Back-to-School Transition:
Tools for COVID Complications

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MGH Aspire

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Agenda

Acknowledging and Setting Priorities

COVID-Specific Concerns

Goals of 'Structure'
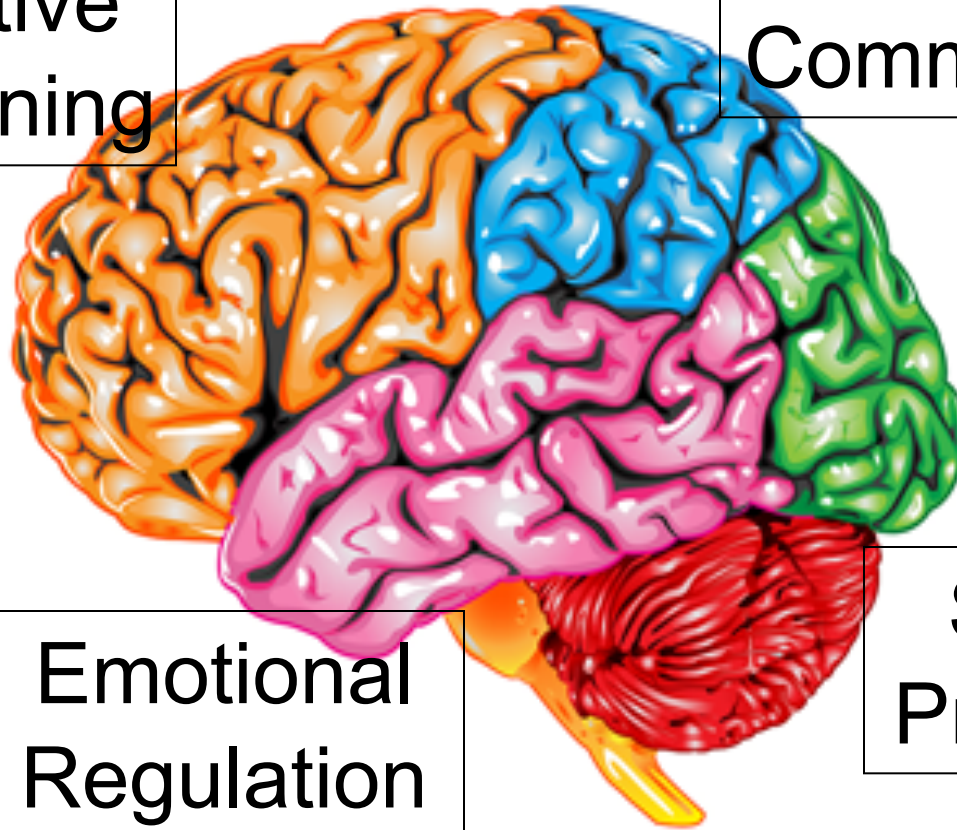
Examples of Supportive Structures
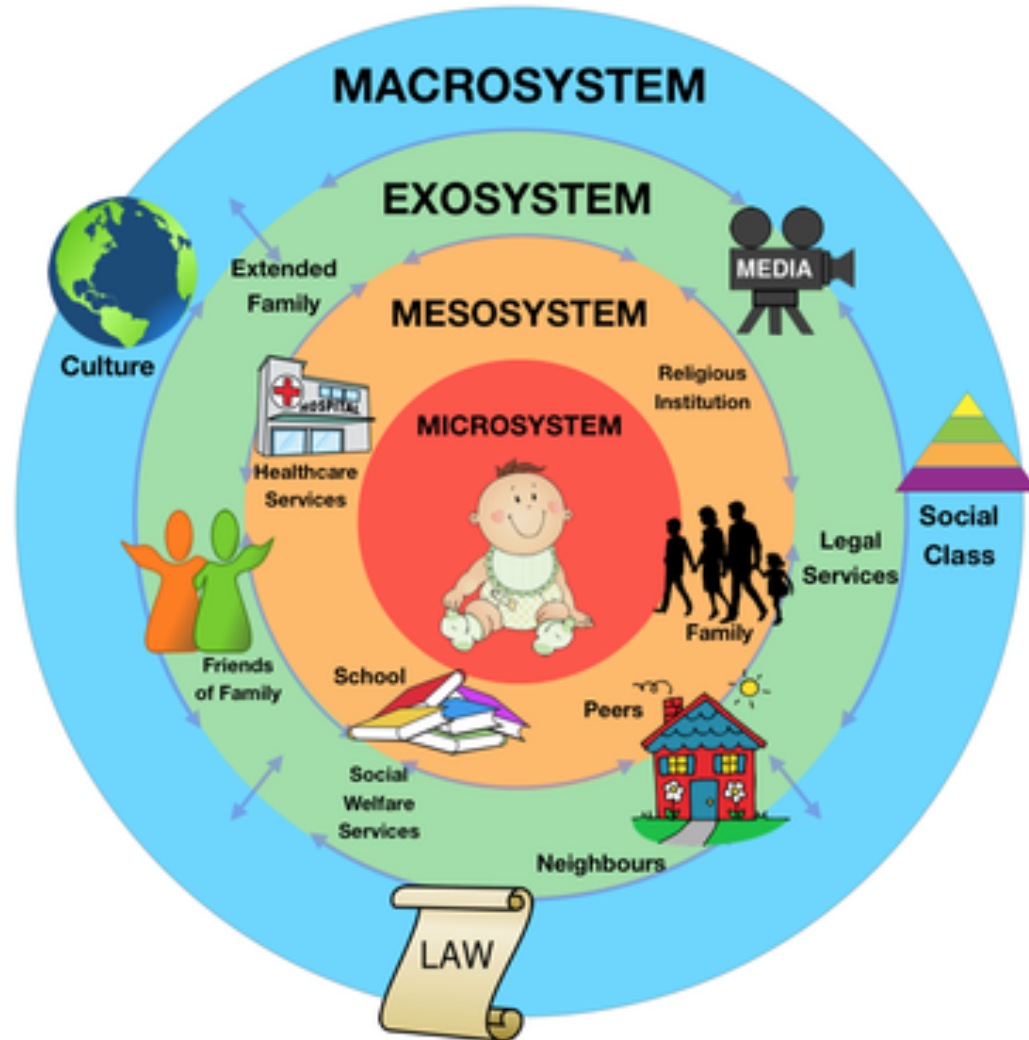
Home-Schooling Resources

