The Four Cs of Mental Health Supports At Home And In Schools

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Rogersinhealth.org
Objectives

• Explore connection between mental health challenges and the need for the 4Cs at home and school

• Consider how to apply the 4Cs in the home and ask for them at school
We begin with best intentions and a level of ignorance and wishful thinking.
Mental Health, Illness and Trauma
What Does Trauma Look Like?

- Sensitive to noise
- Avoid touch
- Heightened startle reflex
- Demand lots of attention
- Perfectionism
- Aggression/Defiance
- Confused - What is dangerous? Who can help?
- Resist separation from familiar adults and safe places
- Reactive and impulsive
One Face of Trauma

www.rogersinhealth.org
Perspective of Children: Typical Development vs. Developmental Trauma

- Nurturing and stable attachments with adults
- Belief in predictable and caring world/ good things will happen to me
- Feeling of positive self-worth
- Optimism about the future
- Basic mistrust of adults/ inability to depend on others
- Belief that the world is an unsafe place/ bad things will happen and they are usually my fault
- Assumption that others will not like them
- Fear and pessimism about future
- Feelings of hopelessness and lack of control
How to reach the lower brain

Increasing resilience

• Connection
• Competency
• Control

Connect with the lower brain

• Think babies!
• Check-in at transition times
• Create safety and consistency
• Sensory intervention - arousal
# The Red Flags for Trauma, Depression and Anxiety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sad, down, blue</th>
<th>Protective of loved ones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest in activities</td>
<td>Easily startled, overly alert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much/little eating and/or sleeping</td>
<td>Withdrawn, disconnected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recurring Nightmares</td>
<td>Hot flushes, chills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fatigue, loss of energy</td>
<td>Trembling, physically numb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worthlessness, guilt</td>
<td>Shortness of breath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor concentration, memory</td>
<td>Chest discomfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling scattered</td>
<td>Nausea, abdomen pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily angered</td>
<td>Dizzy, lightheaded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palpitations</td>
<td>Fear of dying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of worries</td>
<td>Hopelessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restlessness, on edge</td>
<td>Death/suicide thoughts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Feelings of Shame

Public Stigma

↓ self esteem
I am not good.

↓ sense of efficacy
I am not able.

Avoidance and apathy
So, why try!
Resilience

- The ability to recover from traumatic events and manage mental illness.

- Children who are resilient see themselves as safe, able and loved.
The 4 Cs

Connections
- Relationship and Relevance

Competence
- Motivation

Control
- Choice and Self-Management

Consistency
Connection: Relationship is Key
Child-Family-Teacher

• It’s two-way!
• Trust gained through consistency
• No exceptions
• Many settings, many “cultures”
• Check out the connections
Connection: Creating Community

- **Safety**- free to be who I am, no bullying, fighting, or put-downs

- **Democracy**- I am responsible for the health of my family, school, community

- **Growth**- we learn how to improve together

- **Problem Solving**- I know how we solve problems and learn to take the lead
Competence: Motivate and Engage

• One step up at a time ➔ I can!
• Choices
• Effective praise and reward systems
• Think of the whole child
Control:
Proactive to Avoid Being Reactive

- Structure and consistency - Family and classroom rules and procedures!
- Teach the behaviors you want to see repeatedly (pre-correct)
- Positive responses tied to their choices
- Consequences you can do
Control: Help to Deal with Emotions

- Divert and redirect: if needed...
- De-escalate
  - Listen
  - Acknowledge and empathize
  - Agree
  - Invite criticism
  - Engage senses
- Look at the choices you have made before addressing the choices the child made.
Anxiety: Paving a Path to Resilience

- Problem with thoughts
- Understand safety seeking behaviors
- Teach to review thoughts and take challenging steps - exposure
- Support without enabling – slowed breathing, safety thinking, and proactive
- Anxiety brief video series: 
  www.rogersinhealth.org/schools go to classroom strategies
Thank-you for the relationships you build and the strategies you implement that improve the present and future lives of children.

Mental health video clips at: RogersInHealth.org

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