, Purpose, Meaning, Hope*

* Health Canada, First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework, 2014

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Survival Activities Give Our Brains Adrenaline, Dopamine and Oxytocin

Hunting-gathering (violence)
Reproduction (sex)
Eating (rich foods)

→ Adrenaline
Dopamine

Face-to-Face Connections

→ Oxytocin

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Problem: Why Work for Our Adrenaline/Dopamine When We Can Get it from an Electronic Screen?

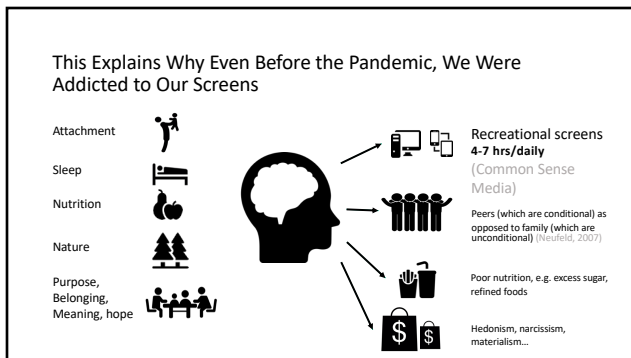
Hunting-gathering (violence)
Reproduction (sex)
Eating (rich foods)

→ Adrenaline
Dopamine

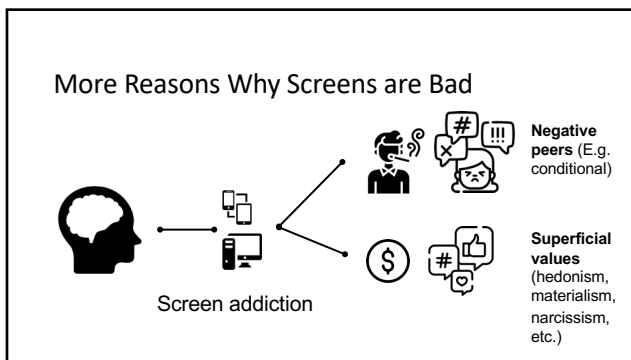
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My Own Journey to Self-Regulation

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As a Younger Psychiatrist...

- I learned all about
 - Deep breathing
 - Journaling
 - Going for a run
 - Yoga
- But in the real world, youth and families who are upset do not want to do deep breathing, journaling, going for a run, etc.



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None of my patients want to do deep breathing when they're upset.
Is it them? Are they unmotivated?
Choose to be difficult? Or am I the problem?



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- Now I realize that its about matching the
 - Right strategy to the
 - Right person at the
 - Right time...
- Its about Self-regulation



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Self-Regulation Skills for Resiliency

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Imagine a Car

- To get from Point A to Point B, it needs different gears or modes.

Low Gear Low Gear Park
High Gear Reverse Gear

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Imagine a Person

- Life consists of a bunch of daily routines and activities.

Sun Person Moon
Car Bed (Zz)

30

Life = Daily Routines and Activities

7 AM		Wake up Breakfast Get dressed
8 AM		Bus to school
8:30 – 2:30 PM		School
2:30-3 PM		Walk home
3 PM		Free time
5:30 PM		Dinner
5:30-8 PM		Evening routines
8 PM		Bedtime routines / Sleep

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Throughout the Day, Our Nervous System Goes Into Different Modes or States

7 AM		Wake up Breakfast Get dressed	
8 AM		Van to school	
8:30 – 2:30 PM		School	
2:30-3 PM		Van or walk home	
3 PM		Free time	
5:30 PM		Dinner	
5:30-8 PM		Evening routines	
8 PM		Bedtime routines / Sleep	

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Just Right (“Green Zone”): What is It?


- Human beings function best when “just right” (“wise mind”)
- Calm, relaxed,
- Can think logically, rationally and problem-solve.
- Can talk about thoughts, feelings, behaviours.
- Cortical brain is working when in this zone.
- Can focus, function with activities, home, work, school.

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Just Right (“Green Zone”): How to Get Here?


- Basic, physical needs
 - Getting enough sleep;
 - Healthy nutrition;
 - Being physically active
 - Getting nature time / outdoors;
 - Face-to-face time with other people.



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Just Right (“Green Zone”): How to Get Here?


- Higher needs
 - People / activities that give belonging, purpose, hope, meaning:
 - Home: Contributing through chores / responsibilities; getting along, connected with family.
 - School: Learning, connected to teachers, peers.
 - Work: Having purpose, connected to coworkers.
 - Community: Contributing, feeling connected to your community.



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Are they Just Right (“Green Zone”)?