Executive Functioning

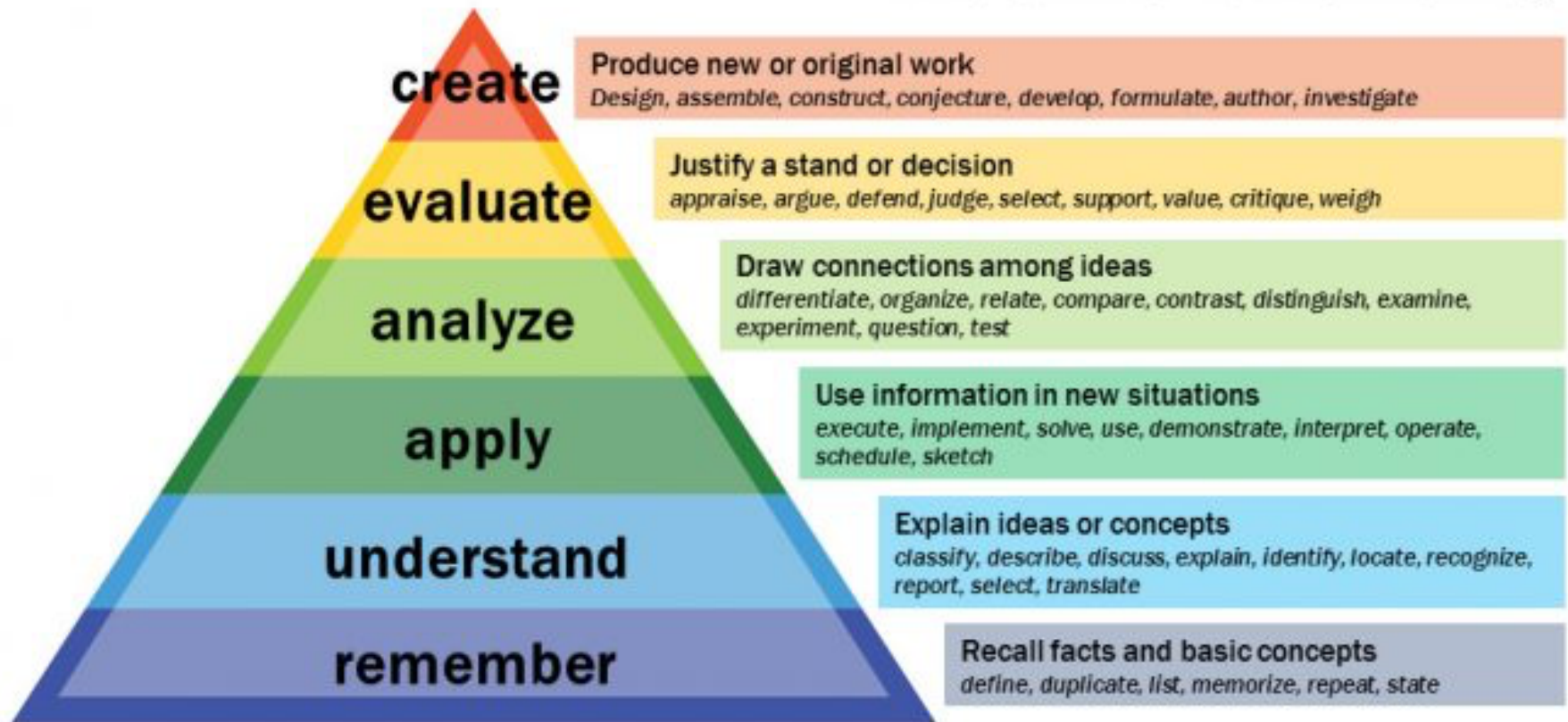Social Communication

Emotional Regulation

Sensory Processing

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory
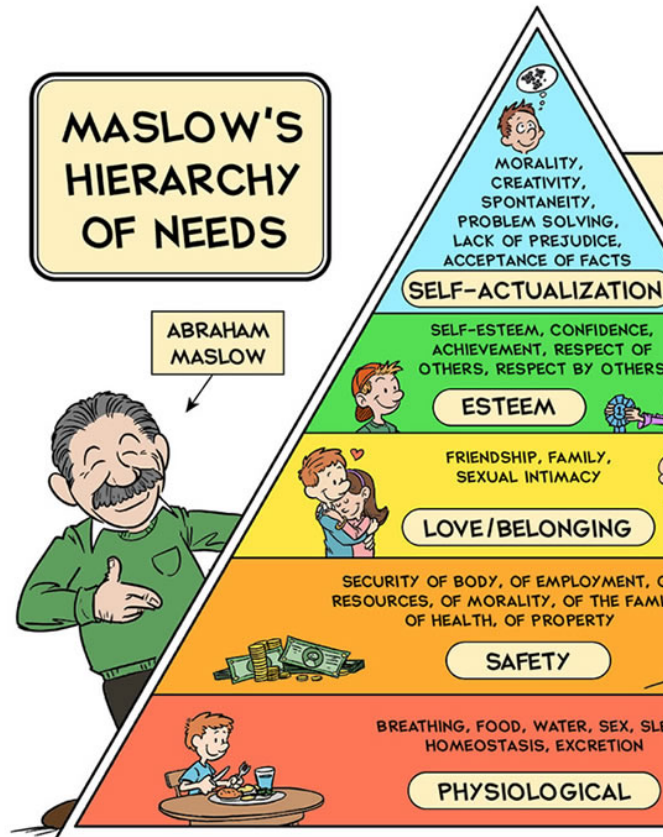
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Bloom's Taxonomy

create	Produce new or original work *Design, assemble, construct, conjecture, develop, formulate, author, investigate*
evaluate	Justify a stand or decision *appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, critique, weigh*
analyze	Draw connections among ideas *differentiate, organize, relate, compare, contrast, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test*
apply	Use information in new situations *execute, implement, solve, use, demonstrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch*
understand	Explain ideas or concepts *classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate*
remember	Recall facts and basic concepts *define, duplicate, list, memorize, repeat, state*

Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching

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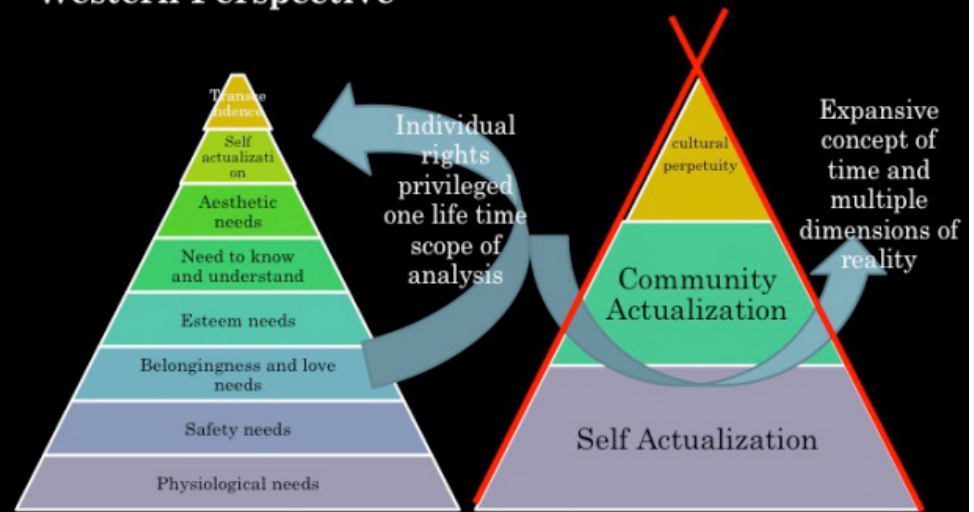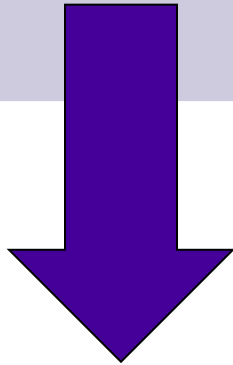
Priorities at School and Home
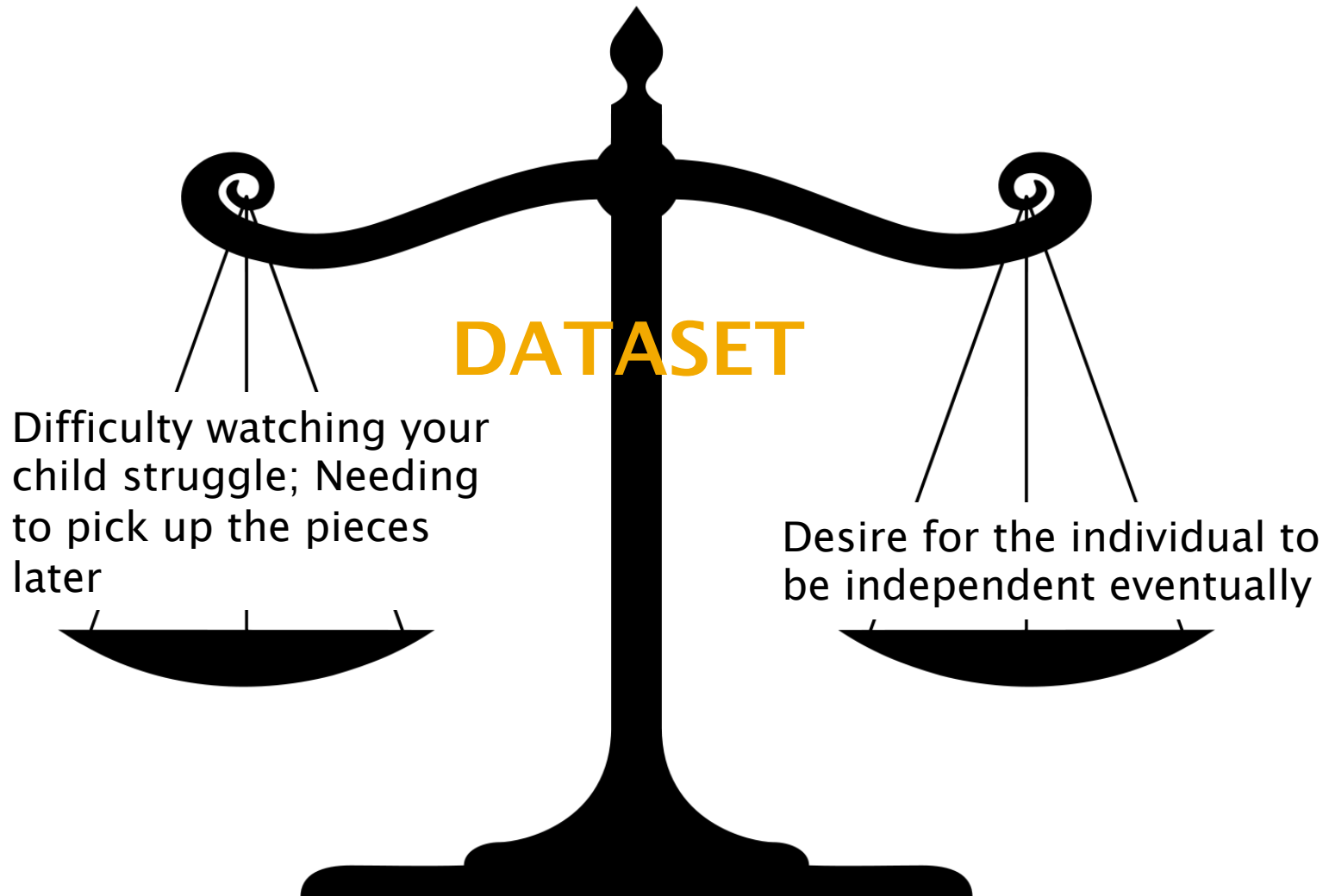
1. Safety

