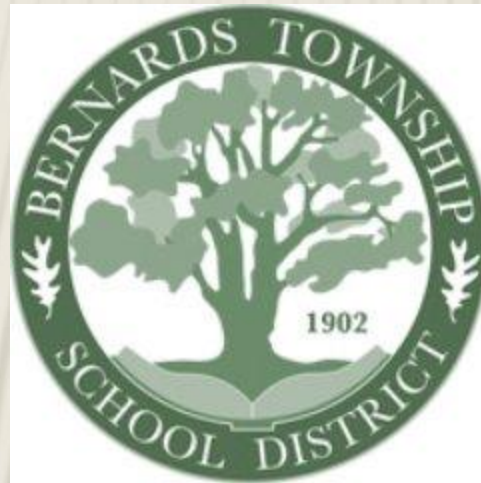
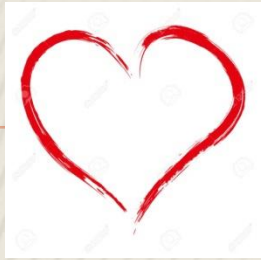


# BERNARDS TWP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

RAISING HEALTHY CHILDREN  
NOW AND ALWAYS



A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION  
MARCH 11, 2021



# Tonight is Personal

During our time together this evening, should you be reminded of an upsetting experience in your life, it is important to take care of you: pause, breathe, hydrate, stand, walk...all to calm your body and your emotions.

Should you need to talk further for understanding or clarity, seek a trusted friend, supervisor or colleague.

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# Interpretation Drives Intervention









# EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN

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How do our children tell us they need us?

# EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN

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How do our children tell us they need us?

They TELL us with their words...

