

# What to Expect through Summer

Immediate and Short-Term Aspects of  
Trauma + COVID-19

# Speaker Disclaimer

- Monica L. Raminger, LMHC, CATP does not have any financial conflicts or ventures to disclose.
- This presentation is not meant to offer certification, professional training, or licensure nor is it intended to offer therapeutic or medical consultation..
- This presentation discusses topics that some members may view as upsetting or triggering. Please assess your level of engagement based on your needs. Take breaks!

The Frontal lobe is considered the emotional control center and the home of our personality.

The frontal lobe controls higher level thinking:

- Reasoning
- Planning
- Language
- Long-term Memory
- Impulse control
- Problem Solving
- Emotions
- Judgment
- Motor Function



# Immediate Disruption

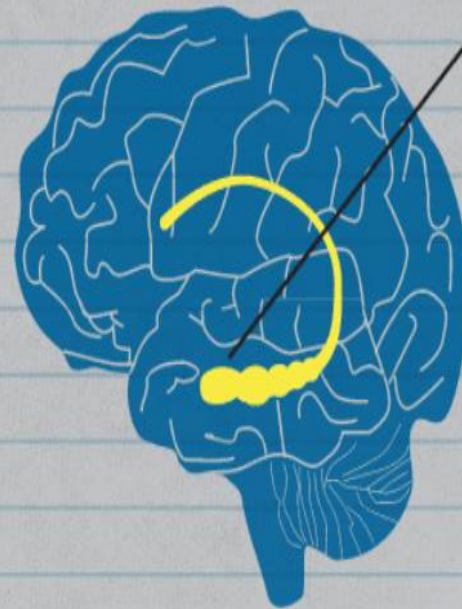
## Stay Cool: Anxiety Hinders Memory

Test anxiety affects  
20-50% of students.

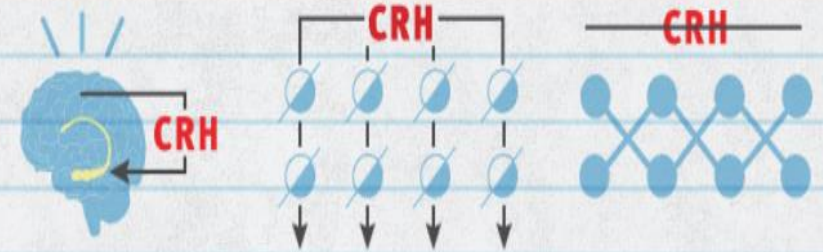
University of California, Irvine, found that

*“Short-term stress lasting as little as a few hours can impair brain-cell communication in areas associated with learning and memory.”*

### WHY IT HAPPENS:



Short-term memory happens in a part of the brain called the **Hippocampus**.



Acute stress causes the brain to release the neurotransmitter **CRH**.

