Responding vs. Reacting: Helping Your Students Understand the Importance of Self-Regulation Begins with You!

Monday, February 19, 2018
Attachment & Trauma Network
National Conference for Creating Trauma Sensitive Schools

James Moffett, MEd, Principal
@DHEPrincipal
Cindy Blasi, LMSW, CCTP, Social Worker
@cindy_blasi

Breakout session objectives...

- To help educational professionals identify their own triggers, and understand the impact those triggers have on their effectiveness.
- To understand the model of self-regulation.
- To understand the difference between a traditional discipline approach and a model of self-regulation.
- To understand the difference in baseline stress levels in a person with a stressed brain and a person with a healthy brain.
- To help professionals teach an array of self-regulation strategies to include breaks, zones of regulation, mindfulness, safe spots, teaching the brain and intentional communication.

What must come first, instructional or behavioral practices?

IF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION INVOLVES LISTENING TO UNDERSTAND, AND IF ALL BEHAVIOR IS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION, WHEN 'THAT KID' IS DISRUPTIVE OR IN CRISIS, ARE YOU TAKING THE TIME TO LISTEN SO YOU KNOW HOW THEY NEED YOU TO RESPOND."

-JAMES MOFFETT
Times have changed...Have we?

People really don’t hate change, they hate the WAY things change.

Our story...

A Complete Paradigm Shift is needed...but proceed with caution...
Mindset Shift #1
We can't expect more from our students than we are willing to give. For far too long, educators have expected things from students that they aren’t willing to do themselves. In fact, we expect things from our students that we’d be upset about if our supervisors expected them from us!

Mindset Shift #2
This shift requires teachers to stop placing the blame on students, families and society for deficits in student academic and behavioral achievement. Teachers need to reflect, look inward and make internal changes to be what their specific student needs them to be. We’re past the days of, “that kid needs to comply because I said so,” and we’re in a stage of “I need to work harder to engage that kid.” That’s hard for many educators to accept.

Mindset Shift #3
Teachers and other school staff can no longer hand off “tough kids,” to social workers, administrators, counselors and behavior interventionist - the job is too big for any one group. Teachers have to be willing to be the first intervention. Things that were once tier 3 interventions are now tier 1 interventions happening in the classroom.
What's all that mean?

MANAGING EMOTIONS

ACADEMIC SKILLS

So where do we start?

Realize. It starts with you.

Who you got?

RESPOND > REACT
Genuine relationships are required!

Relationships built on...
- Vulnerability
- Trust
- Empathy
- Sincere Connections

How well do you know the people in this room?

Show and Tell...

Tell us about all your problems. How many ACEs do you have?

“If teachers can’t regulate themselves they can’t help students learn how to self regulate.”

“Dysregulated kids become dysregulated adults!”

ACEs are adverse childhood experiences.

Show and Tell...
Look inward first to shift your mindset...

- We have to self-regulate if we are going to help our students self-regulate.
- A student’s behavior when they are in trouble is a reaction to the fear behind the initial behavior.
- If we are calm, we can look at the behavior as a teachable moment.
- If we approach the student with a positive intent we can look for win/win solutions.

“That kid!”

1. Characteristics
2. Behaviors
3. Incidents
4. Reputation
5. Appearance
6. Family Life
7. Academic Performance
8. Attitude

Change your lens with “that kid?”

1. Strengths
2. Skills
3. Hobbies
4. Interests
5. Goals
6. Successes
7. What do you know about him/her?
8. What does he/she need?
9. Who is his/her champion?

What’s your ratio? How many OTRs?

- Typically behaving students need a 4:1 positive to negative interaction ratio.
- “That kid” or kids who’ve experienced a high number of ACEs need a 14:1 ratio.
- Do you know your ratio? Ask someone to calculate them for you!
- OTR’s are “opportunities to respond.”
- One way to improve your ratio is to “manufacture” opportunities to positively interact with “that kid.”
- Be deliberate and be intentional.
Grow in empathy!