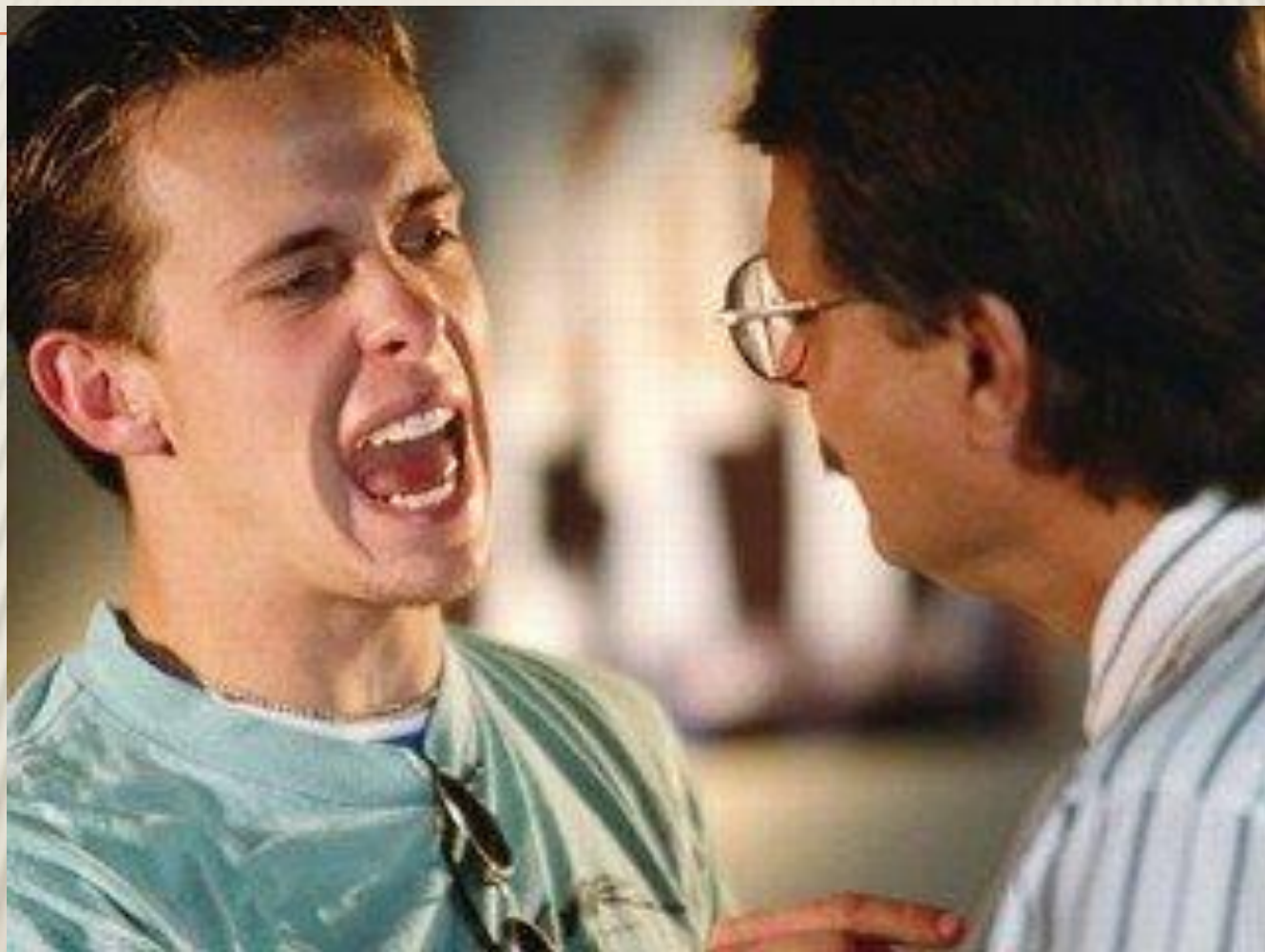


MEGAPIXL

Download from [megapixl.com/3106464](https://megapixl.com/3106464)







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Or they SHOW us with their behavior.









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# Interpretation Drives Intervention

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HOWEVER, we do not always UNDERSTAND..

**IN THE ABSENCE OF TRUE  
UNDERSTANDING, HUMAN BEINGS  
SUFFER...AND SOMETIMES DIE:**

# **IN THE ABSENCE OF TRUE UNDERSTANDING, HUMAN BEINGS SUFFER...AND SOMETIMES DIE:**

- ✗ Ingesting Lead
- ✗ Tobacco Use

# **IN THE ABSENCE OF TRUE UNDERSTANDING, HUMAN BEINGS SUFFER...AND SOMETIMES DIE:**

- ✗ Ingesting Lead
- ✗ Tobacco Use
- ✗ Inhaling Asbestos
- ✗ The Effects of Toxic Stress

