



South East Toronto

Family Health Team

Welcome!

What is a Parenting Webinar Series?

Created in response to
the needs of SETFHT
families

Series of free,
educational webinars
on relevant topics to
child and parent mental
health

30 minutes each +
frequently asked
questions



Who am I?

Thea Smith MSW RSW is a registered social worker with expertise in developmental psychology, child and adolescent mental health and family systems. Thea has worked in a counseling capacity in both community and healthcare settings for several years. At SETFHT Thea provides psychotherapy to children and youth, as well as parental support.

PLEASE NOTE:

While based in research and developmental knowledge, everything discussed here are mere suggestions to guide you as opposed to instruct you on your parenting. We all come from different value systems, and you are the expert on your own family. As well, all children are unique so what works for one may not make sense for another. Since this is general advice, if you are looking for personalized guidance please reach out to your doctor.



Childhood Emotional Regulation: Strategies For Families

SETFHT PARENTING WEBINAR SERIES

*In this webinar
parents and
caregivers will:*

- Learn about childhood emotional development
- See emotion regulation as a teachable skill
- Understand the integral role of the caregiver/parent
- Get tools to manage meltdowns in the moment and afterwards
- Overcome common barriers to implementing emotional regulation strategies at home



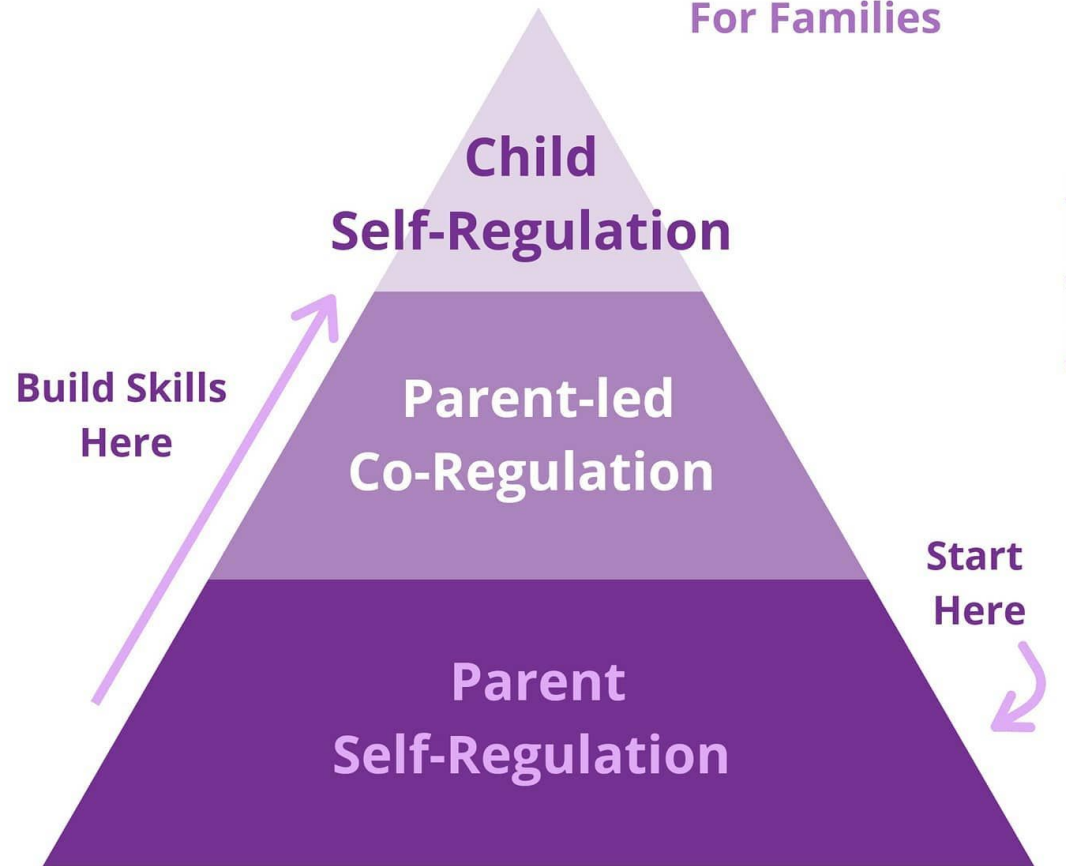
What is
emotional
regulation
?

Emotional regulation, defined

“Emotional-regulation is the ability to manage energy states, emotions, behaviours and attention in ways that are socially acceptable and help achieve positive goals such as maintaining relationships” - Stuart Shanker



Stages of Regulatory Support For Families



In order for your child to learn how to regulate their own emotions and behaviors, they need to consistently experience co-regulation from you and witness you modeling self- vinyl and coping skills.

Emotion regulation at different developmental stages

What kinds of emotions and behaviours are we regulating?



