

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

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FIVE STAR RELATIONSHIPS

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH IN ONTARIO

- Nearly 1 in 5 children
- Early diagnosis, support, and treatment facilitates better outcomes for children later in life

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH - NATIONAL DATA

- A high percentage of behaviour problems in children do not go on to become mental health issues, if treated early
 - 50% of all mental illnesses have their onset before adolescence
 - 20% of youth are affected by mental illness
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MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH - NATIONAL DATA

- Suicide in Canada is the second leading cause of death for individuals ages 10-24
 - 90% of individuals who died by suicide had a mental illness
 - Canada's youth suicide is the third highest in the world
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POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES (AGES 6-18)

- Child gets significantly lower marks in school than achieved previously
 - Avoids friends and family and experiences a loss of enjoyment in life
 - Frequent worry, fear, anger, rage, or mood swings
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POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES (AGES 6-18)

- Loss of appetite or obsessed with weight
 - Little or no concern over appearance (little attention to hygienic concerns)
 - Lack of motivation and energy
 - Bullies other individuals
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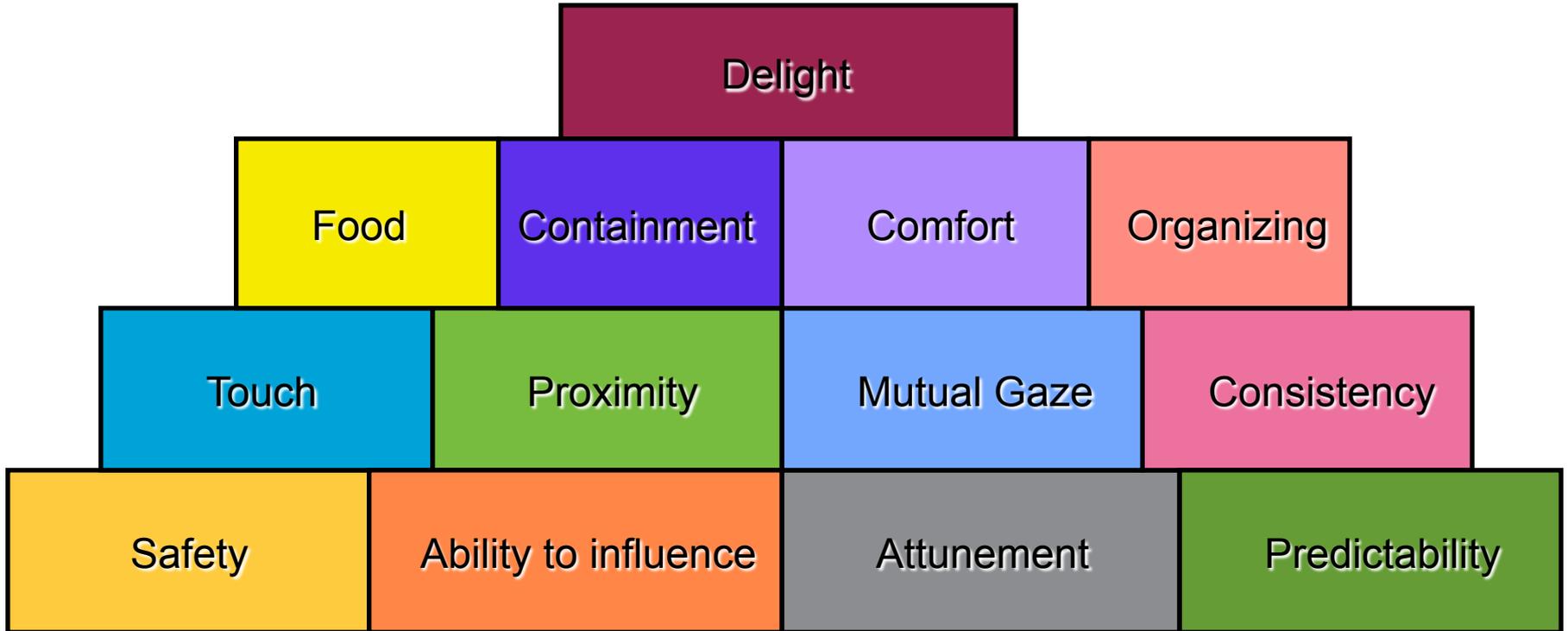
POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES (AGES 6-18)

