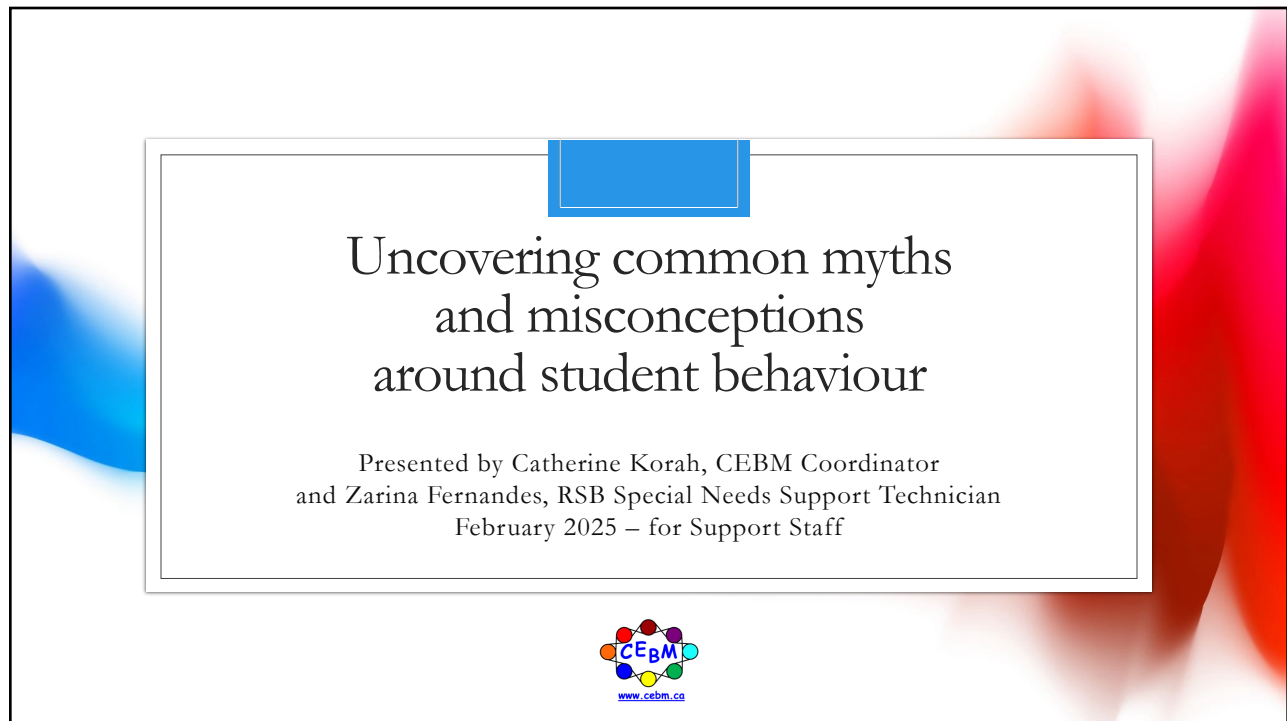
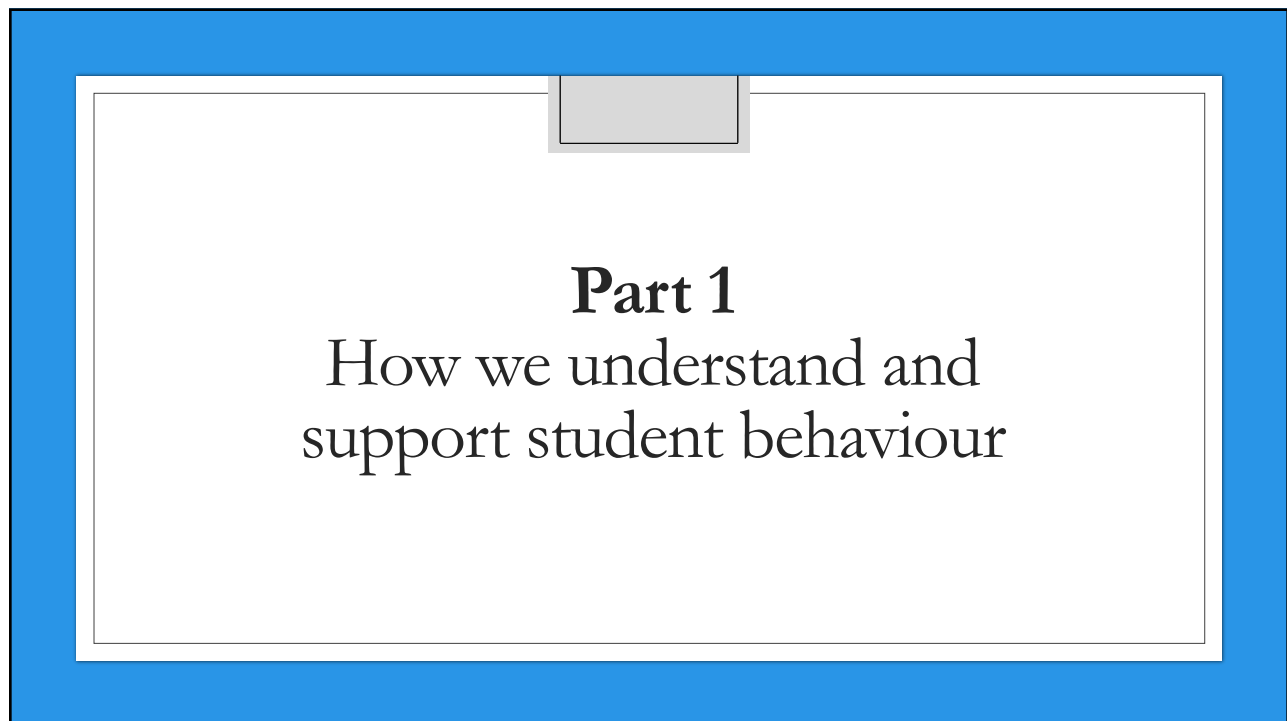