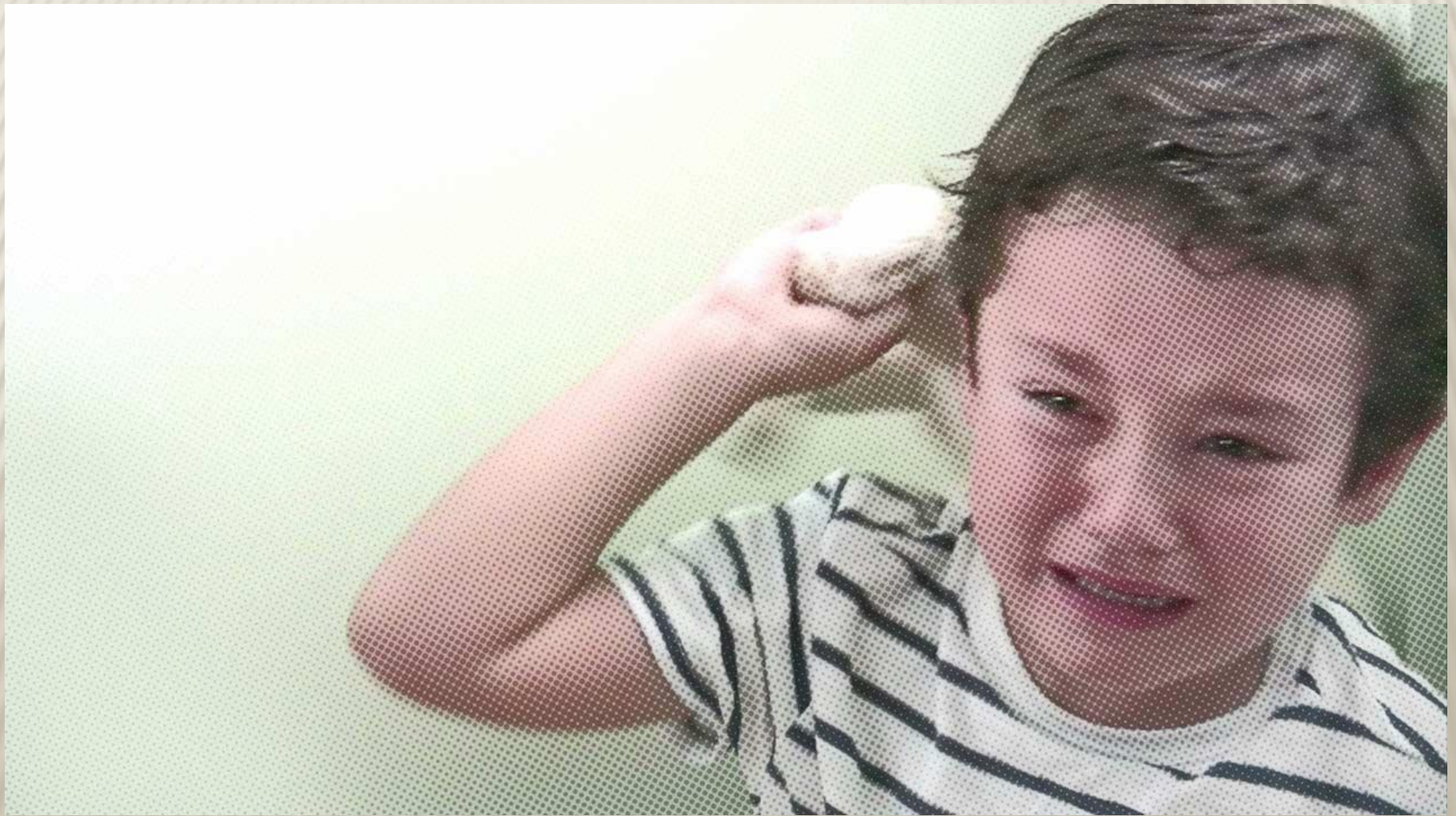
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What about the effects of toxic stress  
on the brains, bodies and the overall  
wellbeing of the children, and of you,  
as adults?

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In the absence of adult (parent and educator) understanding of toxic stress, the lives of some of our children dramatically change direction...











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And for some, the toxic stressors begin very early in life...



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But wait, there is more to the story of stress and  
our STRESS RESPONSE SYSTEMS...

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A Story About a BEAR...



Not this BEAR...



But this BEAR

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The story goes like this...



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That's IF, you come across the BEAR  
in the woods.

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But what if the BEAR....lives in the child's HOME?







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OR the bear is in the school or classroom



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What if you are the BEAR???

---

**Remember this?**



---

But what about this?



# COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS

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# TOXINS, TOXIC EVENTS, TRAUMA

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So, what are these toxins, and what are the effects?

# TOXIC EVENTS

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- ✗ Neglect
- ✗ Emotional, physical and sexual abuse
- ✗ Domestic Violence
- ✗ Addictions in the family
- ✗ **Harsh and demeaning language**
- ✗ Exposure to suicide attempts and deaths
- ✗ Lack of appropriate supervision
- ✗ Being a bully and being bullied

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**In the absence of understanding, human  
beings suffer...and sometimes die.**

- 
- The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study is one of the largest investigations ever conducted (more than 17,000 participants) to assess **associations between childhood maltreatment and later-life health and well-being.**
  - The ACE Study findings suggest that certain experiences are major risk factors for the leading causes of illness and death as well as poor quality of life in the United States.

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When researchers first discovered a link in the late 1990s between childhood adversity and chronic health problems later in life, the real revelation was how common those experiences were across all socioeconomic groups.