2. Self-Regulation

3. **Maintaining** core academic skills

    1. Reading

    2. Writing

    3. Mathematics

4. Connectivity

5. Access point for the future

COVID-19 Concerns

Caregivers	
• Personal loss • Insecurity about ability to care • Greater insight into child's academic or social skills or deficits (data set) • Regression • Shifting priorities • Trauma	

Anxiety

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DATASET

Difficulty watching your child struggle; Needing to pick up the pieces later

Desire for the individual to be independent eventually

Priorities and Responsibilities

All Environments
"Access Curriculum"

| Remote Learning Support	Homeschool Model
• Structure the environment to maximize productivity • Structure TIME • Communicate with classroom teacher/school liaison • Monitor engagement as an EXTENSION of the classroom shared expectations • Facilitate participation (in-the-moment and work completion) CONSISTENT with classroom teacher expectations	• Structure a learning environment • Structure TIME • Understand and select benchmarks • Stay committed to those benchmarks • Brainstorm "evaluation and assessment" that works for your child • Memory, Memory, Memory

Establishing Expectations (at Home)

- **Expectations EVOLVE.**

- Set up a regular Family Meeting

- Prepare for expected questions ('Answer Books')

- Not everything goes in the schedule, but everything has a place in the schedule:

    - Chores

    - Personal Hygiene routines

- Capture the Conversation

    - Write it down

    - Check for agreement

    - Organization: Make it visual

    - Use the tool, don't rely on memory

COVID-19 Concerns in Collaboration

Caregivers	School Staff
• Personal loss • Insecurity about ability to care • Greater insight into child's academic or social skills or deficits • Regression • Shifting priorities • Trauma	• Personal loss • Insecurity about ability to care (virtual platforms) • Greater insight into child's home presentation (data set) • Regression • Shifting priorities • Trauma

Anxiety

Advice to Medical Professionals
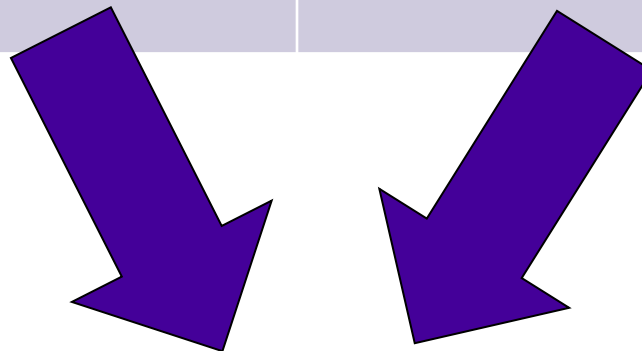
"Families already have many strengths including **resilience and existing strategies to overcome their challenges**. They know their family member ***better than anyone else*** and may have already established methods of effective communication. These existing methods and strategies should be **positively reinforced by professionals during consultations**. Good communication remains essential. **It is imperative to show interest and understand the other person's perspective**. Family members need to help individuals relax and self-soothe."

-Yahya and Khawaja (2020)

Back-to-School: Build the Narrative

- Pre-COVID what were your/your child's priorities?

- Your child's COVID experience:

  - Sleep? Eat? Communicate?

  - Discussions about COVID? Understanding of COVID?

- During COVID remote learning, describe:

  - A bad day

  - A great day

  - An average day

- Now, what are your concerns?

- What are you/your child's priorities?

Shared Experience

- Identify your needs and capabilities

- Communicate with the school liaison (how?)