1



2

The student's reaction came out of nowhere, they had no reason to behave like that

- Even if we might not see any obvious precursors to a behaviour (e.g. another student provoking them), it doesn't mean that there aren't any.
- There can be so many different elements at the root of a behaviour:
 - a triggering situation that happened previously (e.g. the day before, the morning of, etc.)
 - a sensory overload that has accumulated in the system (e.g. too much noise, lights too bright, people in too close proximity, etc.)
 - an anticipation or a misinterpretation on the part of the student (e.g. perceiving being laughed at, sensing pressure from others, anticipation of not getting picked for a game, etc.)
- Keep in mind that emotion doesn't dissipate on its own over time. It requires an outlet to be released if not it will accumulate and erupt when overloaded.

3

The student has no excuse to behave that way, they don't have a history of trauma nor an ASD diagnosis

- Even if a student doesn't have a particular diagnosis or a certain personal history explaining their struggles, it doesn't mean that they are doing it on purpose.
- We must believe that children/teens do the best they can, and that certain factors get in the way of that (e.g. stress response).
- Students who aren't diagnosed with ASD can still be hypersensitive and become overwhelmed by their sensory experience.
- According to **Gabor Mate**, author of *The Myth of Normal*, 'trauma is not what happens to you but what happens inside you', which means that toxic stress and adversity (e.g. financial difficulties, conflictual divorce, etc.) can have a great impact as well on a child/teen's well-being and resulting behaviours.

4

Students should be able to ask for help when they need it

- Many students, when charged emotionally or in sensory overload, don't even recognize it, so it makes it difficult for them to see that they need help.
- For those students who are 'stuck' emotionally, their defenses prevent them from feeling the necessary emotions required to ask for help (caring, consideration, etc.)
- According to **Dr. Ross Greene**, author of *The Explosive Child*, by the time the adult wait for the child to ask for help to intervene, it is already considered 'too late'.
- According to **Dr. Gordon Neufeld**, author of *Hold on to Your Kids*, children cannot feel safe and taken care of by the adult if they are the ones who have to take the lead in taking care of themselves. This can undermine the adult's alpha position, where they are meant to take the lead and be the answer.

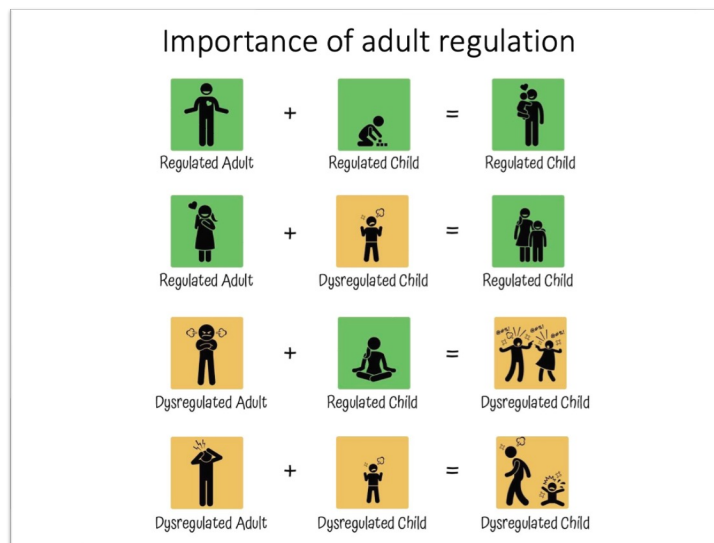
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Students who talk back have no respect

- Even if the talking back may have felt disrespectful to the adult, it doesn't mean that it was the student's intent.
- Respect is something the adults cultivate through ongoing daily interactions (introducing and modeling values, displaying compassion and respect towards the child/teen, etc.) rather than through trying to teach a lesson following an incident.
- Talking back can be the student's way of:
 - experimenting with asserting themselves and finding their voice, which is part of the individuation process.
 - reacting instinctively to a perceived coercion on the part of the adult (Counterwill)
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/resistance-and-opposition>

6

Students who talk back have no respect



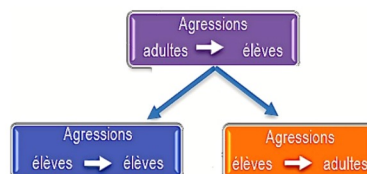
7

Students who talk back have no respect

Impact of adult-student relationships in schools Research findings

Quebec school surveys* found that the more students experienced **negative treatment from adults** (rudeness, staring with contempt, yelling, insults, humiliation, ignoring when student being mistreated by others, etc.)

1. the more **aggressive behaviours between students** occurred.
2. the more adults reported **being attacked by students**.



* Beaumont, Claire et collectif (2016). *Ensemble pour de saines habitudes de vie relationnelles à l'école*. Communication présentée dans le cadre de la Journée d'étude annuelle de la Chaire de recherche sur la sécurité et la violence en milieu éducatif, Université Laval à Québec.