- This is where you can
 - Problem-solve and talk about difficult situations, and work together to find solutions.
 - E.g. talking about learning stress, or school stress.
 - Increase expectations, push them further
 - E.g. talk about any new family routines, such as family board game night (if you are trying to remove technology)



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“Just Right”: Our Goal as Parents

- Parents often say
 - “I just want my child to be happy.”
- Helping your child self-regulate (by example, by teaching) is the best way to get to “happy”.



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Bored / Understimulated: What is It?

- “Bored or “understimulated” is when we are not getting enough stimulation, such as
 - Physical stimulation, e.g. lack of physical activities.
 - Emotional / social stimulation, e.g. lack of emotional warmth from others, or lack of social contact.
 - Brain stimulation, e.g. not learning, not being challenged.



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Q. What Happens if You Grandma You’re Bored?



39

Bored / Understimulated? What Helps


- Giving more stimulation:
 - Healthy ways
 - Contributing through chores and responsibilities to the home and the tribe.
 - Being physically active outside.
 - Physical stimulation, e.g. Physical activity, ideally outside.
 - Sensory stimulation such as music.
 - Social contact with nurturing people
 - Not so healthy ways
 - Excessive screen time; addictions, etc.



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Bored / Understimulated? What Helps

- Learning to tolerate boredom (i.e. low dopamine / adrenaline), i.e. Mindfulness
 - Have times when you are focused on the present, whatever you are doing in the moment without distraction (internal or external) such as
 - Yoga and meditation.
 - Daily mindfulness, e.g. doing any daily activity **without distraction**
 - Examples:
 - Driving in the car (without distraction)
 - Cleaning or household chores (without distraction)
 - Being in nature (without distractions)



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Are You Doing Something That Your Kids Could be Doing? **Involve** them.

- Don't say, "I have chores for you."
- Do say, "I could really use some help."



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Stress is Inevitable



- Physical stresses
 - Tired, hungry, fatigued, medical issues
- Home stress
 - Stress and health issues with family members (e.g. parental separation / divorce, health issues, etc.)
 - Conflicts /disagreements with family, etc.
- School stress
 - Peers
 - Learning issues
- Brain conditions such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), anxiety, ADHD, depression, etc.

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Stressed (“Yellow Zone” “Emotional brain”)

- Your brain becomes
 - “Emotional”, upset, stressed (“limbic brain”, “limbic hijack”)
 - Unable to respond to advice, or logic.
- When upset, people
 - Don’t like suggestions such as “Calm down”, or “Let’s do deep breathing”, nor advice.
 - Do want you to listen, and be empathetic (i.e. agree with their feelings).

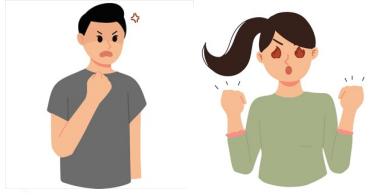
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So What Do We Do When Our Loved Ones Are Upset?



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Q. Has a Friend / Partner Ever Been Upset (at you)?



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Q. When your spouse / partner is upset, what is the best strategy?

- a) Calmly use logic and tell them what they should be doing, e.g. "Calm down, do your deep breathing, etc."
- b) Listen, validate and empathize until they are calmer.



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Q. When your spouse / partner is upset, what is the best strategy?

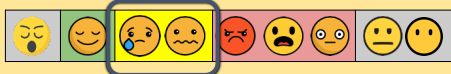
- a) Calmly use logic and tell them what they should be doing, e.g. "Calm down do your deep breathing, etc."
- b) Listen, validate and empathize until they are calmer.



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Stressed (“Yellow Zone” “Emotional brain”)

- Don't give advice or suggestions, e.g. "Calm down", "Let's do deep breathing", "Have you tried..."
- Don't get into arguments with your loved one; don't try to win any arguments.
- Don't expect them to be logically answer, e.g. "What's wrong?" "Why are you feeling this way?" "How can we solve this?"
- Don't raise your voice
- Don't punish or give consequences at this time.



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Is Your Loved One in the Yellow Zone? Support Not Solutions

- Do's
 - Validate feelings, empathize, accept
 - This is a stressful time. Its okay to feel upset / mad / sad / scared..."
 - "You're upset / frustrated..."
 - "You want ____ (e.g. to see your friends, to keep watching TV)
 - "It's frustrating / upsetting when ____"
 - Comfort, co-regulate
 - "Let me give you a hug. Its good to cry and let out your feelings."
 - Tears help people process losses.