- **Agree to mutually acceptable expectations**

- Ask for clarification

- Express outcomes with neutrality

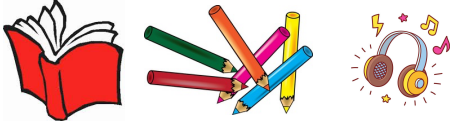- Ask for help

Supportive Structures

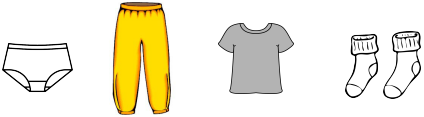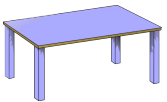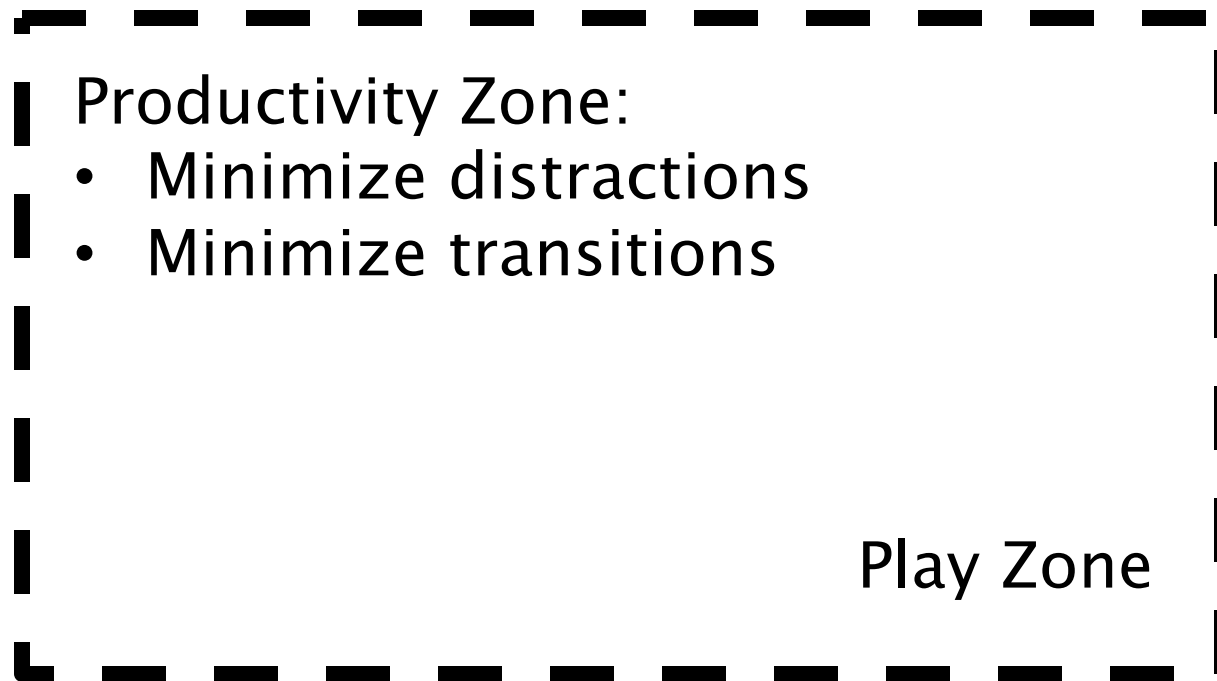# Prediction

- Preview expectations

- Solve (more) problems before 'the moment'

- Caregiver planning

Routines and Schedules

Who	What	When	Where	Why	How
Elise	Morning Meeting	8:00am	The Kitchen Table	Connect with other students in my class and learn about them; Get a preview of the day	iPad, Zoom link
Orlie	Breakfast	8:15am	The Porch	Your body needs fuel to start the day	Dad will prepare it

Morning Choice	
Get Dressed* *Additional Morning Routines	
Breakfast	
Morning Meeting	
Math	

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Day			Mom – volunteer at school		Mom – Book club – 1st/month	Tennis matches Basketball games Swim meets
@School	Send in lunch $	L – gym	N – library L - lab	J – library B - library	B - gym	N – make-up tennis, 1 -2 pm
3:00 p.m.						
3:30 p.m.						
4:00 p.m.		J - Swim practice		J - Swim practice		
4:30 p.m.						
5:00 p.m.		N – tennis lesson	L – basketball practice	N – tennis lesson		
5:30 p.m.	B – play rehearsal		carpool w/Susie	B – play rehearsal	Girl Scouts	
6:00 p.m.				carpool w/ John		
6:30 p.m.						
7:00 p.m.		Bible study; choir rehearsal	L – b'ball practice	Mom - PTA meetings		
7:30 p.m.						
8:00 p.m.						
8:30 p.m.						
9:00 p.m.						