8

Students can choose to behave properly

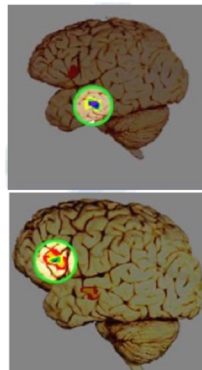
- This line of thinking is based on the idea that 'right thinking' is sufficient to control behaviour.
- According to neuroscientific research:
 - behaviour is pushed by emotion, and
 - emotion is governed by the limbic system in the brain (it happens to us whether we like it or not)
- Behaving properly requires impulse control and self-regulation, which rely on a person having good integrative functioning (comes from a developed prefrontal cortex).
- ❖ *It's important to note that brain maturation is not inevitable, and must take place in favorable conditions to unfold (safety, belonging, emotional rest, play, etc.)*

9

Students can choose to behave properly

Self-management

- Stuck and immature kids have an undeveloped pre-frontal cortex, which means their emotions aren't filtered or slowed down.
- They don't experience much cognitive dissonance or mixed feelings (ONE thought or emotion at a time).
- They have great difficulty with perspective and with reflection, especially when upset.



10

Misbehaving students are being manipulative

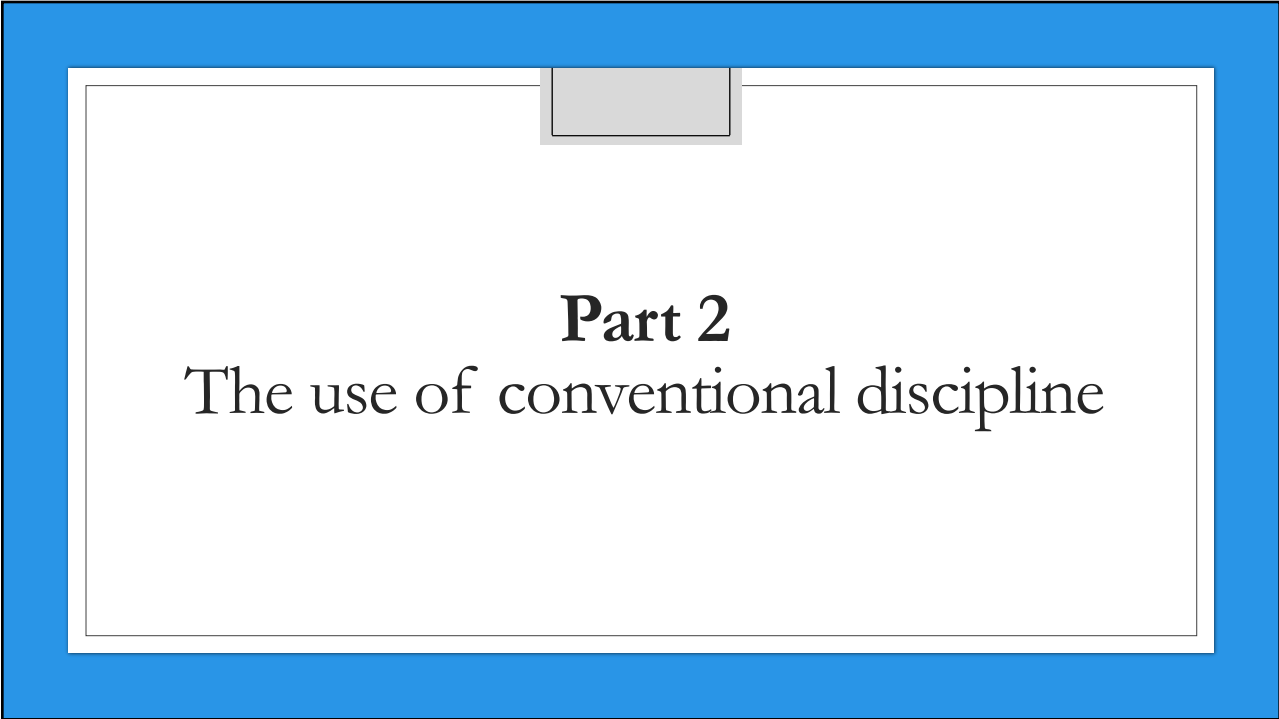
- This line of thinking is based on the idea of the 'function of behaviour' (Cognitive Behavioral lens) as a premise, which believes that behaviour is done intentionally with a certain goal in mind (e.g. to get attention, avoid an unwanted situation, gain access to wanted objects, etc.)
- In most recent years, **neuroscientific research** has debunked this theory by demonstrating that troubled behaviour is actually driven, deeply rooted in impulse and emotion.
- According to **Dr. Stephen Porges**, neuroscientist and author of the *Polyvagal Theory*, 'behavioral responses represent how a person's nervous system is constantly regulating the body's response to stress. Behaviors are adaptive responses to an individual's ever-changing nervous system'.
- According to **Mona Delahooke**, author of *Beyond Behaviors*, behaviours carry important signals about a child's individual needs and differences.

