

Supporting the Whole Child: Student Wellness in the Virtual World

Vienna Elementary School
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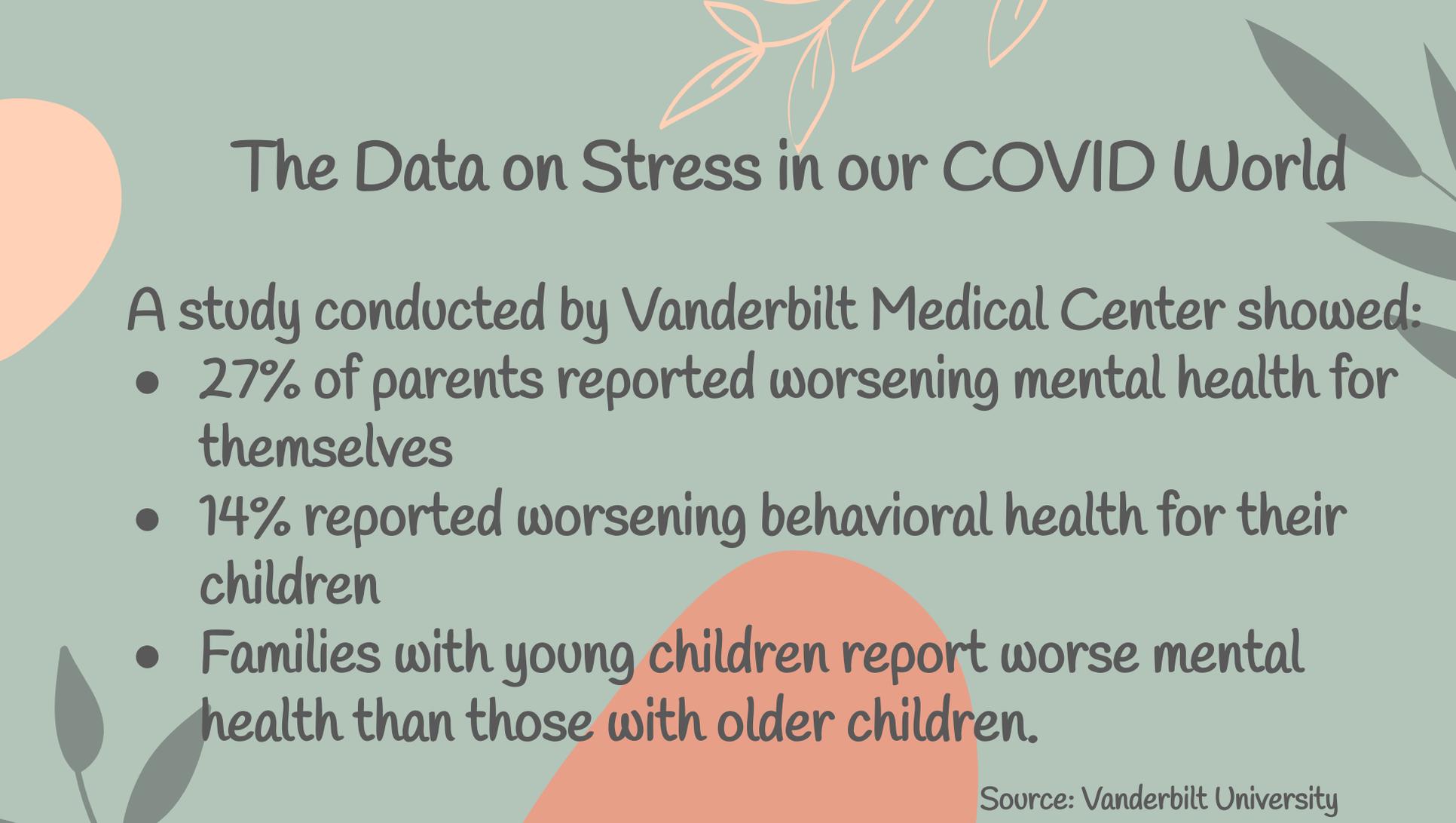
What emotions come to mind when you look at these two images?



Image above is a visual from The Washington Post's Article on *A working mom's quarantine life*.



Picture is from an article that ran in the New York Times *'I Feel Like I Have Five Jobs': Moms Navigate the Pandemic*.