- Attempts to injure self or others
 - Difficulty sleeping
 - Rebels against authority
 - Habitual use of drugs and/or alcohol
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INCREASING RESILIENCE IN FAMILIES

1. Build strong, healthy attachments between parents & children
 2. Establish a healthy family structure
 3. Boost emotional intelligence
 4. Model collaborative problem solving
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BUILDING BLOCKS OF SECURE ATTACHMENT



BUILD STRONG HEALTHY ATTACHMENTS

1. Understand your child's biological & psychological phase of development.
 2. Provide a regular diet of love and respect.
 3. Respond with sensitivity: practice active listening, empathize with feelings, use a tone that conveys respect, dignity, love, and care.
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BUILD STRONG HEALTHY ATTACHMENTS

4. Use nurturing touch: Communicate love and connection.
5. Ensure safety - physically and emotionally.
6. Provide consistent and loving care.
7. Delight in your child: get to know your child: their strengths, what you appreciate about them, and let them know.



BUILD STRONG HEALTHY ATTACHMENTS

8. Be aware, validate & try to meet each family member's needs. Keep family time a priority!
9. Practice positive discipline: Connection first, rather than control. Set limits with a calm, empowered tone.

“Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers,” by Gordon Neufeld, Ph.D, and Gabor Mate, M.D.



ESTABLISH A HEALTHY FAMILY STRUCTURE

The jellyfish family:

- Permissive, unstable, chaotic family environment that lacks structure, consistency, and safe boundaries.
- There are few or no limits and children usually get what they want.
- Parents rescue children from their problems. Bribes, threats, and punishment are used when the lack of structure causes excessive frustration. Emotions rule the behaviour of parents and children.

The possible result:

- These children often feel unloved and abandoned and do not trust others. Children learn to get their needs met by manipulating others, as they do not know how to express their feelings. Children often lack resources to be able to stick up for themselves.

ESTABLISH A HEALTHY FAMILY STRUCTURE

The brick-wall family:

- Family that is concerned with order, control, obedience, adherence to rules, and a hierarchy of power. Kids are controlled, directed, reminded, lectured, supervised, and threatened. The parent has authority and enforces order. Bribes are used and competition is encouraged. This type of family teaches children what to think, rather than how to think, and love is conditional.

The possible result:

- Children learn to bully, control, and manipulate others. They become easily angry and aggressive, lack empathy, collaborative problem solving skills, and healthy relational skills.

ESTABLISH A HEALTHY FAMILY STRUCTURE

The backbone family:

- Teaches & demonstrates respect, is compassionate, firm, friendly, fair, consistent, calm, and has flexible boundaries and structure. Collaboration is encouraged, consequences are natural and reasonable, and rules are simple and clear. Children are motivated to be all they can be, learn to be responsible for their actions and feelings, and receive affirmation, hugs, smiles and humour. Parental messages: “I believe in you, trust you, know you can handle life situations, you are listened too, cared for, loved, and are very important to me.”

The desired result:

- Children develop a secure attachment, learn they can say no, listen, are respectful, learn to think, love themselves, feel empowered, and have empathy and compassion for others.

“Kids are Worth it” Barbara Coloroso

BOOST EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Name & Validate feelings

It looks like you are sad that Taylor can't come to your birthday party

Use empathy

Empathic Response: It can be disappointing when you invite a friend to something that you are looking forward to and they can't come.

Empathic responses are helpful in developing your child's emotional intelligence, especially when children communicate their feelings.

BOOST EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Capitalize on ‘teachable moments’

When you and your child are together and experience or witness a situation that involves feelings.

Example: when you are at the mall shopping and a child has a ‘meltdown’ followed by the parent losing control. It looks like that child is upset about something and the parent is acting out of frustration.

Be pre-emptive

Example: Grocery shopping.

**“How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk, “
by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish.**

COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Collaborative problem solving is about clarifying the concerns of both parties, and then working towards solutions that address those concerns.