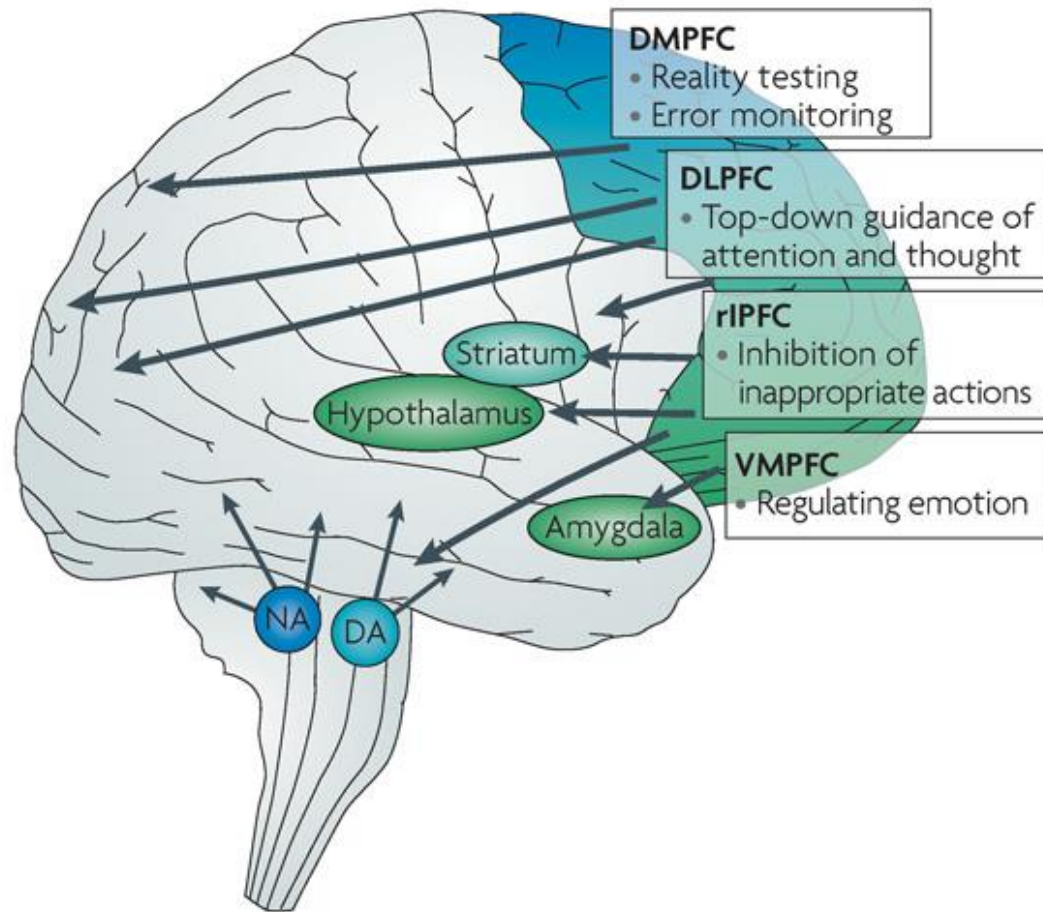
**CRH** temporarily damages neurons in Hippocampus that form new memories.

When **CRH** is removed however, the neurons heal and begin forming memories with ease.