Windows of “Stress Tolerance”

Where do you fit?

Your colleagues?

Window of Tolerance

Window of Tolerance

Level of Stress

Level of Stress

Out with the old, in with the new!

Model 1

Notice  React  Escalates the Individual

Model 2

Notice  Name  Respond  Calms the Student

Practice and Reflect...

What are your triggers? What sets you off?

As an educational professional, what are your triggers? What causes you to blow your top?

Practice and Reflect...

Notice, Name, Validate and Respond Tracker

At the beginning of a lesson, take a moment to review your own triggers and those of your colleagues to better understand how you can support each other. This strategy helps teachers and students alike to notice and mitigate the impact of triggers in the classroom.

Practice and Reflect...
The breakdown...here's the difference...

**Model 1**

Traditional discipline is fear based.

Fear begets fear. Escalation breeds more escalation.

**Model 2**

The self-regulation model of discipline is love based.

Love begets love. Calm elicits calm.

Notice ➔ Self-Regulate*

We start with a PAUSE...to regulate ourselves.

What happens in the pause is crucial!

**PAUSE...what are you feeling?**

“I Calm” Breathing...notice nonverbal cues

“I Feel” Name feeling...I statements

“I Choose” Reframing...to a positive solution

“I Solve” Problem solve...win/win solution

Rethinking our traditional thinking...

Examples of A-B-C Contingencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedent A</th>
<th>Behavior B</th>
<th>Consequence C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lights off; dark exam</td>
<td>Turn on light</td>
<td>Lights are on; it's bright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not prepared for meeting; anxious</td>
<td>Review documents prepared</td>
<td>Well-prepared for meeting; confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not signed into Outlook; no access to email</td>
<td>Sign into Outlook</td>
<td>Signed into Outlook; have access to email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warned not to do something</td>
<td>Do it anyway</td>
<td>Punished for noncompliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On conference call with prospective client, client is the one talking, client’s tone is direct; supervisor, and project manager</td>
<td>Child(paraphrased) requests and gently</td>
<td>Child(paraphrased) requests and gently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AB...C
You’ve taken care of you, now take care of them!

Strategy 1: Breaks

Limited Request Break Cards

Triggers are occurring in your classroom all the time that cause students to “check out.” Teachers can take back “control” by allowing students to regulate breaks. In turn, decreasing stressful situations for the teacher and student.

Strategy 2: Zones of Regulation

Strategy 3: Mindfulness

Mindfulness is recognizing your thoughts and emotions. It is allowing yourself to be nonjudgmental of those feelings. Mindfulness teaches us to calm our bodies and minds, relieving stress, seeking gratitude, and connecting with our sense of self. In other words...It teaches us to BE IN THE MOMENT!
Strategy 4: Safe Spots

A safe spot is intended to teach students to self regulate and de-escalate. Children should be taught how to use the safe spot before an incident occurs.

A safe spot is not a punishment or consequence; it is not a “naughty chair/spot” or time out area. Rarely should a child be sent here.

As adults we all have “safe spots.” Places we escape to in our mind when we are stressed. Children need a concrete place they can physically go to de-escalate and refocus.

Every classroom must have a true safe spot.

Strategy 5: Teaching about the Brain

What’s the data telling us?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>ODRs</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug./Sept.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>859</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategy 6: Communication must be intentional

How can teachers communicate effectively with students who have experienced trauma?

Meaningful relationships are still the key!
Classroom meetings
Check in, check out with daily goals and incentives!
Praise publicly, criticize privately!
Be intentional about building trust!
Teach universal expectations in every location
Use your voice to create calm, predictable transitions.
Be vulnerable and share about your struggles and obstacles.
When responding to a behavior, listen more than you speak (seek to understand, not to be heard).
Reward students when they are able to self regulate!

These are best practices for ALL!
Questions?

Thanks for joining us today!
We’ll stick around to answer any specific questions you have.

Professional References