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Are there Lots of Yellow Zones? Plan Ahead

- Do's
 - Do ask them AHEAD OF TIME when they are in the GREEN ZONE about what works for people in YELLOW ZONE.



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Are You in the Yellow Zone?

- Do's
 - Do whatever you need to do in order to calm down.
 - Consider asking for support from others
 - Let others know that what you need, such as
 - Emotional support
 - Validation, or
 - Distraction.
 - Let others know if you do NOT need advice and solutions.
 - Do have a good cry, as tears are a powerful self-regulating and processing mechanism.



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Are You in the Yellow Zone?

- Don'ts
 - Don't try thinking too much when you are upset.
 - It may often make things worse.
 - Don't try responding to situations when you are upset, e.g.
 - Avoid texting or emailing others when upset;
 - If you do write a text or email, save it as a draft and look at it when you are feeling calmer.
 - Tell yourself that you will get back to it when you are feeling calmer.



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Is your Loved One Back in Green Zone?

- Once calm again, now is the time to
 - Use logical, rational problem-solving
 - Talk more fully about things.
 - Discuss consequences if necessary.



54

Are You Back in Green Zone?

- Once calm again, now is the time to
 - Use logical, rational problem-solving
 - Talk more fully about things.
 - Discuss consequences if necessary.

55

“Fight or Flight” (“Red Zone”)

- Too much stress?
 - Things may go into Red Zone
- Our primitive reptilian, “fight/flight” brain takes over.
 - “Fight”, e.g. anger, aggression, e.g. temper tantrum / road rage, etc.
 - “Flight”, e.g. running away, hiding in the corner.
 - “Freeze”, e.g. “like a deer in headlights.”
- Neither logical brain nor emotional brain work

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Why We Have “Fight or Flight” (“Red Zone”)

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Why We Have "Fight or Flight" ("Red Zone")

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"Fight or Flight" ("Red Zone")

- Examples include
 - "Road rage"
 - "Mask rage"
 - "Air rage"
 - "Blinded by rage"

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Is Your Loved One in "Fight or Flight" ("Red Zone")? Soothing Space and Time

- Do's
 - Do ride out the wave, weather out the storm...
 - Do give space, e.g. "Let me give you some space – I'll check on you in a few minutes."
 - Do reduce sensory overload, e.g. excess noise, light, people...
 - Call a crisis line if necessary.

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Is Your Loved One in “Fight or Flight” (“Red Zone”)? Soothing Space and Time

- Don'ts
 - Don't make things worse, e.g. don't raise your voice or scream or yell or go into your own yellow or red zone.
 - Don't threaten with more consequences

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Are You in “Fight or Flight” (“Red Zone”)? Soothing Space and Time

- Do's
 - Do go somewhere quiet and calming.
 - Do give “soothing space and time”
 - Do “ride the storm”.
- Don'ts
 - Don't make things worse, e.g. don't engage with others if you are overwhelmed.
 - Don't get revenge or get back at others.

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Daily Routine

Do we understand a person's self-regulation?

Create a daily schedule where

- Triggers are minimized;
- Self-regulating / modulating routines are embedded in the schedule.

7 AM		Wake up Breakfast Get dressed
8 AM		Van to school
8:30 – 2:30 PM		School
2:30-3 PM		Van or walk home
3 PM		Arrive home Put away school bag Free time • Play outside • Drawing, reading, music
5:30 PM		Dinner

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Historical Examples of Self-Regulation

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Traditional Activities Helped Us Self-Regulate

- Children spent their days physically active outside, with adults doing day-to-day activities necessary for survival, giving belonging, purpose, meaning...



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Modern Examples of Self-Regulation

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Modern Day Coping Strategies

- Active
 - Going for a run
- Mindful
 - Deep breathing.
 - Yoga
- Creative arts
 - Journaling.
- Social
 - Talking / seeing a friend or family member.
- Passive distractions
 - Watching videos, playing video games, listening to music.

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Example of Using Self-Regulation in a Typical Day

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Self-Regulation Quiz

- Your kids are at school.
- You are reading an internet article that talks about how important for your kids to do more chores.
- You decide to set some new expectations about chores and responsibilities.
- You can't wait until your son gets home.
- Your son comes home, but he's all upset because he had a bad day...


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Self-Regulation Quiz

Q. What do you say to your son?

- a) "You're old enough to help out more. I'm going outside to cook dinner on the grill, and you're going to make the table."
- b) "Let's make dinner. Can you help me out?"
- c) "You look like you had a rough day. Let me give you a hug. What's up?"