11

Play is a reward, students who misbehave shouldn't have access to it

- Play can have many different purposes beyond enjoyment and entertainment:
 - to move, concentrate, sensory input, calm, shift gears, etc.
- As presented by CEBM in their '**Tools vs. Toys**' webinar, although an object can be used as a toy, it can also be used as a tool if it is used with a specific objective in mind to answer a need or to effect change (Adults need to be clear and explicit when introducing an item as a tool). [To view the recording](#) - [To download the handout](#)
- Moreover, play in general should be considered as a **need to be fulfilled** (not as a privilege) and offers numerous benefits, such as better concentration/engagement, tension relief, improved emotional regulation, increased academic performance, etc. Countless research studies have demonstrated that the loss of play is directly related to the decrease in children's mental health.

12



Part 2

The use of conventional discipline

13

Students who are not disciplined will never learn

- This line of thinking is based on the idea that good behaviour must be taught (Learning Theory and Cognitive Behavioural lens)
- According to **Dr. Gordon Neufeld**, developmental psychologist:
 - civilized behaviour is the fruit of maturation, which will unfold spontaneously and naturally if the right conditions are in place (safety, belonging, rest, play, etc.)
 - adults cannot push or teach troubled youth to grow up faster nor to act more maturely, given their level of defendedness and emotional stuckness (what's needed rather is to soften their defenses and to find the developmental solutions towards maturation)

14

All students should follow the same rules and require the same discipline

- There is no such thing as a 'one-size-fits-all' when it comes to supporting students. The adults must take into account the student's profile, needs, challenges, and individual differences.
- Some students benefit from targeted measures, which have been assigned or scheduled for them, and they manage better when given blocs of time in a small-group setting (Tier 2)
- Other students require more personalized and intensive support measures, as well as one-to-one accompaniment (Tier 3)
- This doesn't mean that we change our values and fundamental rules, but that we adjust our expectations and support measures to help them adapt better to their environment and become more successful.

15

We must address the inappropriate behaviour immediately, if not we're giving it permission

- We must trust that our day-to-day interactions (through modeling and accompaniment) are at the root of transmitting our rules and values, rather than the lessons we're trying to teach following an incident.
- **Timing is key:** the student must be receptive and available to receive the feedback. Intervening too quickly when the student is still upset may trigger and dysregulate them further.
- Waiting to address the incident doesn't transmit the message that we approve of their behaviour or give it permission (chances are, our body language has already spoken for us). Students generally know right from wrong and are aware of adult expectations – that's not where the problem is.

16

Discipline is all about giving consequences

The problem with consequences is that:

- It requires integrative functioning (prefrontal cortex development) on the part of the student to be able to remember them in the heat of the moment
- It requires emotional softness (care and vulnerability) on the part of the student to be able to follow through (they need to care about the impact of the consequences)
- The degree of forcefulness may increase the risk of hardening the student further
- It may negatively affect the relationship to the adult (student may lose trust)
- It may interfere with the development of intrinsic motivation and caring feelings

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/common-practices-to-avoid>

17

What we can do

Putting into place alternative preventive measures to compensate for the student's needs, challenges, individual differences

- Targeted or individualized support measures in the classroom, which are assigned or scheduled for the student
- Blocs of time allocated for breaks, movement, respite
- Opportunities in a small-group or one-to-one setting (depending on the student)
- Opportunities in an alternate location (Oasis Room, Nurturing Support Centre)
- Alternative options for hallway transitions, recess, and lunch: alternate time for entrance/exit, having a locker in an alternate location, supported recess/lunch, sheltered recess/lunch, extended recess/lunch
- Etc.

18

Reward systems can change behaviour

- **Alfie Kohn:** No controlled study has ever found a long-term improvement in the quality of work as a result of any kind of incentive plan. Rewards are not actually solutions at all; they are gimmicks, quick fixes that mask problems and ignore reasons. They never look below the surface.
- **Gordon Neufeld:** The neuroscience now informs us that most troubled behaviour is actually driven, deeply rooted in impulse and emotion.
- What tempers impulse and emotion is a well-developed and functioning Prefrontal Cortex and a robust corpus callosum.
- **Jay Geed:** Neuroscience tells us that it takes 25 years to develop a human brain that is capable of mature behaviour. The brain grows from within – prefrontal cortex, cerebellum, corpus callosum, right hemisphere, left hemisphere.
- **Richard Curwin:** Bribes (rewards) tend to produce "finishers" rather than "learners. At least ten studies have shown that people offered a reward generally choose the easiest possible task.

**How is it possible that a sticker or a reward would
actually grow a brain so that behaviour could change?**

19

Reward systems can change behaviour

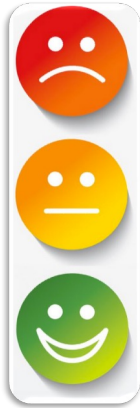
The problem with reward systems is that:

- It requires integrative functioning (prefrontal cortex development) on the part of the student to truly change their behaviour – students are temporarily good for the reward and not because they have integrated it
- It requires emotional softness (care and vulnerability) on the part of the student to be able to follow through (They need to care about the gain of the rewards)
- It's a temporary solution, as the gains are lost as soon as the adults take away the rewards.
- It may increase frustration (not being able to receive a reward) or alarm (feeling pressure to keep up), which can eventually lead to disengagement
- It may interfere with the development of intrinsic motivation – can push a student into having selfish motives behind the behaviour
- It may interfere with the relationship to the adult (feels like the relationship is contingent upon performance, or that only some efforts are recognized)