DISTRESS



WORRY



ANGER



FEAR



SADNESS



AGGRESSION

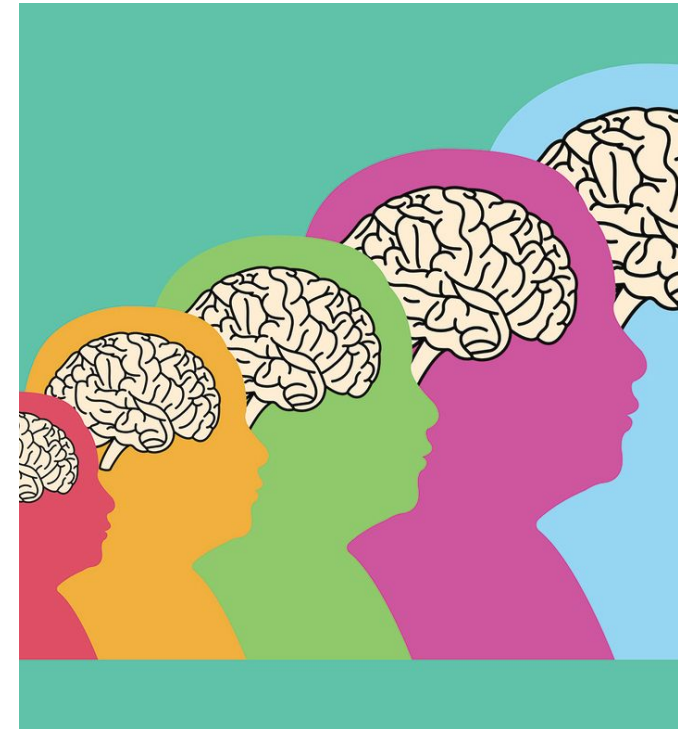


What emotional-regulation is NOT

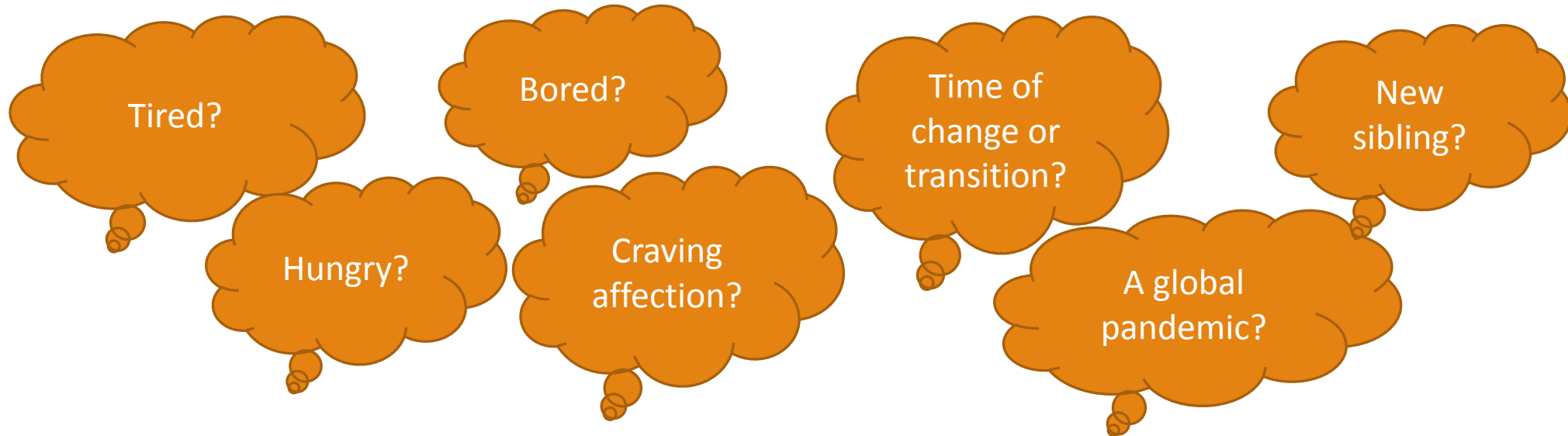
- ❑ Denying a child permission to experience their feelings
- ❑ Preventing emotional and behavioral outbursts 100% of the time
- ❑ Expecting a child to regulate in ways not appropriate for their age

What drives childhood behaviours?