Productivity Zone:
- Minimize distractions
- Minimize transitions

Play Zone

TIME as an Executive Functioning Tool

- Be TRANSPARENT about TIME:

  - Break down time into smaller intervals

  - Use visual timers and be explicit about how and when you're using them (wall clocks, computer clocks, microwave clocks, watches, iPhone timers, sand timers)

  - When approaching a task:

    – Prompt for an expected time interval: "I'm estimating that wiping down the table should take about 3 minutes. What do you think?"

    – "How long do you think that might take?... Ok, let's see…"
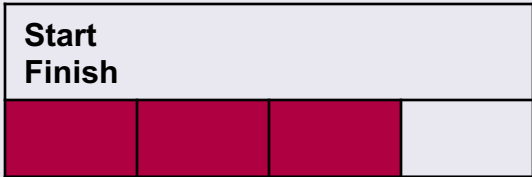
Encourage your child to check-in regularly (not just when they're struggling).
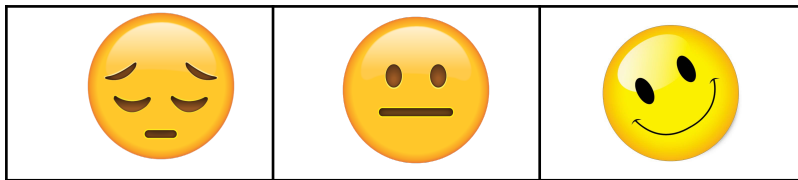
1	2	3	4	5
SO BORING	Mostly boring	Some new information	Interesting	FUN

?Highs and Lows?

Structuring Motivation

Bribe	Incentive	Visual Progress
• Not a natural consequence/unrelated to the behavior • Given in the moment • Exclusively controlled by the 'adult'	• Natural consequence, logically related to the behavior • Discussed ahead of time • Access is a mutual agreement	• Shows progress towards an outcome • Does not require an additional 'motivator' • Fosters self-awareness and self-monitoring
Example: "If you get off the floor of the grocery store, I'll buy you that cookie."	Example: "The schedule shows that you have Free Choice time as soon as you finish your chores."	Example: Start Finish

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Going Back in the Building

Control what you can.

- **Prepare:** Gather the information you can specific to your school/program

- **Predict:** Use other available resources to make reasonable predictions about what your child might be asked to do or would encounter
  - Spaces, self-advocacy, activities that might feel different or may not exist

- **Preview:** Use images, videos, social stories to help your child build some possible 'future pictures'

- **Practice:** Repeated role-play
  - Masks, hand-washing, sitting at/communicating from a distance, drinking and eating routines

Build the Schema

Same	Similar	Different

Keep in Mind

- Your child (and you) may be feeling multiple emotions at the same time.

- Speak neutrally or positively about school and the people caring for your child.

- Pay attention to the messages you send with your face and body.

- You set priorities for the year for a reason.

- We are in a pandemic.

- Schools have experts. We're working on it.

- This will end.

Existing Resources

wideopenschool.org: User-friendly and professionally vetted platform with academic and social-emotional tools, organized by age or developmental level.

outschool.com: Program that runs interest-based curriculum to fill the social access need. Their programming is not designed to specifically target social development. Great for self-esteem and keeping kids engaged for an extended period of time.

www.amazingeducationalresources.com: Massive database of resources for building homeschool curriculum.