*The three types of ACEs include*

**ABUSE**



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

**NEGLECT**



Physical



Emotional

**HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION**



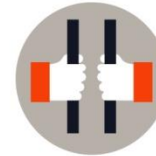
Mental Illness



Mother treated violently



Divorce



Incarcerated Relative



Substance Abuse

**WHAT IMPACT DO ACEs HAVE?**

# OTHER ACES FACTORS:

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- ▶ the death of a parent
- ▶ the death of a sibling
- ▶ poverty
- ▶ community violence
- ▶ Peer rejection and lack of healthy friends;
- ▶ Peer victimization

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Got an ACE score of 4 or more?

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Got an ACE score of 4 or more?

There is likely to be an increase risk of:

- poor academic performance,
- complaints of headaches and bellyaches
- violations of classroom rules,
- increases in discipline including detentions and suspensions,
- disruptive classroom behaviors.

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Got an ACE score of 4 or more?

- A child's risk of developing depression is 46 times greater than if there is a score of 0.

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## Common Stress Responses of Children or Teens

- + Inability to focus or concentrate
- + Failing or declining grades
- + Incomplete or poor quality work
- + Increased absences or refusal to go to school
- + Forgetfulness, memory loss
- + Inattentiveness
- + Daydreaming

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Children who have been traumatized, or have lived in chaotic circumstances, “need to be in environments that restore their sense of safety, control, and predictability...”

Is that your home, your school, your classroom, in your presence?

# PREREQUISITES FOR WELL BEING

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1. Attachment/touch
2. Safety/physical and emotional
3. Soothing and calming adult behavior

All important and all necessary for healthy development

# ABRAHAM MASLOW HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Maslow, A. *Motivation and  
Personality* (2nd ed.)  
Harper & Row, 1970.



# WHAT DO OUR CHILDREN NEED?

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- ✗ Limited exposure to media news
- ✗ Limited exposure to adult opinions
- ✗ Routines and predictability
- ✗ Assurance and reassurance that the adults will keep them safe
- ✗ Opportunity to express their worries and fears
- ✗ Opportunity for fun, play and laughter

# SAFETY FOR OUR CHILDREN MEANS

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1. Creating safe classrooms, physically and emotionally
2. Nurturing attachments
3. Avoiding shame and embarrassment
4. Avoiding negative judgment and harsh language
5. Being predictable
6. Affirming the value of the children
7. Never giving up
8. Always believing change is possible

# IN THE HOME

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“The first value to be established is that of safety”

“Healing cannot advance unless there is an environment of safety for all community members.”

# IT MAY NOT BE YOU, BUT IT SHOULD BE SOMEBODY

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“Children who are more resilient after facing adversity often had an important, reliable adult to turn to in their youth;

a grown-up who stepped in and helped them understand that what was happening wasn't about them and wasn't their fault.”

(Childhood Disrupted, Donna Jackson Nakazawa)

# WHAT IS AN ADULT TO DO?

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1. Manage your own baggage. Work to make sense of your own story first.
2. Understand that childhood's chronic challenges are different than childhood's chronic stresses. Challenges build resiliency; constant stressors change the brain system.
3. Offer “facetime” with the child, without a “yuk” face, using a soothing eye gaze.

# WHAT IS AN ADULT TO DO?

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4. If you lose your temper, apologize—Right Away!
5. Validate and normalize all of their EMOTIONS.
6. Strengthen attachments, secure the bonds between adults and children, and among children.

# WHAT IS AN ADULT TO DO?

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7. Amplify the good feelings.
8. Make what's happening a safe and open conversation.
9. Consider how to use mindfulness and calming moments in the classroom

AS ADULTS WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE:



For all of the children!

# PROTECTIVE FACTORS THAT INCREASE WELLNESS

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- Access to care for mental and physical health needs;
- Social integration and connections to social groups;
- Help seeking behavior/ advice seeking;
- Family cohesion;
- Stability in home and personal life;
- Effective coping skills/self-care;

# THE BIG 3:

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✕ SLEEP

✕ NUTRITION (WATER)

✕ EXERCISE

# WHEN YOU ARE CONCERNED...

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- Tell your child, and your spouse/partner you are concerned...
- Call the school counselor for advice...
- Ask for the names of private counselors and agencies, and then make an appointment...
- Speak with your child's physician, express your worries and concerns...
- If your "gut feeling" keeps you concerned, don't ignore the feeling.

