



Supporting kids in a changing landscape

MELISSA SELLEVAAG, LICSW

To Begin...pause and slow down



Take a deep breath

Where is my attention drawn to on my body?

Take a deep breath

What parts of my body are moving?

Take a deep breath

Release energy that is not yours from your body

Take a deep breath and feel into a center

Why the Wendt Center?



“No one should have to
grieve alone.”

~ William “Bill” Wendt
Founder of Wendt Center
circa 1977

What are you seeing

In the past month I have witnessed the following

- Difficulty with transitions
- Anger outbursts
- Crying spells
- Forgetfulness
- Irritability
- Clinginess

What are you experiencing

In the past month I have experienced

- Exhaustion
- Loneliness
- Feelings of overwhelm
- Anger outbursts
- Difficulty sleeping
- Crying
- Forgetfulness

24 months and 17 days

747 days

17,928 hours

1,075,680 minutes



Impact on the brain

- ❖ Prolonged exposure to suffering and hardship
- ❖ Increased activation and stress

Permission to be impacted

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

Rachel Remen, 1996 *Kitchen Table Wisdom: Stories that Heal*

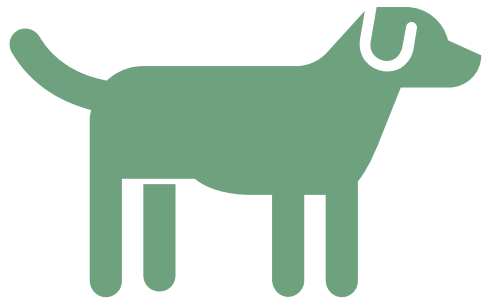


Triune Brain

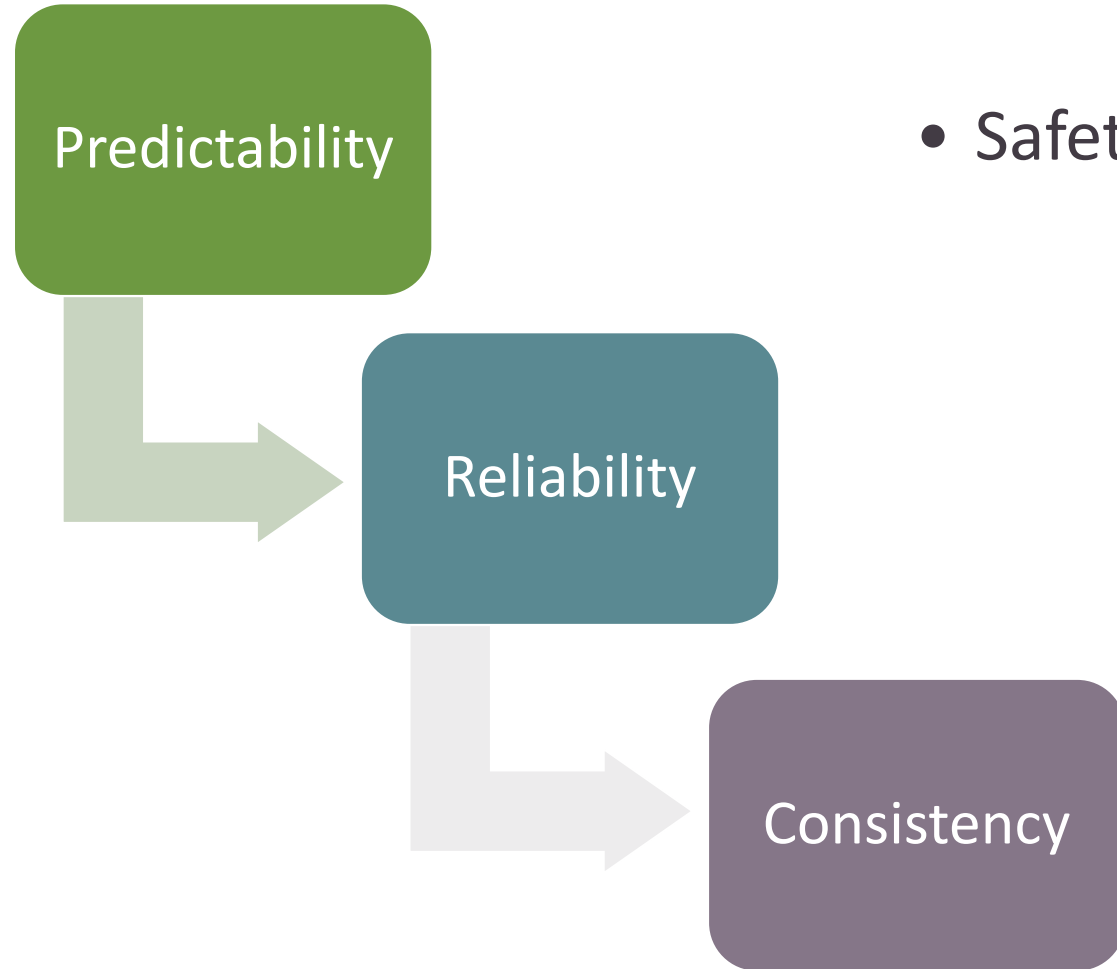


	Brainstem	Limbic System	Pre-frontal Cortex
Evolutionary Roots	Reptilian Brain	Mammalian Brain	Human Brain
State	Survival	Emotional	Executive
Key Question	“Am I safe?”	“Am I loved?”	“What can I learn from this?”

“Guard Dog” and “Wise Owl”



Prolonged Uncertainty



- Safety

- Belonging

- Competency

Post Pandemic Stress

“living in a state of hypervigilance for 2 years has taken a toll on our individual and collective well-being”