Humanities Resources

12 Museum Virtual Tours

123 Homeschool for Me

ABCdatabasesuite

ActivelyLearn.com

Adventures in Family: Virtual Field Trips

American Archive of Public Broadcasting

An Author's Journey (WWII)

Awesomestories.com

Betterworlded.org (free trial)

Bitesmedia.com

BrainPop

C-SPAN Classroom

CILC.org

GuestHollow.com

Heifer International

HelpTeaching.com

KidsPressMagazine.com

www.iCivics.Org

iDialogue.com

Humanities Resources

www.joysunbear.com

Khan Academy

Lakeshore Learning

Madison Country Day School's Library of US Women's History

Maryland Historical Society

National Constitution Center

GoogleEarth

Newsomatic.org

Newsicle.co

Rocketlit.com

Scholastic (dropbox link)

Sheppardsoftware.com

Social Studies School Service

www.sporcle.com/kids

Storyboard That

Take the Stage (Mass. PBS)

www.TeacherCreatedMaterials.com

https://teachtopia.com/printable-cut-outs.html

TeachRock.org

www.nytimes.com/section/learning

Humanities Resources

Time for Kids: time.com/tfk-free

Virtual Farm Trips:
virtualfarmtrips.com

Wisc-online.com

www.geohistorymap.com

Reading and Writing Resources

www.12storylibrary.com

Accelerating Young Minds

Achieve 3000

Actively Learn

American Archive of Public Broadcasting

Newsomatic.org

Newsicle.co

Rocketlit.com

News ELA

Time for Kids: time.com/tfk-free

Wisc-online.com

Storyboard That

All Digital School

All Kids Network

Audible

InquirED

KOBI- Decoding

Learning A-Z/Raz-Kids

MetaMetrics- Decoding

Monster Phonics- Decoding

Writing Resources

No Red Ink

Quill.org

An Author's Journey

Essay Jack

Mentormywriting.org

Authorfy

Heron Books

Institute for Excellence in Writing

The Four Most Important Beliefs Adults Can Foster in Individuals in Their Care:

A feeling that they are appreciated/liked/valued for their neurodiversity (comprehensively).

What they do is different than *Who* they are.

A sense that they have some control over their lives. Mastery leads to pride.

A sense that they are increasingly autonomous.

Q+A

MGH Aspire

Helping children, teens and adults with high cognitive autism spectrum disorder or a related social profile achieve success.

- Program of MGH and MassGeneral Hospital for Children.

- Supporting individuals on the autism spectrum in the areas of self-awareness, social competency and stress management.

- Multi-disciplinary approach in small, well-matched peer groups.

- Locations in Lexington, Charlestown, Newton and Westwood; and over 50 employer sites throughout MA, NH and RI.

MGH Aspire Services

- Academic-Year Social Groups & Theme-Based Groups (all ages)

- Summer Programming

  - Adventure camp (children ages 5-14)

  - Teen & adult summer programs (ages 14+)

- Special Events Throughout the Year

- MGH Aspire Works

  - Internship program, employer consultation and training

- Parent Coaching

- Career Counseling

- Consultation Services

- Professional Development

MGH Aspire "3S" Model

- Learn and apply skills to interact with others in expected ways across contexts

- Build relationships using shared experiences and common interests

- Improve capacity to identify strengths and develop strategies for challenges

- Engage in self-advocacy

Social Competency

Stress Management

Self-Awareness

- Develop strategies to manage stress and frustration

- Habitual practice using these strategies in real-life situations

Social Competency

- Recognize that social competency is needed in life

- Understand social strengths/challenges

- Develop social thinking and social skills

- Apply this knowledge in various contexts/relationships

- Show empathy for others

- Form positive relationships, work in teams effectively, deal effectively with conflict

Stress Management
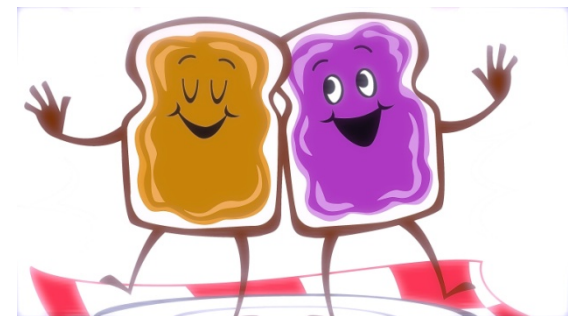
- Understand stress is a part of life, neither good nor bad

- Know, recognize and predict internal and external triggers

- Link thoughts, feelings and behavior

- Manage stress responses (reactively and proactively)

- Develop and utilize a coping tool box of self-regulation and stress management strategies

Self-Awareness

- Know personal strengths and challenges

- Recognize and express likes, dislikes, passions

- Acknowledge and control habits

- Set goals

- Understand and manage emotions and behavior to achieve goals

- Recognize when effort/perseverance is required and be able to apply it

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MGH Aspire – Resources

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  - Email us at mghaspire@partners.org

  - Call us at 781-860-1900

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