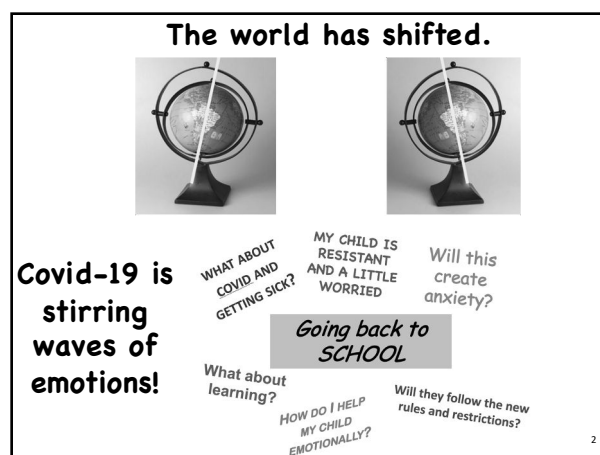
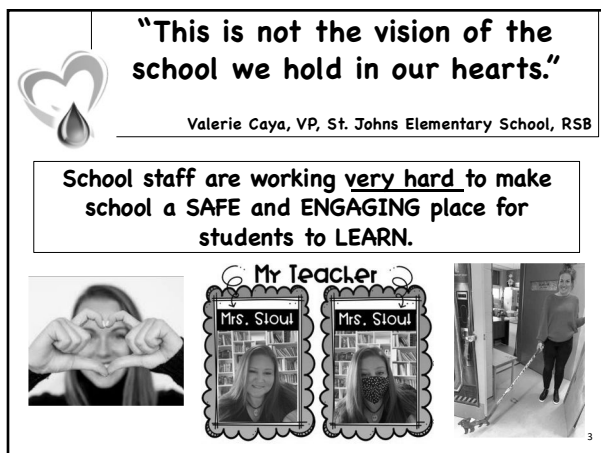


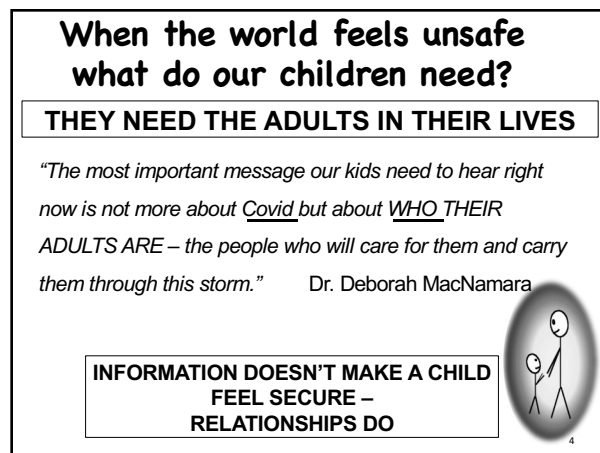
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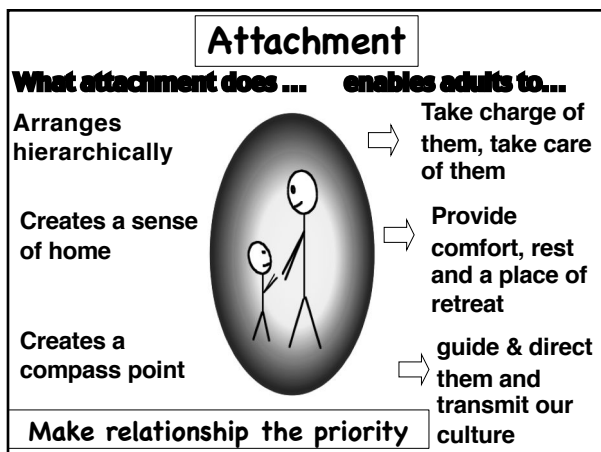
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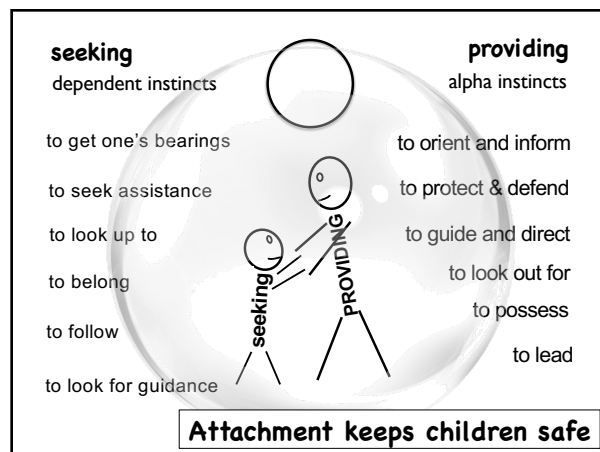
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TAKING THE CARING ALPHA ROLE**CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE**

It is very important that children, especially at a time like this, see adults as being able to handle their world:

- present yourself as the ANSWER to what the children truly need
- continually give children the message that you can and will take care of them
- take charge of situations and circumstances that affect the children

ANTICIPATE & PREVENT

7

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CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

- **COMMUNICATE OFTEN** and **PROVIDE REASSURANCE**
 - Your teachers are getting ready for you
 - They are figuring things out
 - We are all working together
 - This will get better