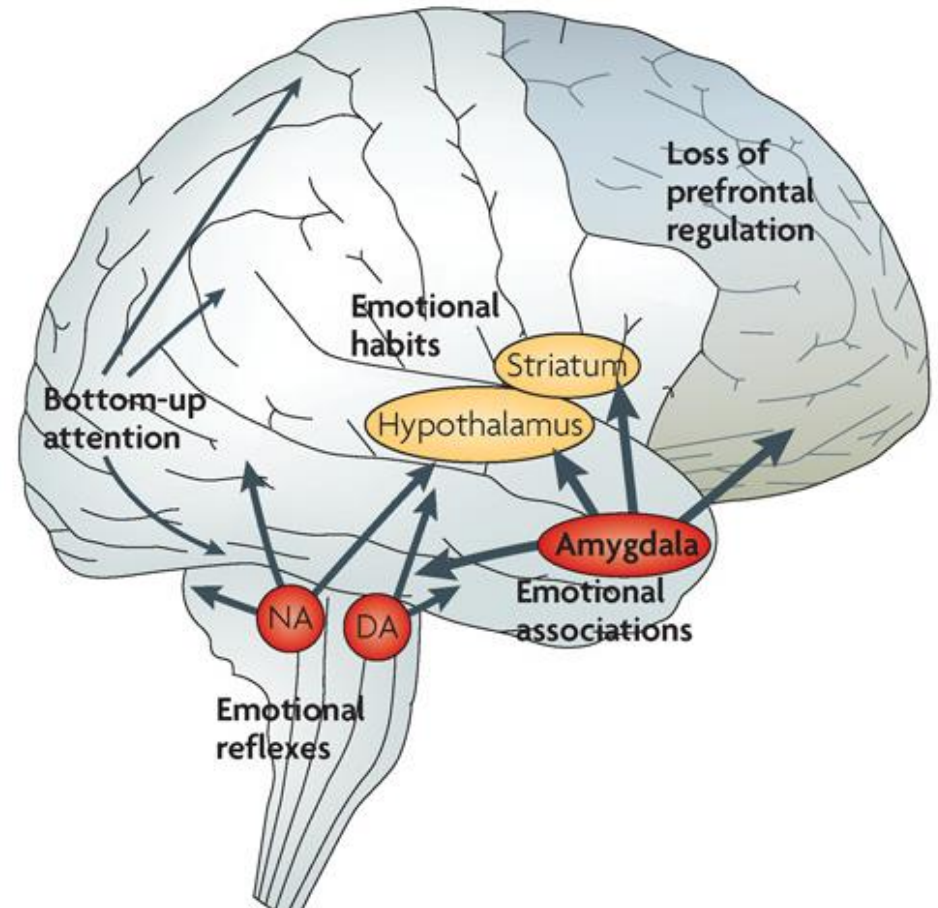


# Stress Related Changes in the Brain

a Prefrontal regulation during alert, non-stress conditions



b Amygdala control during stress conditions



# Behavior Changes

- Physical and Behavioral Signs
- Social and Interpersonal Signs
- Academic changes
  - Performance
  - Effort
  - Motivation

# Emotional Dysregulation

*“When a child experiences difficulty with registering emotions, responding with emotions appropriate to context, and regulating emotional responses in social situations (i.e., suppressing emotions or presenting with overly dramatic and excessive emotional responses).”*

- Diminished social reward
- Difficulty with executive functioning
- Enhanced threat bias

# Adjustment Disorder

“An unhealthy emotional or behavioral reaction to a stressful event or change in a person’s life. The response happens within 3 months of the stressful event and last up to 6 months after the event.”

- **Adjustment disorder with depressed mood.**
- **Adjustment disorder with anxiety.**
- **Adjustment disorder with anxiety and depressed mood.**
- **Adjustment disorder with disturbance of conduct.**
- **Adjustment disorder with mixed disturbance of emotions and conduct.**
- **Adjustment disorder unspecified**



# Acute Stress Disorder

*“The development of severe anxiety, dissociation, and other symptoms that occurs within one month after exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor”*

Reexperiencing of the event

Reminders of the event are avoided

*-Dissociation as an attempt to separate self from event reminder*

Increased stress response when reminded of the event

Irritability    Difficulty sleeping    Hypervigilance    Problems concentrating    Negative mood    Foggy and dazed

Usually begins immediately after the event and lasts 3 days to a month



# Dissociation in Students

Separation of mind and behavior from overall awareness

- Normal Dissociation v. Problematic Dissociation

Mild Dissociation

Moderate Dissociation

- Depersonalization
- Derealization

Severe Dissociation

# Trauma Informed Summer Outreach

Protective Factors Against Trauma Disorders

## **ENGAGE**

- Continuous contact with and support from important people in your life
- Talking about the stress with trusted adults
- Helping others in their healing process

## **EMPOWER**

- Identifying as a survivor as opposed to a victim
- Use of positive emotions and laughter
- Finding positive meaning in the stress
- Holding the belief that you can manage your feelings and cope

# Resiliency

“The ability to mentally or emotionally cope with a crisis or to return to pre-crisis status quickly, using skills to protect self from the potential negative effects of stressors”

- **Competence**
- **Confidence**
- **Connection**
- **Character**
- **Contribution**
- **Coping**
- **Control**

# Student Self-Care



EXERCISE



NUTRITION



SLEEP



GOAL-SETTING



SOCIALIZATION

# Mental Health Education and Awareness

- Staff Education
- Student Education
- Parent and Family Education
- Community Education



# Psychosocial Needs



- Housing
- Food
- Income
- Mental health
- Physical health
- Safety



# Local Resources



Mental Health Treatment



Case Management



Community Groups



Crisis Services



LDSS

# Learning Assessments

Solicit feedback from students and families

- What have students lost?
- How do they best learn?
- What are they most/least looking forward to in their return?