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/common-practices-to-avoid>

20

Behaviour charts work



- after the first few weeks of school, it is usually the same children who are in yellow, orange or red
- if they could change their behaviour they would
- immaturity and emotional needs are the real reasons behind most “mis-behaviour”
- the warning system can cause shame or alarm – displacing behaviour but not changing or dealing with the underlying cause

21

Behaviour charts work

The problem with behaviour charts is that:

- It requires integrative functioning (prefrontal cortex development) on the part of the student to truly change their behaviour – the chart may have some impact while in place, but doesn't help the student grow up and have lasting changes
- It requires emotional softness (care and vulnerability) on the part of the student to be able to follow through (they need to care about the impact)
- It may push the student's face into their 'failure' and increase frustration, alarm, and/or disengagement
- It may interfere with the relationship to the adult (feels like the relationship is contingent upon performance, or that only some efforts are recognized)

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/common-practices-to-avoid>

22

What we can do

Rely on structures and routines to help the student adapt better to their environment

- Visual schedule
- Visual reminders/prompts
- Extra targeted support where needed
- Providing systematic check-ins with a significant adult (beyond teacher greeting) at scheduled times
- Practice opportunities where student is reception/available
- Narrating, in an engaging and positive way, concrete examples of 'what to do' and 'what not to do'
- If needed, previewing tasks/activities that are triggering for the student
- Giving the student enough advance notice to help prepare them before switching to the next activity
- Notifying the student, when possible, of any changes in routine, such as special activities, guests, and staff absences

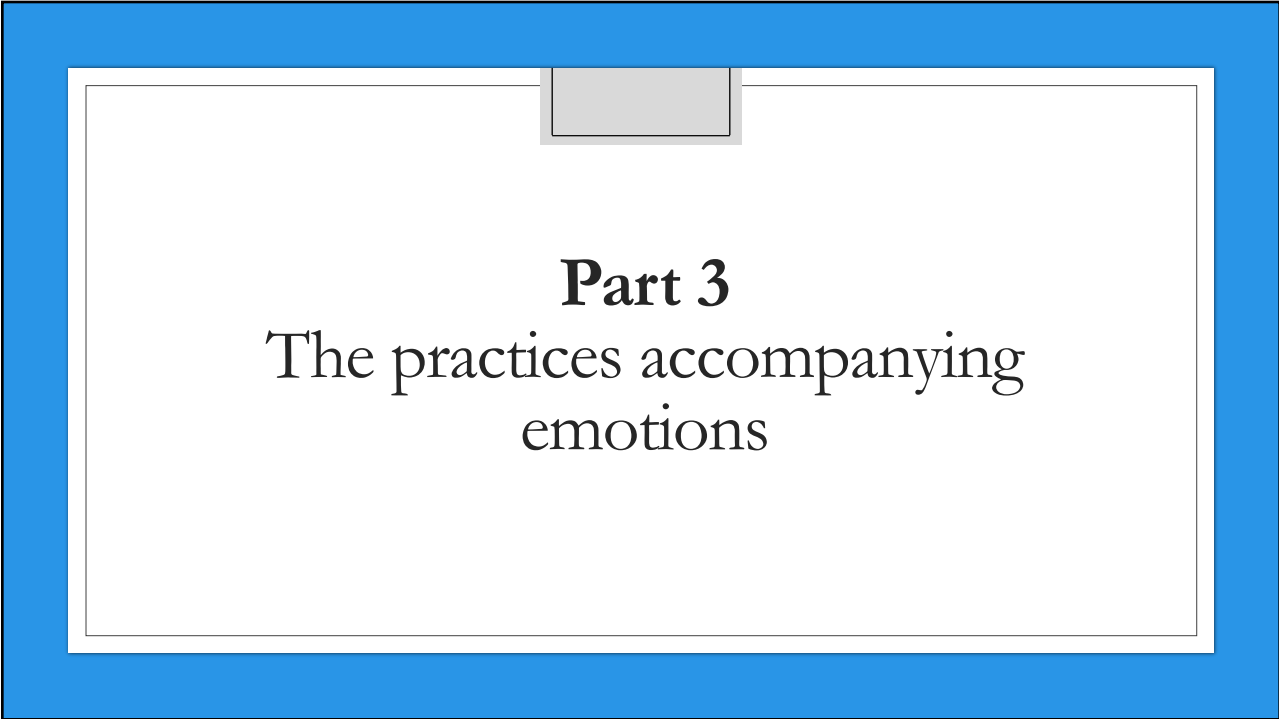
23

The problem isn't my intervention. The student just won't listen

Many factors can impact the effectiveness of an intervention:

- Timing (not being preventive, student is dysregulated)
- Environment (publicly addressing the situation, student's sensory is being triggered)
- Type of intervention selected is not well matched with the student's needs, challenges, and individual differences
- Tool/resource chosen has not been properly introduced, modeled, practiced (when the student is calm, receptive, and connected to the adult)
- Adult relationship (does the student trust the adult? is the student attached? Is the student attuned to the adult in the moment)
- Adult energy (they are getting tense or frustrated themselves) is contributing factor

24



Part 3

The practices accompanying emotions

25

Managing emotions has to be taught

“Emotional Health Cannot be “Taught”. Building emotional health calls for **experiences** that put us in touch with the full spectrum of human emotions – even the ones that we often try so hard to avoid”.

“Change doesn’t begin with managing our emotions as an intellectual process that we systematically think through in the heat of the moment! Change – true, deep, long-lasting change – is something that comes from the **inside out**. It begins with **feeling** our emotions, being truly aware of them, having the space to express them, and then acting on them in ways that are appropriate. It is at the emotional level that the deepest, most long-lasting changes occur. And it is on this level that we have to engage our kids, if we want to support their emotional well-being”.