- A child's most developed form of communication = behaviour
- Primary function of behaviours is to have needs met
- Young brains have to develop cognitive abilities, regulation abilities, the ability to understand consequences and many more executive functioning processes



Exploring underlying needs



TIP: Consistency, predictable routines and clear expectations help children anticipate how the day will go, which can decrease opportunities for emotional build up



Emotion Regulation Strategies for Families

Strategy 1: Regulate own emotions first

- Emotions are contagious
- Anxiety is contagious, but so is calm
- Respond vs. React



TIP: Positive and negative attention can compute the same way in young brains. This speaks to importance of self-regulating first, before moving to respond

Strategy 2: Model Emotional Regulation



TIP: When you lose your cool, come back and explain to your child what happened, and maybe what you could try next time.
Apologize if they ended up in the firing range

Strategy 3: Prevent misunderstandings by facilitating listening

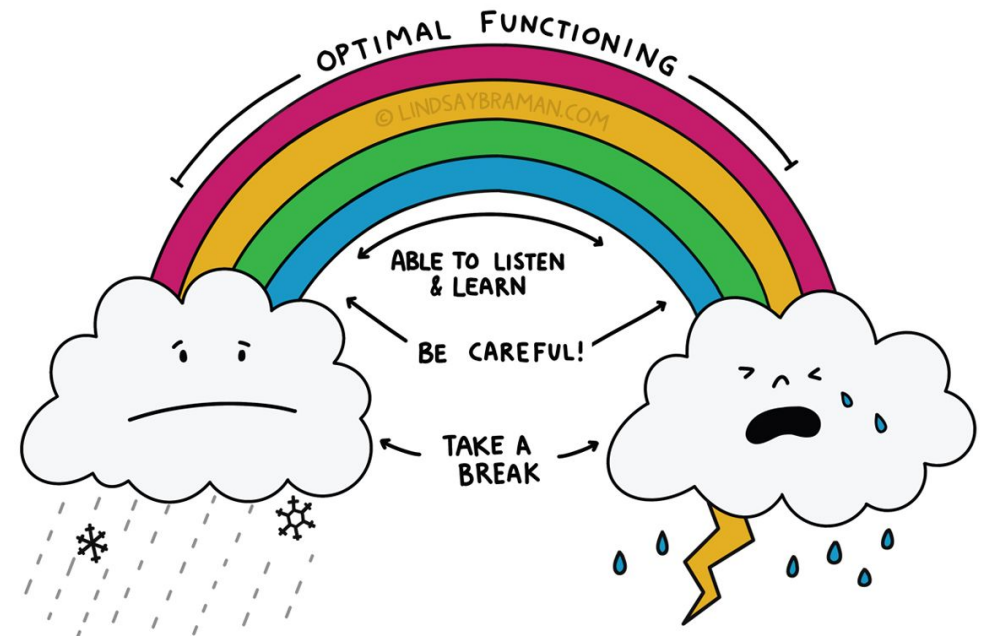
Did you know --> Meltdowns often come from miscommunication or misinterpretation of instructions



TIP: Get down on eye level, use name, wait for attention, share one thing at a time

Strategy 4: Use soothing strategies to manage meltdowns in the moment

- Validate Validate Validate
- Ok the feeling not the behaviour
- Physiological regulation comes first



TIP: The teaching moment comes AFTER the meltdown/reaction/undesired behaviour

Strategy 5: Talk it out

- Debrief
- Try out regulation strategies as a family (such as deep belly breathing, listening to music, mindful walking)
- Create a plan for next time



TIP: Understand the need for replacement behaviours! It will be hard for a child to stop doing something if they don't have other options

Strategy 6: Focus on strengths

- Positive reinforcement has a bigger influence on behaviour than punishment
- Examples of positive reinforcement: specific praise, intentional attention, rewards, validation
- Child's AND parental strengths



TIP: Catch your child being good!

Frequently Asked Questions

- Will validating feelings make my child weak?
- What do I do when I know my child is 'faking it' or 'just looking for attention'?
- What do I do when my partner/child's parent and I have different ideas of how to parent?
- Why do labels matter (like being called the quiet one or the loud one)?
- When does a child need therapy?



Summary of Parenting Strategies for Better Emotional Regulation

1. Regulate own emotions first
2. Model emotion regulation
3. Prevent misunderstands by facilitating listening
4. Use soothing strategies to manage meltdowns in the moment
5. Talk it out after
6. Focus on your families' strengths

What's to
come...

- Parenting Webinar Series 2: Mindful Families – Reducing Anxiety in the Family
- Parenting Webinar Series 3: Self-Esteem – Building Confidence in Young People

References and Resources

Kelty Mental Health - What is Emotional Regulation?

<https://keltymentalhealth.ca/emotional-regulation>

Child Mind - How Can We Help Kids with Self-Regulation?

<https://childmind.org/article/can-help-kids-self-regulation/>

Child Development Institute - Emotion Regulation Tipsheet for Parents

<https://www.childdevelop.ca/sites/default/files/files/Tip%20sheet%20-%20Emotion%20Regulation.pdf>

Very Well Family - How to Help an Emotional Child Cope with Big Feelings

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/how-to-help-an-overly-emotional-child-4157594>

British Journal of Educational Psychology - Metacognition and emotional regulation in children from 8 to 12 years old

<https://bpspsychub.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/bjep.12305>



The end