# Learning assessments

Assess for Reteaching

Know your Purpose

Collect Data over Time

Focus on Feedback

Check for Understanding

Use Personal Conversations

Use Professional Judgment

Stop Assessing *Everything*

Strength-Based Assessment

# Summer Slide

- Achievement typically slows or declines over the summer months
- Declines tend to be steeper for math than for reading
- The extent (proportionally) of loss increases in the upper grades

Recent studies project that students will lose 30-50% of information learned since March 15 through Summer



Create Continuity

Building and Maintaining Peer Relationships

Modeling why and how to use metacognition—  
awareness and understanding of one's own  
thought process

Build Support for the Entire Family

Summer  
Enrichment

# Social Emotional Learning

*“The set of skills, knowledge, and behaviors involved in understanding and managing emotions, setting positive goals, feeling empathy for others, engaging in positive relationships, and solving problems effectively”*

Social Awareness

Self-Awareness

Self-Management

Relationship Skills

# S.E.L.

CLASSROOM	 <b>Explicit SEL instruction</b>	Students have consistent opportunities to cultivate, practice, and reflect on social and emotional competencies in ways that are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive.
	 <b>SEL integrated with academic instruction</b>	SEL objectives are integrated into instructional content and teaching strategies for academics as well as music, art, and physical education.
	 <b>Youth voice and engagement</b>	Staff honor and elevate a broad range of student perspectives and experiences by engaging students as leaders, problem solvers, and decision-makers.
SCHOOL	 <b>Supportive school and classroom climates</b>	Schoolwide and classroom learning environments are supportive, culturally responsive, and focused on building relationships and community.
	 <b>Focus on adult SEL</b>	Staff have regular opportunities to cultivate their own social, emotional, and cultural competence, collaborate with one another, build trusting relationships, and maintain a strong community.
	 <b>Supportive discipline</b>	Discipline policies and practices are instructive, restorative, developmentally appropriate, and equitably applied.
	 <b>A continuum of integrated supports</b>	SEL is seamlessly integrated into a continuum of academic and behavioral supports, which are available to ensure that all student needs are met.
COMMUNITY FAMILY	 <b>Authentic family partnerships</b>	Families and school staff have regular and meaningful opportunities to build relationships and collaborate to support students' social, emotional, and academic development.
	 <b>Aligned community partnerships</b>	School staff and community partners align on common language, strategies, and communication around all SEL-related efforts and initiatives, including out-of-school time.
	 <b>Systems for continuous improvement</b>	Implementation and outcome data are collected and used to continuously improve all SEL-related systems, practices, and policies with a focus on equity.

# Why do Emotions Matter?

- Attention, Memory, and Learning
- Decision-Making
- Relationships
- Health and Well-Being
- Performance


# Helping with Emotions

Helping a child manage their emotions and regulate themselves (AKA co-regulation) can help prevent and reduce negative behaviors

- Reduce over-control of emotions
- Reduce under-control of emotions
- Develop coping skills for different circumstances



# Emotional Literacy

- Recognizing and naming emotions
    - Labeling and verbalizing feelings; use of ‘feeling words’
  - Connecting emotions to physical sensations
    - How emotions are ‘felt’ in our bodies; what feelings communicate to us
  - Safe emotional regulation
    - Expressing and releasing a full range of emotions
- 





## ACTIVITY, GRADES K-5: BELLY BREATHING

### PREP FOR ACTIVITY

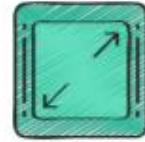
Make sure you have a stuffed animal or something soft that can be placed on your bellies as you do this activity together.