Physical
and mental
exhaustion

Anxiety

Mood
instability

First Times

Name it

Perspective take

Reality check

Impact on Kids

Naming the changes

Masking

Activities

Travel

Camps

Quarantine

The Impact

Anxiety

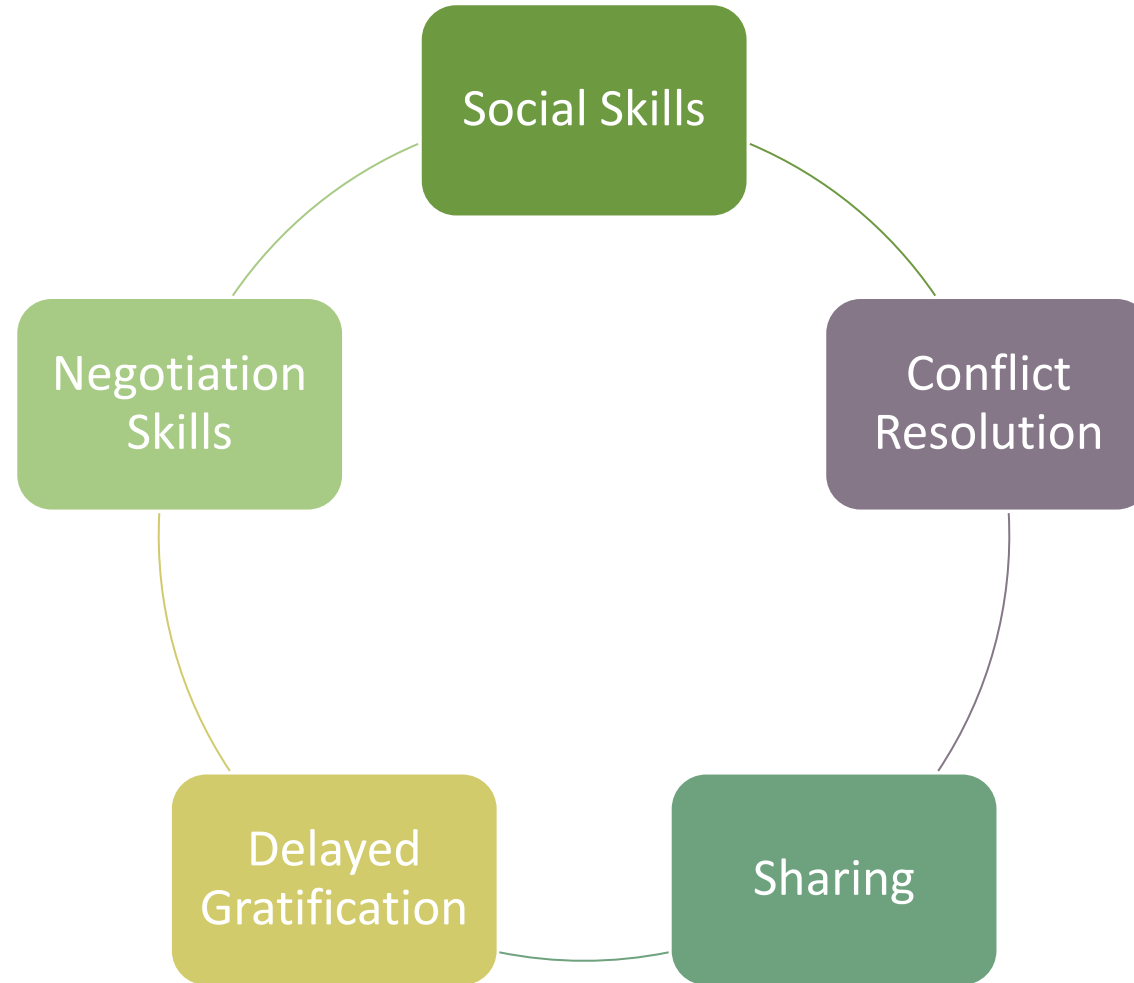
Isolation

Confusion

Energy/Outbursts

Somatic responses

Social Emotional Impact



Awareness of Impact

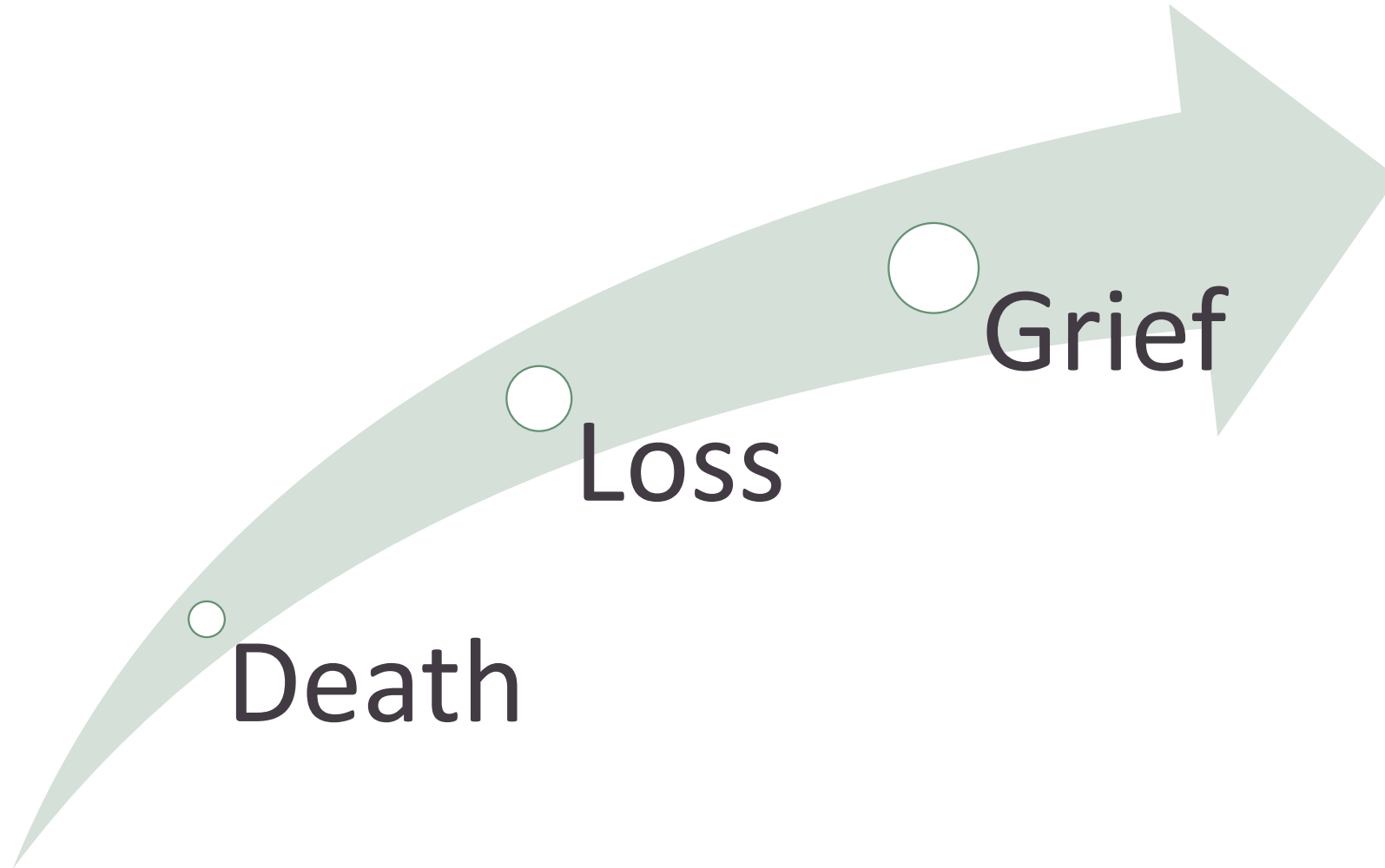
Physical
Response

Emotional
Response

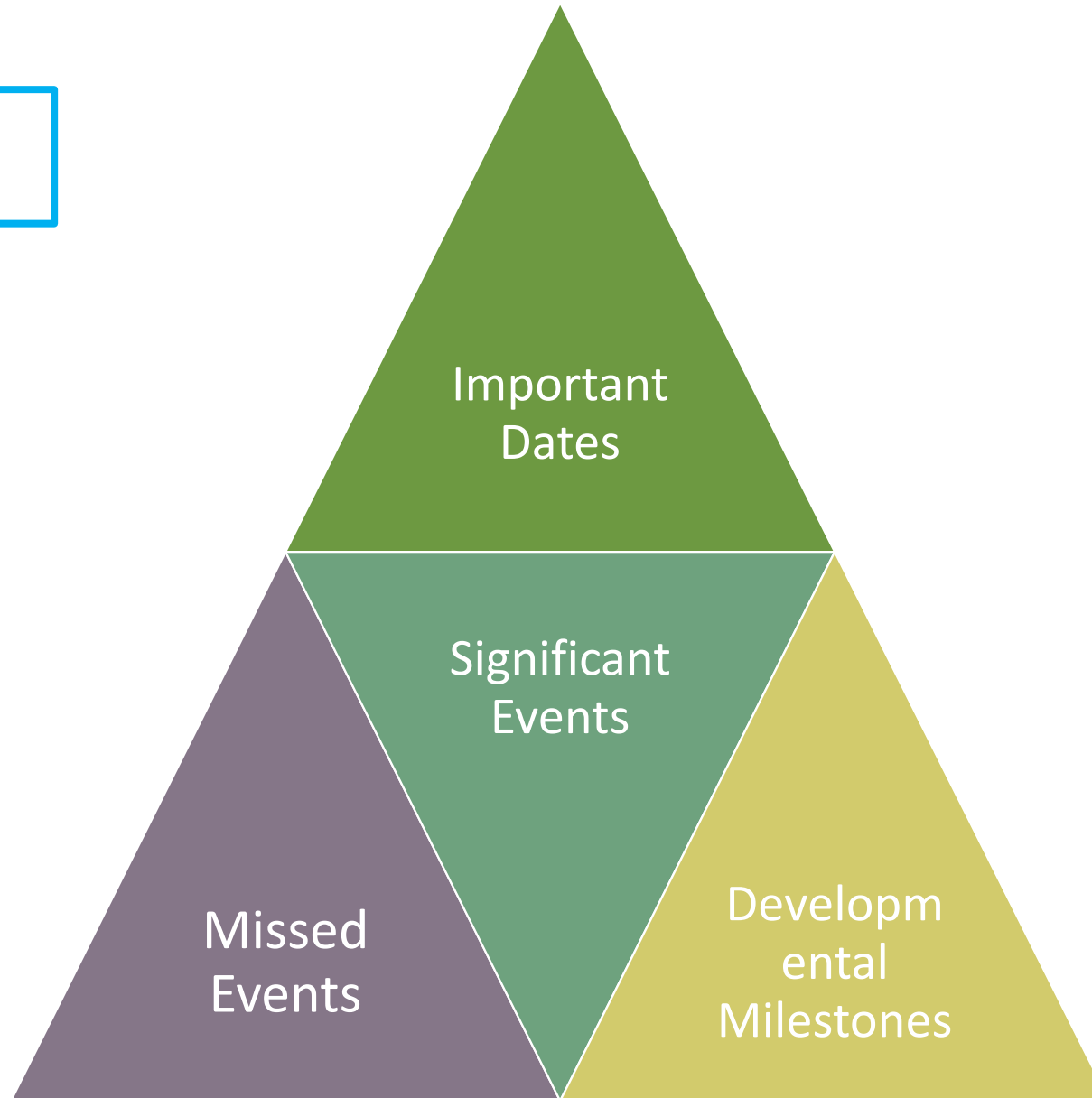
Cognitive
Response

Enter Grief