Hannah Beach (2020) *Kids Need a Safe Space to Feel*

26

Managing emotions has to be taught

- Supporting students with emotional awareness is key to helping them develop healthy emotional regulation and interpersonal skills.
- Emotions are nuanced and multi-dimensional. Color-coding can oversimplify emotions, reducing them to a few categories (like red for anger or blue for sadness), which doesn't capture the full range or complexity of how people feel. Emotions can be mixed or evolve over time, and reducing them to a specific color can make it harder for individuals to articulate what they're truly experiencing.
- While a child may recognize "red" as something related to anger, they might not fully understand the underlying causes, thoughts, or behaviors tied to that emotion. They might just memorize the system without truly internalizing it.
- We need to foster emotional safety by creating an environment where students feel safe to express their emotions without fear of judgment or punishment. We can encourage open conversations about feelings and validate their experiences.
- Teach students a range of emotional words. Using images, colors, or facial expressions alongside words can be effective. All emotions are welcome!

27

Self-regulation is the main goal of SEL

Nurturing Emotional Health and Growth

- Emotional health and growth is a lifelong process – must go beyond a focus on emotional regulation
- It starts with the adults
- It needs to be experiential as a process
- Setting up the conditions for emotional health and growth to unfold naturally (rather than focusing on 'teaching the skills' prematurely and focusing primarily of self-regulation)
- It needs to be peppered into our everyday life (systemic) and can be built-in implicitly (infused) – benefits from being done proactively rather than waiting for problems to arise to address them
- It can work better for some if the experience is done in the 'play mode' (indirect none-threatening expressive activities)

Meena Srinivasan (2019) *SEL Every Day*

28

Self-regulation is the main goal of SEL

- SEL programs often follow a standard curriculum that doesn't account for individual differences. Children, for example, have varying emotional needs based on their background, culture, experiences, and temperament.
- Many SEL programs focus on theoretical concepts or activities but don't offer enough practical strategies for integrating social-emotional skills into everyday life.
- SEL programs often focus on individual behavior and emotions without addressing broader systemic issues, such as poverty, trauma, or inequality, which can significantly impact students' social and emotional development.
- Various SEL programs focus heavily on teaching students to "behave" in socially acceptable ways, rather than promoting deeper emotional understanding or self-awareness. They focus on compliance over growth.
- The majority of SEL programs emphasize positive emotional states (like happiness and optimism) and devalue or minimize negative emotions (like anger, sadness, or frustration). This can lead to emotional suppression, where students feel they must always be "happy" or "calm" rather than accepting and learning to cope with a wider range of emotions. Students may feel pressure to express emotions in prescribed ways or be shamed if they don't conform to the ideal emotional responses encouraged by the program.

29

What we can do

- **Use Stories and Role-Playing**
- **Emotion-focused literature:** Read books or stories that explore emotional experiences, such as loss, frustration, or joy. Discuss how characters manage their emotions and what students can learn from these scenarios.
- **Role-playing:** Engage students in role-playing exercises that help them practice expressing emotions in different situations, such as resolving a conflict or asking for help when feeling overwhelmed.
- **Teach Emotional Regulation Strategies**
- **Coping tools:** Help students identify strategies for managing intense emotions, such as taking a break, using positive self-talk, or engaging in a calming activity (e.g., drawing, journaling, or using stress-relief tools).
- **Emotion regulation exercises:** Teach students techniques such as deep breathing, counting to 10, or using a "calm-down corner" where they can go to regain composure when feeling overwhelmed.

30

What we can do

- **Encourage Empathy Perspective-Taking**
- **Empathy-building activities:** Encourage students to consider how others might be feeling in different situations. This can be done through discussions, group projects, or helping them relate to characters in stories or real-life examples.
- **Perspective-taking games:** Engage students in exercises where they must imagine how someone else feels in a particular scenario. This helps them develop empathy and a broader understanding of emotions beyond their own.
- **Provide Opportunities for Reflection**
- **Journaling:** Encourage students to keep an emotional journal where they can reflect on their day, identify emotions they experienced, and think about how they handled them. This helps build emotional awareness over time.
- **Group discussions:** Create opportunities for students to talk about their emotions in a group setting. Encourage active listening and respectful feedback, allowing students to learn from each other's experiences.

31

What we can do

- **Positive Reinforcement for Emotional Awareness**
- **Praise emotional intelligence:** When students express emotions in a healthy way or recognize their own feelings, praise and reinforce that behavior. This encourages them to continue developing emotional awareness.
- **Reward emotional growth:** Acknowledge progress in emotional regulation and self-awareness, not just academic achievements.
- **Involve Families in the Process**
- **Share strategies with families:** Work with families to reinforce emotional awareness practices at home. Provide them with resources, such as visuals, mindfulness exercises, or emotion-focused books, to support emotional development outside school.
- **Create a family-friendly emotional environment:** Encourage families to have regular discussions about emotions, allowing students to practice their emotional vocabulary and regulation techniques in a comfortable, familiar setting.