### STEPS FOR BELLY BREATHING

1. Lie down and place a stuffed animal on your belly.
2. Fully relax your whole body, including your belly.
3. Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose, and watch the stuffed animal rise.
4. Hold for a moment, then exhale slowly through your mouth and watch the stuffed animal lower.
5. Repeat as many times as your child(ren) can stay engaged.
  - a. Tip: With younger children, start with 3-5 simple breaths. Invite them to pretend that they are 'rocking' their stuffed animal to sleep.
  - b. Tip: As your child practices and gets more comfortable, you can extend the time they breathe. There is no need for them to go beyond 30-60 seconds, or they might start to feel a little light-headed



# Belly breathing



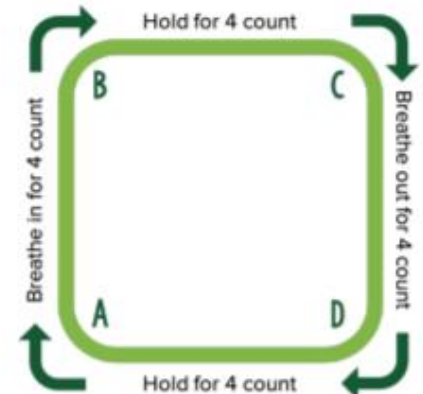
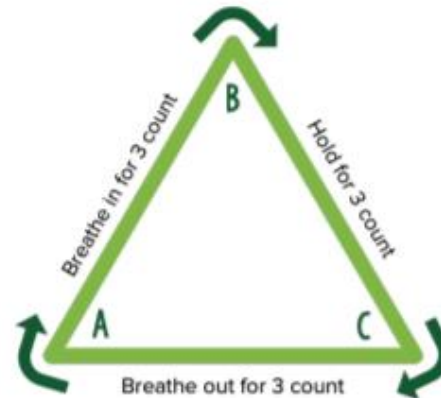
## ACTIVITY, GRADES K-5: BREATHING WITH SHAPES

### PREP FOR ACTIVITY

Print out the shapes below, or draw your own shapes on a piece of paper at home.

### STEPS FOR BREATHING WITH SHAPES

1. Place a finger on a shape below and follow the pattern of the triangle or square to guide breathing.
2. The triangle is the best for beginners, and then as you get more comfortable with the practice move on to the square.
3. Be sure to breathe "around" the shape at least 3-5 times to feel the intended effects.
4. At most, breathe with the shape for 30-60 seconds to avoid getting light-headed.





## ACTIVITY, GRADES 6-12: DEEP BREATHING FOR RELAXATION RESPONSE

### PREP FOR ACTIVITY

You can do this deep breathing exercise lying down, sitting, or even out on a walk! Create space to quiet your mind, turn inward to self-reflect, and focus on breathing. Have a timer handy.

### STEPS FOR DEEP BREATHING

1. Set a timer for yourself. Start with 60 seconds, and then build from there to doing this for up to 3-5 minutes.
  - a) Tip: Write down what you are feeling before you start.
2. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position and close your eyes.
3. Deeply relax all your muscles, beginning at your feet and progressing up to your face. Keep them relaxed.
  - a) Relax your stomach muscles too. We are accustomed to keeping it taut, but it is important to learn to relax your stomach when breathing deeply.
4. Start breathing in and out through your nose. Become aware of your breathing.
  - a) As you breathe out, say the word, "one," silently to yourself.
  - b) For example, breathe in...out, "one." Breathe in...out, "one."
  - c) Repeat easily and naturally – this should not feel forced.
5. Do your best to focus solely on your breath and the present moment.
  - a) When you notice thoughts, emotions, or other distractions simply acknowledge them, and the gently set them aside and return to focusing on your breath.
  - b) Maintain a positive attitude and permit relaxation to occur at its own pace.
6. When your timer goes off, very gently transition back to opening your eyes and being aware of your surroundings.
  - a) Tip: Write down how you are feeling now that you have concluded the practice. What emotions did you notice come up for you? What (if anything) changed?



## ACTIVITY, GRADES 6-12: MINDFUL BREATH COUNTING

### PREP FOR ACTIVITY

The deep breathing activity below is a great one to declutter an anxious mind by focusing on counting while breathing. Follow the directions below and you will feel stress and anxiousness disappear as you count.