Step #1: Empathy

Gather information from your child to understand his or her perspective & concern about a given unsolved problem.



COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Step #2: Define the problem

Communicate your concern or perspective about the same problem.

Step #3: Offer an invitation

Brainstorm with your child to find solutions that are realistic and mutually satisfactory. The invitation addresses the concerns your child voiced in step #1, and what you voiced in step #2.

“The Explosive Child,” by Ross Greene

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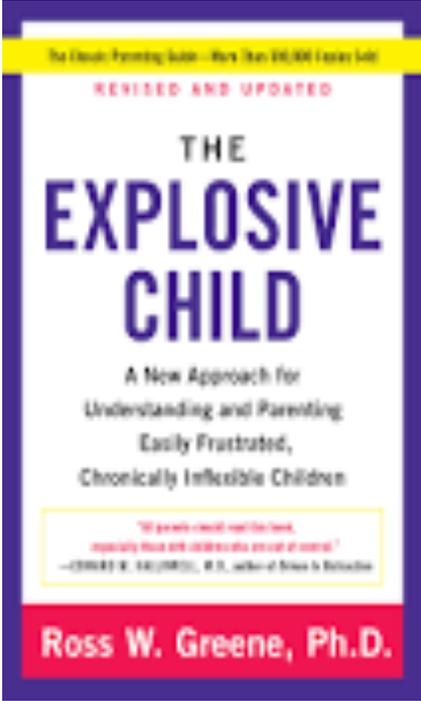
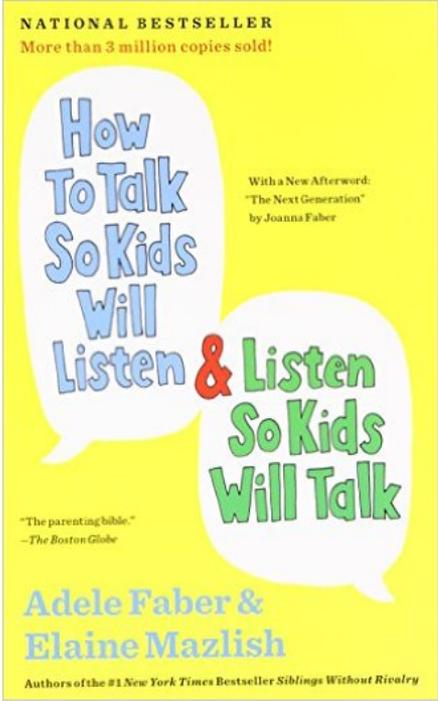
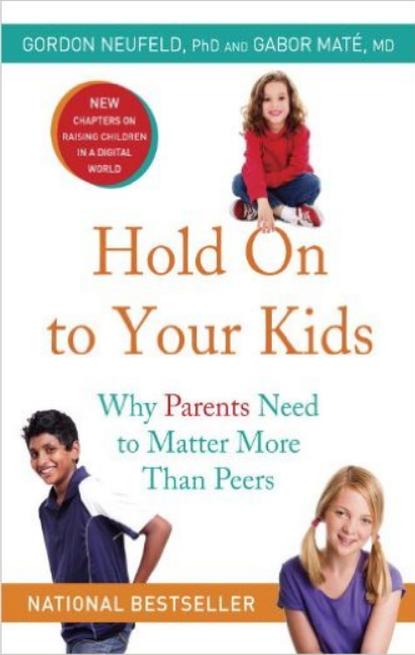
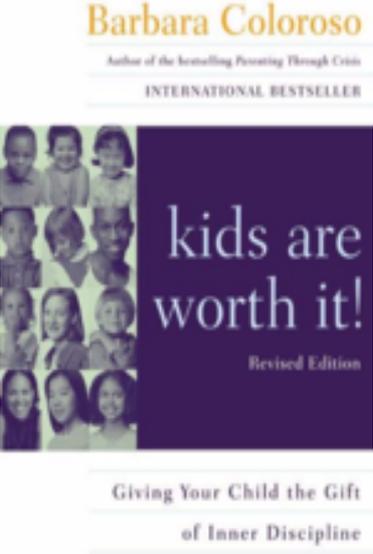
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RESOURCE BOOKS



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