



## WHEN YOUR CHILD COMES IN FROM SCHOOL

### Let your child “power down”—

- ◆ Deal with daily burn-out.
- ◆ Give space and time before asking questions.
- ◆ Allow them to express feelings.
- ◆ Stay focused on the child (no tv, etc.)
- ◆ Tell them that nothing is too difficult to talk about.
- ◆ Show you care and will listen when they are ready to talk. (Set a time—5, 10 minutes, etc.)

### Ask:

- ◆ What is one thing you feel good/positive about today?
- ◆ What is one thing that you learned today?
- ◆ What is one thing that upset you today?
- ◆ Were the directions hard to understand?
- ◆ What can you do the next time if something happens that upsets you?
- ◆ If you change anything about today, what would it be? Why?

### Discuss:

- ◆ Any risky behavior or not following the rules.
- ◆ All students “feeling safe” at school and model, then role-play the appropriate behavior with your child.

**Remember, your child’s perspective, your perspective, and the teacher’s perspective may be different.**

## MENTAL HEALTH - TRAUMA - PTSD in CHILDREN

It is REAL! Children are faced with multiple traumatic experiences that are exacerbated by tv, video games, magazines, older siblings, & parents who have difficulty “drawing the line.” Depression and suicide in children are continuing to climb. Children are taught negative actions by what they see and hear. **SEEK MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE** if a child changes behavior suddenly, withdraws, does not respond, cries often, grades change, begins talking negatively about everything, and changes eating habits and play activities. Anxiety and depression are real in children of all ages. They both can lead to MENTAL HEALTH issues, including cutting, using drugs, and possibly suicide. (Please see the brochure on [ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION.](#))



**Cyberbullying is Serious!**

### **WHAT TO ASK YOUR CHILD IF THEY WANT A CELL PHONE**

Cell phones have made it easy for cyberbullying to occur. The “they won’t know it’s me” and “they’ll never find out” attitudes seem to dull ones’ emotional thermometer. Have your child complete [Digital Compass](#) (a Common Sense Media game that teaches digital citizenship) before handing over the device. Go to <https://www.digitalcompass.org/game>.

#### Ask your child....

**Why do you want a cell phone?**

**Do you understand the rules your family and school have for phone use?**

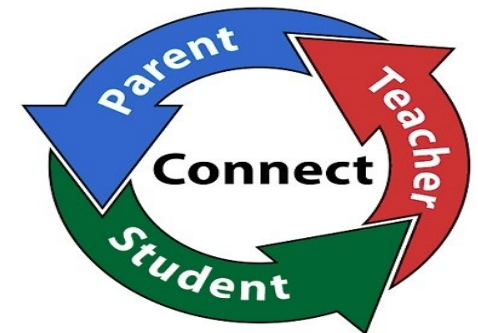
**What are some concerns you think your family and teachers have about phones?**

**What are five places it's not OK to use your phone?**

**What will you do if you lose or break your phone?**



**Helping Children Talk About  
the Tough Times &  
Gaining Resiliency**



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# RESILIENCY

Caregivers can create play experiences for children of all ages that give them ways to engage in solving problems, develop self-regulation skills, and form relationships. Here are some ideas:

- "Simon Says" helps children practice several self-regulation skills (for example, working memory and inhibitory control)
- Legos, blocks, and other tactile toys give children opportunities to solve problems and focus on a goal ("I want to build a tower. How can I build the tower really high without it falling?"). If they are playing with an adult (especially one who lets the child direct the play), they are also building a relationship.
- Breathing exercises and body work (yoga, stretching)
- Reading books, playing games, and having conversations about identifying emotions
- Letting children talk aloud (and/or hear you talk aloud) about solving a problem. What are the pros and cons to possible solutions?
- Dancing, singing, listening to music, and playing musical instruments and experimenting with speed (fast song, slow song), volume (sing loudly, sing quietly), and breath (play your instrument and hold the note as long as you can...now try making short, staccato notes)



Teach your child "gratitude" by

- ◆ Asking your child to express thankfulness for something daily
- ◆ Ask your child to express appreciation for something in their life, daily, for both big and small things alike.

# MELTDOWN SELF-REGULATION

For PARENT-TEACHER-ADULT CARE GIVER:

- **Settle down first**
- **Take a deep breath**
- **Calm your heart beat**
- **Calm your tone of voice**
- **Ignore onlookers**
- **Move to settle the child**

## STRATEGIES THAT INCREASE "JUST RIGHT" STATES

A lot of situations can trigger meltdowns, depending on the person. For example, pain, fear, or unexpected changes to routines or life situations like a divorce or job loss.

- Change or reduce the amount of sensory input. Take to a "safe" room, turn off light, close blinds, etc. Do not leave them alone.
- Lower your body so that your eyes are at or below eye level of the child.
- Speak in short sentences and avoid a lot of questions. This is not the time to "preach."
- Slow down your rate of speech and movement.
- Use a relaxation strategy or tool. Put your palm near the child's chest; say, "It's alright." Hand child a relaxation tool or stress relief toy or calming item. Or, put child's hand over parent's heart so that the child can feel the heart beat and parent's breathing.
- Let the child talk when ready. LISTEN and be patient.
- Avoid providing solutions or problem solve at this time.

## BE PREPARED

- Learn the triggers or patterns
- Teach the child a signal to let you know that something is wrong.
- Be ready with problem solving stories to be used during a calming time.

# VIOLENCE FEAR COPING

- Speak calmly, with patience, responsiveness and sensitivity.
- Be present in a supportive way, understanding that not everyone affected will want or need to talk about their feelings readily.
- Talk with children and validate their feelings, listen and watch their actions carefully.
- Young children may need concrete activities (such as drawing, looking at picture books, or imaginative play) to help them identify and express their feelings.
- Let their questions guide what and how much information to provide.
- Give age appropriate information.
- Emphasize the positive things that children/families/schools can do to stay safe.
- Ask simple, respectful questions about how you can help, without making assumptions about their need.
- Watch for clues that they may want to talk, such as hovering around while you do the dishes or yard work or when students are changing classes or after school.

## MAKING FRIENDS