### STEPS FOR MINDFUL BREATH COUNTING

1. **Lie down and let your body fully rest.**
  - a. Pay attention to the thoughts and emotions that you are experiencing.
2. **When you are ready, fully relax your stomach and take three deep breaths** while paying attention to the rising and falling of your belly.
  - a. Notice the sensation — what it feels like.
  - b. Note: Your belly (and not your chest) should be going in and out while you breathe.
3. **Place your hand on your belly.** As best as you are able, pay attention to the rocking of your hand with each breath.
4. **Recognize that your mind will go off somewhere else,** over and over again, or you might feel restless. This is completely normal.
  - a. Each time you notice your attention is gone somewhere else, come back again to your hand rising and falling on your belly.
5. Begin to count **your breaths, sticking to small groups.**
  - a. Start by counting to five, and then go back to one and repeat.
  - b. Next, count to ten and repeat.
  - c. **Each time you lose track, simply start over.**
  - d. Note any tendency to get frustrated — distractions will happen.
  - e. Continue at your own pace: Breathe in, one, breathe out, one; breathe in, two, breathe out, two...
6. **Any thoughts or emotions that come up are normal. Acknowledge the presence of these distractions, and then return to focusing on your breathing, your hand, or your counting.**
  - a. Remind yourself that all you are here to do is focus on your breathing.
  - b. This is not about being productive or taking action, but only about being fully present in the moment.
7. **When you are ready,** if you would like, open your eyes, or continuing to lie still until you are ready to conclude your practice.
8. **End with gratitude:** Acknowledge one thing you are grateful for in that moment.
  - a. Ideas: Health, friendships, work, school, today, breath, family, etc.



# SEL Homework

- Put on mini plays or skits.
- Be Active and Exercise.
- Go outside at night and point out different constellations.
- Read to your pet.
- Draw or trace their hand or random shape and see what animals you can make out of it.
- Write letters to friends or family.
- Put together puzzles.
- Bake a dessert to share with family
- Play musical instruments or create musical instruments.
- Take a virtual tour of a famous museum through Google Arts and Culture or download the museum's app.
- Watch a live-cam from a popular zoo or aquarium and see what the animals are doing, or of a national park
- Look up a science experiment that uses household stuff
- Find your house and family members' houses on Google Earth
- Use online resources to practice mindfulness
- Do breathing exercises.

# Play as Homework

- Play:
  - Helps Kids Take Academic Risks
  - Shapes School Climate
  - Gives Kids Ownership Over Learning
  - Deepens SEL
- Ideas: Imaginative, interactive, team-based, active, creative
  - “Story Building.”, “Name that Tune.”, “Simon Says.”, “Mother May I?”, Eye Spy, “Sound Search.”, “Follow the Leader.”, “Charades.”, the Alphabet Game, Pretend Teacher, “Hidden Words”, “Guess the Definition”, “Guess the Person”, Pictionary, Scrabble, Farkle

# Continued Improvement of Online Instruction

- Develop a flexible template with breaks that mirrors a school day
- Professional Development and Workshops
  - Available to staff and families
- Online support groups
  - Teachers, parents, and community members
- Virtual social opportunities
  - Clubs, extracurriculars, team workouts, 'dances'



## Burn Out

*“A state of chronic stress that leads to physical and emotional exhaustion, cynicism, detachment, and feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment.”*

Fatigue and Sleep Issues

Forgetfulness and Poor Concentration

Appetite and Weight Change

Depression and Anxiety

# Self-Care

Establish balanced work/life boundaries

- Give only what you can

Develop healthy distraction and distress tolerance skills

Physical Care

- Sleep
- Exercise

Emotional Care

- Mindfulness
- Learning

Social Care

- Stay Connected

# What to expect next week

Long-term/lasting aspects of trauma: PTSD, complex trauma, regression in behaviors, development of new behaviors, etc.

Transition back in Fall: What to expect, what to change, what to keep the same?

Trauma-informed education: Instruction, Milieu/Culture, staff and student education, family connections, community, etc.

Continuing SEL: collaborative learning, building social/emotional skills.

Continue self-care and wellness focus: mindfulness, compassion