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Self-Regulation Quiz

Q. What do you say to your son?

- a) "You're old enough to help out more. I'm going outside to cook dinner on the grill, and you're going to make the table."
- b) "Let's make dinner. Can you help me out?"
- c) "You look like you had a rough day. Let me give you a hug. What's up?" – CORRECT




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Self-Regulation Quiz

- a) "You look like you had a rough day. Let me give you a hug. What's up?"

- CORRECT!
 - "Connection before direction"
 - When people are upset, we must connect with them and co-regulate with them, until they can one day self-regulate....
- He cries as he tells you how one of the kids was mean to him today, plus the supply teacher gave him a hard day today too.
- Your son calms down enough and is now back in the green zone.




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Self-Regulation Quiz

Q. What do you do now?

- a) Say, "You're old enough to help out with dinner. I'm going outside to cook dinner on the grill, and you're going to make the table."
- b) Say, "I'm starving. Let's make dinner together. I'd love it if you could come outside and help me with the grill."




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Self-Regulation Quiz: ANSWER

Q. What do you do now?

- a) Say, "You're old enough to help out with dinner. I'm going outside to cook dinner on the grill, and you're going to make the table."
- b) Say, "I'm starving. Let's make dinner together. I'd love it if you could come outside and help me with the grill." – CORRECT




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Explanation

- a) Say, "I'm starving. Let's make dinner together. I'd love it if you could come outside and help me with the grill." – CORRECT

When teaching a new skill, always best to go in very small steps.
 Start with doing the new skill **with your child**.
 Start with having your child watch you do the skill.
 Then do the skill **beside your child**.
 Later on when child has mastered the skill, we might try letting your child do on their own – nonetheless, there is a power in doing the skill **together**.



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Many Parenting/Mental Health Challenges Are Self-Regulation Challenges

- Are your kids watching too much technology?
 - Give them more non-electronic chores, responsibilities, activities to keep them occupied.
 - See our previous Health Canada Presentation on Screen Time. ☺
- Are your kids bored?
 - Give them more chores / responsibilities.
- Are your kids fighting with each other?
 - Is it because they are bored?
 - Give them more chores / responsibilities.
 - Is it because they lack interpersonal skills?
 - Give them more chores / responsibilities interacting **with other people**.


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Post-Quiz


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Post-Quiz

Q. What is your best hope for your kids?

a) I just want them to be happy.

b) I just want them to be able to self-regulate.


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Post-Quiz

Q. What is your best hope for your kids?

a) I just want them to be happy.

b) I just want them to be able to self-regulate.

Perhaps most of you still feel this way – that’s fine.

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Post-Quiz

Q. What is your best hope for your kids? (or your best hope for your loved ones?)

a) I just want them to be happy.

b) I just want them to be able to self-regulate.

But hopefully more of you will answer this way.

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Summary: How to Help Depends On How They Feel

- Are they calm?
 - Try talking about things logically and problem-solving.
- Are the emotionally upset? (yellow zone)
 - Listen; validate emotions / feelings; accept they are upset.
 - Don't give advice or tell them what to do.
- Are they in fight/flight/freeze? (red zone)
 - Talk in advance with your loved one about what to do in red zone, such as giving space; not talking too much; having a calm sensory environment.

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Want to Learn More About Screen Addiction?

Check out the Rideauwood Talk




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Want to Learn More About (Re)Connecting to Your Kids?

Check out the Parent Connections Talk




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Want to Learn More About Child/Youth Mental Health?

- Supporting your child's mental health and well-being



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Want to Learn More Supporting Your Child with Stress and Anxiety?

Parenting through stress and anxiety



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And Many Other Great Topics


- Special Education - Understanding and Accessing Support for your child
- How to identify risk factors for educational stagnation and formulate an action plan for student success
- The Human Library - Student Voice
- Reading Development: How to Help your Child at Home
- Building children's oral language as a foundation for literacy
- Welcoming and Supporting Newcomer Families with Navigating the School System
- Understanding the Steps to English Proficiency (STEP) Framework for Multilingual Learners
- Transforming Culture and Curriculum to Affirm Identities

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Looking for Mental Health for a Child, Youth or Adult?

Infant, children and youth from birth to aged 21 in Eastern Ontario?



Older youth and adults, aged 16 and above in Eastern Ontario?



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Looking for information about mental health conditions and where to find help?



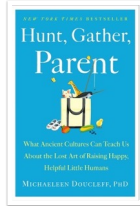
In Partnership with CHEO



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Want to Learn More about Power of Chores and Daily Activities for Resiliency?

- Hunt Gather Parent: What Ancient Cultures Can Teach Us About the Lost Art of Raising Happy, Helpful Little Humans



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Questions?



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