32

What we can do

- **Promote Self-Awareness through Reflection**
 - **Self-assessment:** Encourage students to periodically assess their emotional well-being, such as through self-reflection questions like “What made me feel happy today?” or “How did I deal with frustration?”
 - Help students with vocabulary, such as I feel ..., what's not working ..., my tools are This gives them a sense of ownership over their emotional growth.
- *Incorporating these practices helps students not only become more aware of their own emotions but also learn how to manage them in healthy ways and develop stronger relationships with others. The key is consistency, modeling, and creating spaces where emotional exploration is welcomed and valued.

33

There are certain milestones when it comes to understanding and managing one's behaviour and reactions

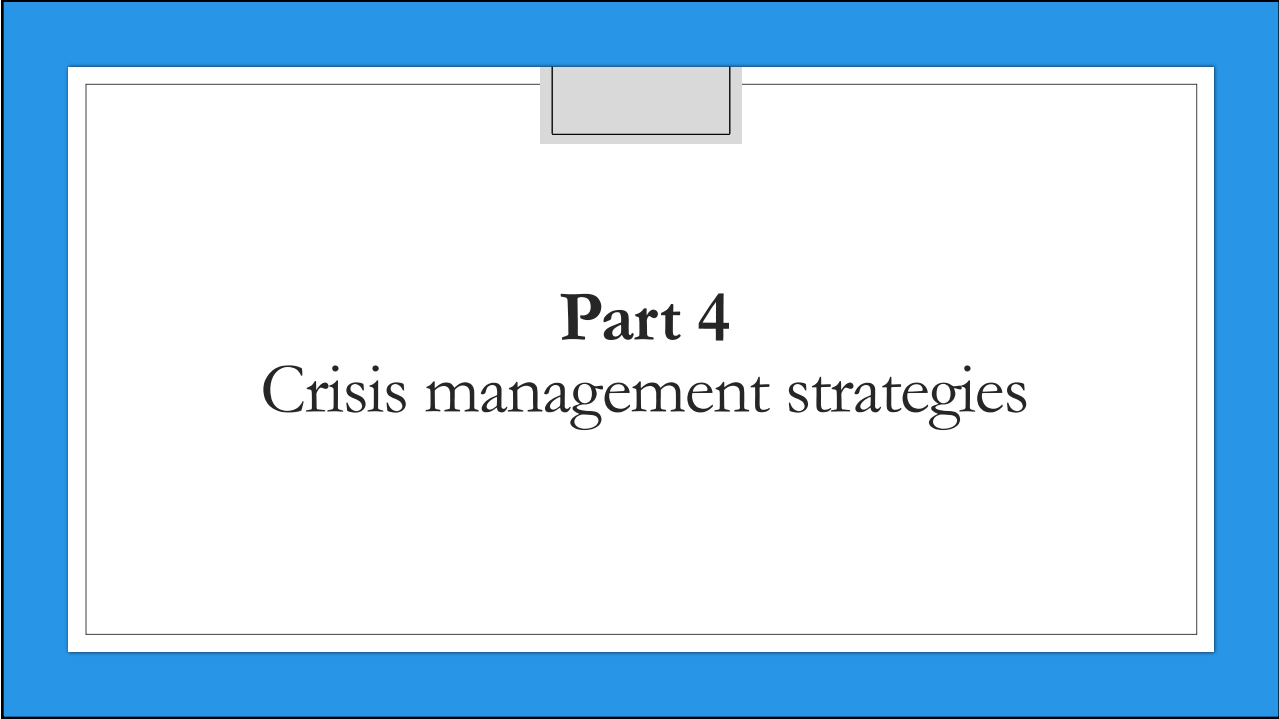
- Personal growth, self-awareness, and emotional regulation are a continuous and fluid processes, rather than something that happens at fixed, predefined milestones.
- **Individual Differences:** Everyone's journey to self-awareness and emotional regulation can look different. Some people may have moments of insight earlier or later than others, and there may not be clear milestones for everyone.
- **Cultural and Environmental Factors:** How people learn to understand and manage their behavior can depend heavily on their environment and cultural context. For example, people raised in different cultures may prioritize different aspects of emotional regulation or behavior.

34

There are certain milestones when it comes to understanding and managing one's behaviour and reactions

- **Fluid and Ongoing Process:** Emotional maturity and understanding of oneself often develop over time in response to experiences and life circumstances. Unlike cognitive milestones (like learning to read), emotional and behavioral development can happen gradually and non-linearly, with setbacks and progress intertwined.
- **Complexity of Human Behavior:** Human emotions and reactions are deeply complex. There isn't always a simple, linear path to mastering them. People might gain insight into one area of behavior but struggle with another, and these insights can evolve and shift over time.
- So, it's not necessarily about milestones in the way you might expect for, say, physical growth or intellectual development, but rather about an ongoing process of learning and adapting.

35



Part 4

Crisis management strategies

36

We must restrain a student who runs away for their safety

- When a child runs away, it may be an expression of fear, frustration, or a desire to escape a situation that feels overwhelming. Restraining them physically can make them feel unsafe and trapped, which can escalate the child's anxiety and reinforce the behavior. It can damage their sense of emotional security, which is essential for healthy development.
- When a child feels that the adult is trying to physically control or overpower them, it can create a sense of emotional distance or distrust. The child may feel misunderstood or even rejected, which weakens the attachment.
- Physical restraint can escalate a power struggle between adult and child. The more you try to control a child in this way, the more likely they are to push back. This sets up a cycle of confrontation, where the child learns that their autonomy is being disregarded, which can lead to increased defiance or withdrawal.