Special Considerations



Grief bursts



Rituals

Remembering

Honoring

Celebrating

Anchoring

Transitions

Kids who have experienced trauma and/or loss often struggle with transitions

- Transitions require regulation
- Some transitions can be more difficult than others
 - Energy peaks and valleys

Transitions

Plan

Assess

Posted
Schedules

Prepare

Toolbox

Signals

Practice

Compassion

Competence

Manage our own transitions

- Acknowledge the impact
- Live with self-compassion
- Identify what we can control and what we can't control

Enter the
day with
curiosity

I wonder
what will
happen
today

♥♥ My WISHES FOR YOU
AS A PARENT: ♥♥

MAY YOU REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE DOING THE BEST YOU CAN WITH WHAT YOU HAVE. MAY YOU RELEASE ANY GUILT YOU FEEL OVER SCREEN TIME, CEREAL FOR DINNER, and HIDING IN THE BATHROOM TO GET FOUR SECONDS OF ALONE TIME. MAY EVERYONE IN YOUR HOME SLEEP WELL, and SLEEP OFTEN. MAY YOU REMEMBER THAT YOU ALWAYS HAVE MY SUPPORT and RESPECT, and THAT WORRYING IF YOU'RE SCREWING UP YOUR KIDS IS AN EXCELLENT SIGN THAT YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY SCREWING UP YOUR KIDS. MAY YOU FIND TIME TO BREATHE, and HAVE FAITH THAT EVERYONE WILL BE OKAY. ♥

WENDT CENTER FOR LOSS AND HEALING

Rekindling Hope, Rebuilding Lives

Let's continue the healing conversation
@WendtCenter



4201 Connecticut Ave NW
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20008
202-624-0010

www.wendtcenter.org

2041 Martin Luther King Ave SE
Suite 234
Washington, DC 20020
202-610-0066