



NEW DIRECTIONS
FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, ADULTS & FAMILIES

Parenting in Difficult Times

Family Therapy Services

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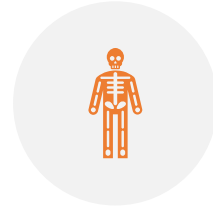
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Managing Your Own Feelings

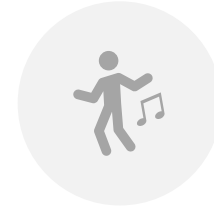
- It is normal to experience many feelings in one day, perhaps even in one hour.
- Sometimes we feel angry because of what we can't do, sometimes we feel sad, other times we forget for a few minutes and feel as if we are living our normal lives.
- Know that you are not alone in feeling this way. There is no right way to feel during this pandemic.



Settling Your Body Helps Settle Your Feelings



BREATHING IN A REGULAR BREATH (COUNT OF 4) AND SLOWLY EXHALING (COUNT OF 6) – DO THIS A MINIMUM OF 10-20 TIMES (SHORT RAPID BREATHS SIGNAL OUR BODY TO BE MORE STRESSED)



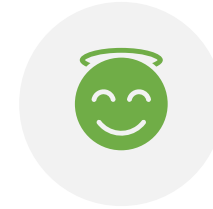
MOVE YOUR BODY - GO FOR A WALK, EXERCISE OR DANCE TO MUSIC



WRITING THINGS DOWN (INSTEAD OF SHOUTING AT OUR KIDS OR OUR PARTNER)



REACHING OUT TO ANOTHER ADULT WHO WILL LISTEN



WATCHING A FAVOURITE SHOW OR LISTENING TO A GOOD PODCAST (WHILE DOING THE BREATHING)


Helping Your Kids Manage Their Feelings

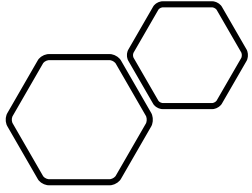
- Kids are feeling all the same feelings you are.
- Sometimes they feel angry because of what they can't do, sometimes they feel sad, other times they forget for a few minutes and feel as if they are living their normal lives.
- Sometimes their feelings are very full and then a small thing happens, and they have a meltdown.



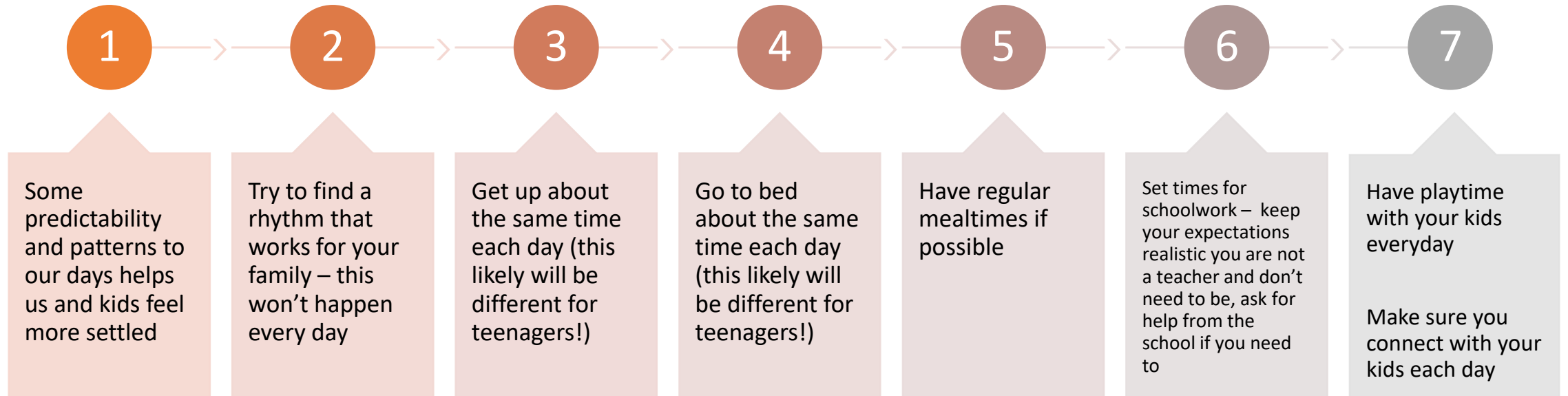
So, What Do Kids Need?

First, they need you to be settled and then they need...