Instead of telling them they will be 'okay', tell them they will be **TAKEN CARE OF.**



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CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

When you **DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO**

- **Act CONFIDENT**
- **Try NOT speak of your concerns IN FRONT OF THE CHILD**

*** It's OK to be uncertain and anxious but the **EXTENT** of this should only be shared with other **ADULTS.**



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CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE**TALK ABOUT EMOTION:**

- **ALARM**
 - Yes, Covid is scary
 - You're worried about getting sick/ Us getting sick/ Grandma getting sick
- **FRUSTRATION**
 - It is **frustrating** that Covid won't go away
 - It's not fun to have wear a mask
 - It's not fair that you can't hug your teacher

It's OK to feel upset and angry

When **EMOTIONS** are shared, they move. When emotions move, emotional well-being improves.

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CONVEY A STRONG ALPHA PRESENCE

- **PROVIDING** and/preparing food
 - Making food available
 - Making "comfort" foods
 - Preparing treats
- **PROVIDING** comfort items:
 - Blankets / Stuffed animals
- **CREATING opportunities** for:
 - **PLAY**
 - Board games / family games / music / dance
 - Getting outside the home

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PLAY and EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

When children are "stirred up" emotionally, their play can reflect themes they are struggling with.

It is how they can make sense of all the emotions they are experiencing.

In Play, pictures are drawn, structures are made, and games are engaged in to allow **EMOTIONS TO COME OUT** in a way that feels "safer".



Play is the pressure value for EMOTION

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Playing with ALARM

- peek-a-boo play
- scary stories, games and activities
- monsters & scary creature play
- rescue play
- ambush games
- safe hide-away play
- 'tumble' play
- dare games
- safe-at-home play
- startle play



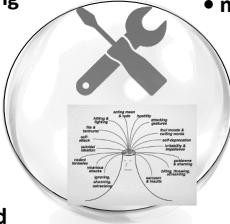
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Playing with FRUSTRATION

CHANGE

ATTACK

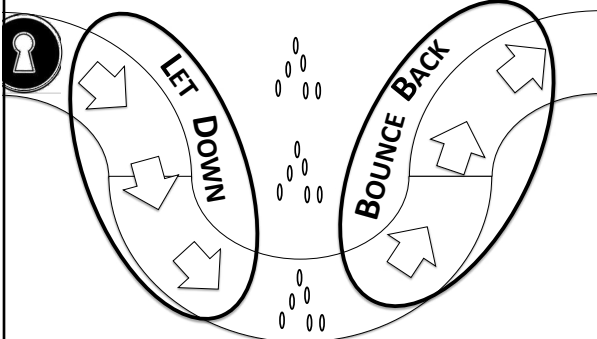
- building
- fixing
- reassemble and reorder
- growing and planting
- silly self



- mock aggression
- play fighting
- pretend pain
- destroying
- war games

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The Healing Power of TEARS



GRIEVING

Gordon Neufeld, PhD

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In a child, **TEARS** are the best indicator of an emotional system that is functioning well.

When we communicate to our children that there is something wrong with them for being sad, we stop both their tears and the opportunity to become resilient.


One of the best gifts we can give our children is to value their sad tears and make room for them to flow.

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ADAPTATION

Adaptation requires
a soft heart and a safe place to cry

a soft heart = able to tolerate feelings of vulnerability



a safe place to cry = someone who will keep you safe while you are vulnerable

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HELPING THE TEARS TO FLOW

1. Start by talking about and reflecting back the Emotion
 - i. **FRUSTRATION**: "That didn't work for you." "That was not what you had in mind."
 - ii. **ALARM**: "That was scary." "You weren't sure what was going to happen".
 - iii. **SEEKING/PURSUIT**: "You really wanted her/him to like you."
2. **MATCH THE EMOTION.**
3. **THEN:** Move subtly towards **SADNESS** by allowing a tinge of sadness in your voice.

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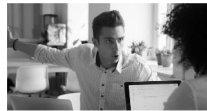
- When the child starts to cry:
 - DON'T ASK WHY
 - If the child gives a reason, don't MINIMIZE. If it seems trivial, it is usually because the child can't bear to name the true reason for their sadness.
- When the tears start: SIT QUIETLY with compassion
 - Trust in the "bounce back"
 - Resist the Alpha instincts to make things better or to problem solve
 - Give lots of space to SADNESS and TEARS.
- Problem solve well after the tears (if needed)

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1. SAD BOOKS, MOVIES, YOUTUBE etc.
2. IN A DARK ROOM – IN A DARK CAR
3. SHOULDER TO SHOULDER (walk – working together)
4. SLIGHT TINGE OF SADNESS IN VOICE
5. NORMALIZE SADNESS AND TEARS
6. Once tears appear, if resistant, CHANGE THE TOPIC BUT REJOICE IN THE SADNESS

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- Identify your own **support system**, your **“village”**
 - your family
 - your partner
 - your friends
- Give yourself permission to **vent**
- Find your own **tears**
- Nurture your **passions** – have some “play time”



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You are not alone.



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Eva de Gosztonyi, Psychologist, Martine Demers, Behaviour Consultant, Catherine Korah, Behaviour Consultant

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