37

We must restrain a student who runs away for their safety

- When a child runs away, there's often an underlying reason: they may be seeking control, trying to escape a stressful situation, or expressing a need for something that isn't being met.
- Restraint may teach the child that their feelings or desires are invalid or that they need to suppress their emotions to avoid consequences. Restraint can make them feel helpless, where, as giving them the tools to manage their emotions can foster independence and emotional intelligence.
- For the student that is in the flight response; we do not agitate the student more by blocking doorways, chasing after them, or locking the door (unless imminent danger). Going outside on school grounds, running in the hallway, are disruptive and inconvenient but not in danger.
- Instead, approach the child with empathy and understanding. Create an emotionally safe environment and guide them through their emotions. Calmly setting boundaries and offering support helps the child feel secure, which can ultimately reduce the likelihood of runaway behavior.

38

I have already been trained before in crisis management, so I don't need a refresher

- Any type of crisis management training (such as CPI, BMS, CMT, etc.) is valid for a certain period of time (typically for about 2 years).
- It is imperative trained staff follow refreshers, because:
 - Information in the training may have changed
 - Valuable information may have been forgotten (e.g. verbal de-escalation, danger assessment)
 - Skills learned to complete a restraints safely/properly may have been forgotten, which could endanger the student or the adult themselves.
- Adults need the opportunities to practice outside of the actual incidents, because it's not the time or place to figure things out in the heat of the moment when under stress.

39

I have my CPI/CMT card, which gives me permission to apply restraints and isolation

- According to the *Cadre de référence des mesures de contrôle* written by the MEQ, these types of interventions are meant to be used **as a last-resort**, in **exceptional emergency circumstances only**, where the child is in **imminent danger** to themselves and to others. 3 criteria must be observed: probability, immediacy, severity.
- Even if the staff have been trained to apply these measures, it doesn't mean they should unless at any time (only when necessary, when faced with imminent danger).
- Furthermore, even if a student has a safety protocol, which includes details regarding restraints and isolation measures, it also doesn't mean they should be applied at any time (only when necessary, when faced with imminent danger).

40

I have my CPI/CMT card, which gives me permission to apply restraints and isolation

We must differentiate between:

- **A crisis situation:** when a student's behaviour becomes disorganized and spirals out of control in a fairly predictable pattern. The crisis is a temporary disruption of the student's functioning on the emotional, cognitive or behavioural level. It can be resolved through interventions, or it can worsen and lead to an emergency situation.
- **An emergency situation:** when the physical safety of the student or others is threatened and there is potential danger. This danger is assessed using three criteria: its probability, its immediacy and the severity of its consequences. In an emergency situation, the staff concerned must take immediate action, which may include the use of alternative measures or, as a last resort, a control measure.

41

Using isolation is different from using restraints

- According to the *Cadre de référence des mesures de contrôle* written by the MEQ, the use of isolation in a school environment must be considered in the same way as a restraint because of the heightened risk of causing harm to the physical, psychological and moral well-being of students and staff.
- The school staff must stay vigilant and rely on this type of intervention as a last-resort, in exceptional circumstances only, where the child is in eminent danger to themselves and to others (taking into account the child's rights recognized by the *Québec Charter of human rights and freedoms*).
- Similarly to restraints, isolation, if required, must be reduced to a minimum, and the measure must be discontinued as soon as the safety of the student and the people around them is no longer compromised. The signs that the student wants to collaborate and that they have regained their composure must also be considered.
- Isolation is not the same as removal, where the student can freely leave the area at any time. For example, the student could be placed by themselves in an area of the classroom to allow them to regain their composure.

42

Guiding a student by the hand/wrist isn't considered a restraint

According to the *Cadre de référence des mesures de contrôle* written by the MEQ, it is important to distinguish between:

- a physical restraint, which is aimed at stopping or limiting the movement of a student using human strength. The strength applied is such that the student has difficulty freeing themselves despite all their efforts
- an intervention involving physical assistance for a student who is **cooperating**

❖ **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If a staff takes a student's hand/arm, or holds them by the wrist, to lead them to the requested activity, where the **student demonstrates some resistance**, this is considered a physical restraint.*

43

Part 5 The roles and responsibilities of Support Staff

44

Support Staff must focus on their assigned student only

- All adults are involved in general tier 1 support for all students.
- Support staff play a crucial role in ensuring the smooth operation of educational environments. While teachers are primarily responsible for delivering academic content, support staff contribute in various ways to the overall well-being of students, staff, and the school community.
- Support staff serve as essential advocates for both their students and themselves. Through active listening, collaboration, and promoting inclusivity, they ensure that students' needs are met, and their voices are heard. At the same time, advocating for their own professional development, well-being, and recognition is vital for ensuring they can continue to provide the best support for students. Effective advocacy by support staff strengthens the entire school community, contributing to a positive, nurturing, and effective educational environment for all.

45

Not my job!

- The roles of support staff in schools are diverse and vital to the overall success of students and the functioning of the school system. The myths that surround these roles often undervalue their contributions. Support staff are not just “assistants”; they are skilled professionals who support students in various ways, from improving academic outcomes to ensuring mental health and well-being, to maintaining a safe and efficient learning environment.
- Roles should be seen as complimentary to one another. When we share the weight as a team, we have the best success and feel valued.
- Support staff often play a key role in decision-making processes. We need to collaborate with teachers, administrators, and parents to make decisions about students' needs, curriculum adaptations, and interventions.

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