# WHO IS YOUR SUPPORT TEAM?

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We can't do this alone. Often it requires us to partner with others who we TRUST. Consider creating a support team to include:

- School Counselors

- School Child Study Team Members

- Trusted teacher/nurse/administrator

- Pastors, priests, rabbi, imam

- Private Therapist

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We can no longer ignore what research now tells us is the truth about child development.

We can no longer expect others to carry on the work alone, without us.

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Following are resources to support  
your growth.

Donna Jackson Nakazawa

# CHILDHOOD DISRUPTED

How Your Biography  
Becomes Your Biology,  
and How You Can Heal



"A truly important gift  
of understanding—  
illuminates the  
heartbreaking costs of  
childhood trauma and,  
like good medicine, offers  
the promising science of  
healing and prevention."  
—JACK KORNFIELD, PhD, author  
of *A Path with Heart*

# the deepest well



NADINE BURKE HARRIS, M.D.

*"Creating Sanctuary is that rare, original, once-in-a-lifetime book  
that could save lives." —Gloria Steinem*

# CREATING SANCTUARY

TOWARD  
AN  
EVOLUTION  
OF SANE  
SOCIETIES

SANDRA BLOOM

# Trauma Through A Child's Eyes



Awakening  
the Ordinary  
Miracle  
of Healing

Infancy through Adolescence

PETER A. LEVINE  
*author of Waking the Night Sleeping Trauma*  
MAGGIE KLINE



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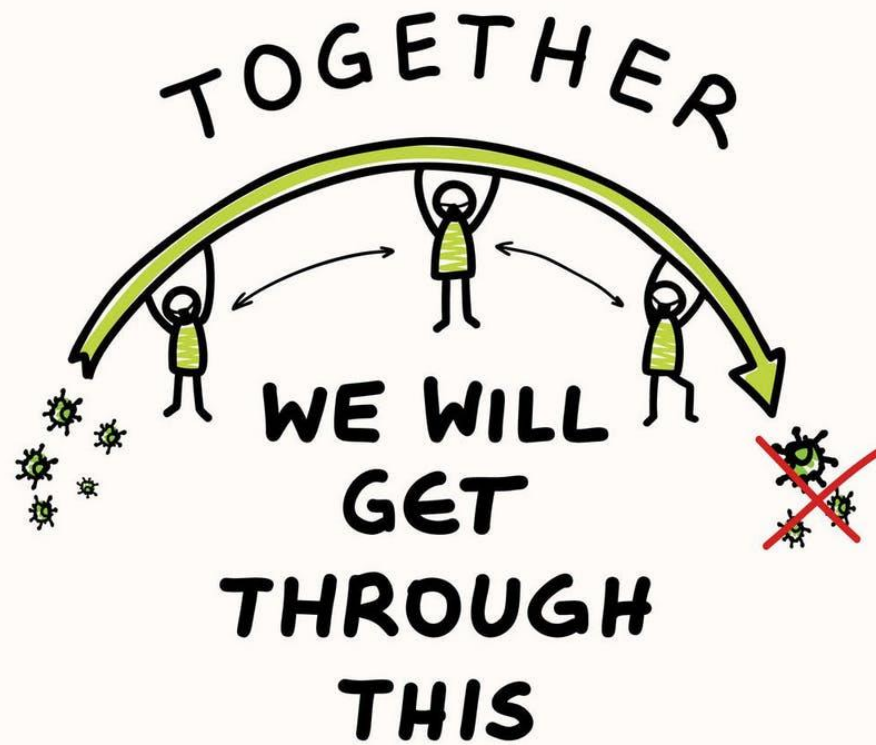
Download a soothing app to your phone to guide you in relaxation:



**Stop, Breathe &  
Think**

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NJ HOPELINE  
1-855-654-6735



# COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS

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# THIS IS ONLY A BEGINNING.

We must help the  
children find their  
way.

If not us...  
WHO???