- To settle their body which helps settle their feelings
 - Breathing in a regular breath (count of 4) and slowly exhaling (count of 6) – do this a minimum of 10-20 times (do it with your child(ren) and add a kid friendly feature such as pretending to smell fresh baked cookies and then blowing on them to cool)
 - Take breaks - go for a walk, get some exercise or dance to music
- 



Kids Need Routine



Kids Need Someone To Listen To Them

Just like you, kids need to have someone to listen to them

Try to hear them out - often they are trying to tell you about a struggle they are having

Hear about their worries – try not to tell them about your worries, reach out to another adult to talk about those

Kids Try To Tell Us About Their Feelings Through Their Behaviour

1

Worry, boredom, sadness and frustration come and go for kids (just like it does for us) throughout the day.

2

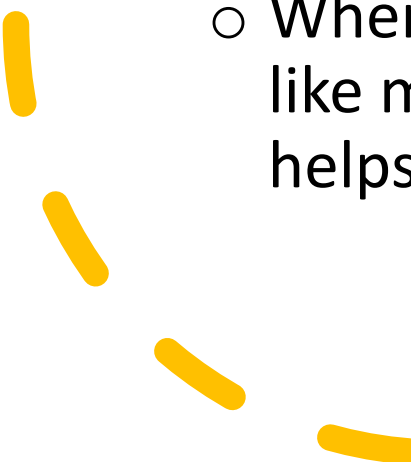
Some kids will say this out loud and some will show it through their moods or behaviour.

3

Read their body language and try to catch subtle signs of struggle. Offering them comfort before their feelings get too big will help kids manage their upset better.



Kids Need...To Feel Involved And Have A Sense Of Control

- It's really hard for older kids and teens to feel the loss of choice and sense of control in their everyday lives
 - When possible, get them involved in some practical decision-making like menu planning, whose playlist to listen to, what game to play - this helps them feel connected and involved
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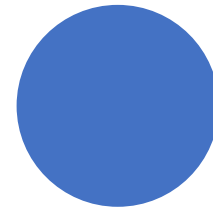
Kids Need Us: To Connect And Play

- Board games, cards, playing catch etc.
- It's good for us and our kids to play – even with our teenagers!
- Kids need time to just be with you
- Being connected helps kids feel safe

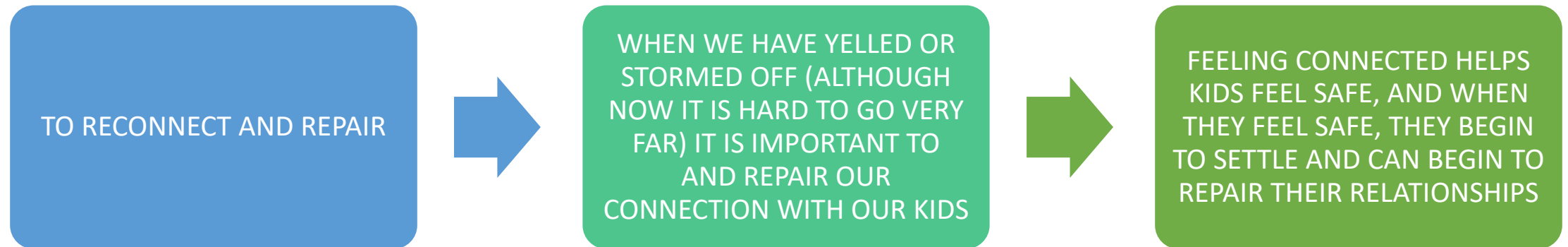


- We know it is hard to keep our cool all the time.
- It is very important to keep everyone safe and to figure out what to do after a meltdown.

What About When I Or My Kids
Have a Melt Down?




So, What Do Parents And Kids Need?





What Can We Do?

- We grown-ups need to go first to reconnect and repair when this happens
 - Comfort, soothe and help your kids calm down (after you are calm)
 - Ask what could we learn from what happened?
 - Ask what do we need to do now?
 - Remind and reassure them that feelings get big and you are both learning how to handle them in this new situation
- 



Fact Check

- Most kids get the news from each other rather than from reliable sources, and accuracy is oftentimes lost as it travels from one child to the next.
- Misinformation (fake news!) can be a cause for confusion and anxiety.
- Be their news source.
- Share age-appropriate information about what is going on and continue conversations around what you can do as a family to stay safe.



Remember!

- Spend time connecting with your kids each day
- Be patient and gentle with yourselves!

Protect Your Kids Online

- Check-up on what your kids are doing online
- www.protectkidsonline.ca



Here Are Some Helpful Links

- Big Feelings Come and Go (Storybook)
 - www.protectchildren.ca/en/order/product/301:en/
 - Read aloud version of the book coming soon to YouTube!
- Making Sense of Trauma Practical Tools for Responding to Children and Youth
 - www.makingsenseoftrauma.ca
- Big Bird's comfy cozy nest
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciGL9fCa8uk&feature=emb_title
- Just Breathe
 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVA2N6tX2cg
- Why do we lose control of our emotions?
 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bKuoH8CkFc