The Data on Stress in our COVID World

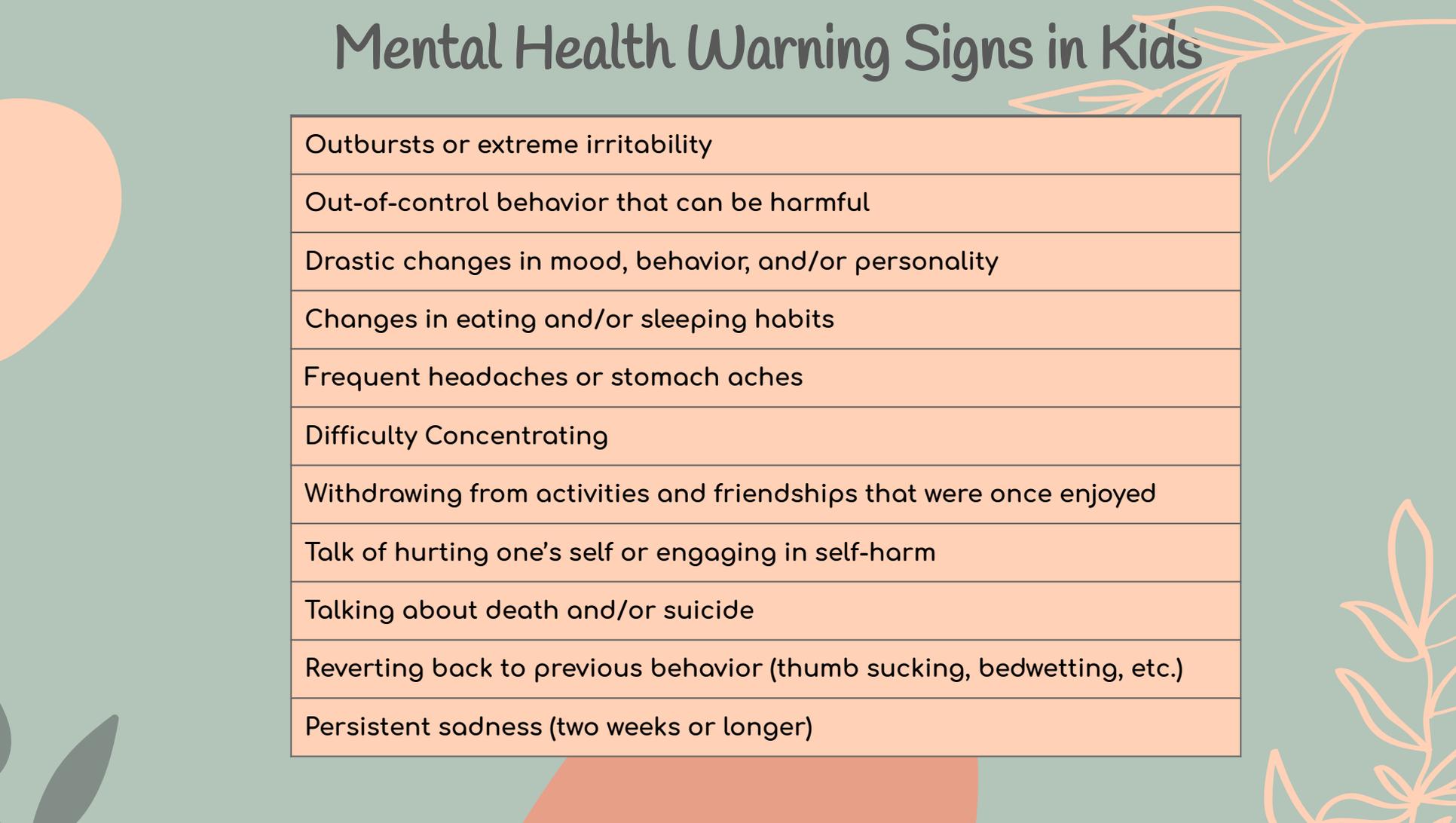
A study conducted by Vanderbilt Medical Center showed:

- 27% of parents reported worsening mental health for themselves
- 14% reported worsening behavioral health for their children
- Families with young children report worse mental health than those with older children.

Implications for Parents

- Heightened emotional states
- A biological stress cycle is activated for all members of the household
- Parents need tangible tools
 - To support children in coping with feelings
 - To help release heavy emotions from the physical body

Mental Health Warning Signs in Kids



Outbursts or extreme irritability

Out-of-control behavior that can be harmful

Drastic changes in mood, behavior, and/or personality

Changes in eating and/or sleeping habits

Frequent headaches or stomach aches

Difficulty Concentrating

Withdrawing from activities and friendships that were once enjoyed

Talk of hurting one's self or engaging in self-harm

Talking about death and/or suicide

Reverting back to previous behavior (thumb sucking, bedwetting, etc.)

Persistent sadness (two weeks or longer)

What Kids Need Most is YOU "Showing Up"

Feeling seen: When someone tunes into us in a way that makes us feel seen, there's a sense of connection. We feel empathy and we are soothed by a knowing that they understand what we are experiencing.

Being soothed: helping children cope with difficult emotions and situations

Feeling safe: For secure attachment, a child needs to feel protected, and safe within the relationship from actions and responses that frighten or hurt them.

***These three S's will contribute to a secure attachment.**

Source: The Whole Brain Child

Strategies to Support the 4 S's

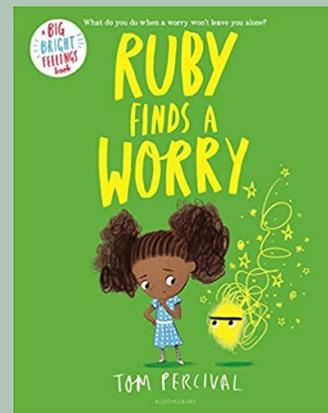
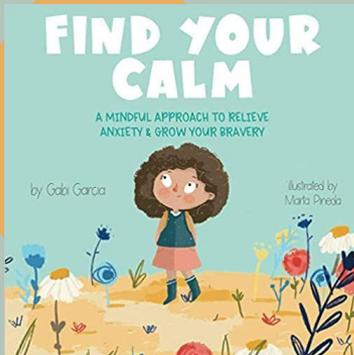
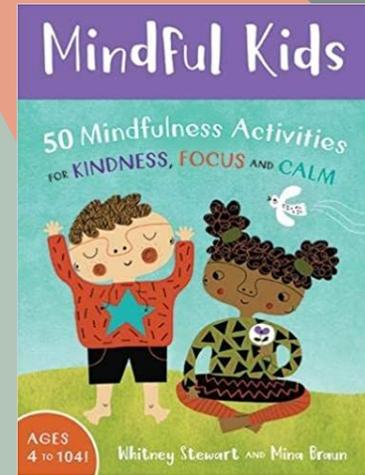
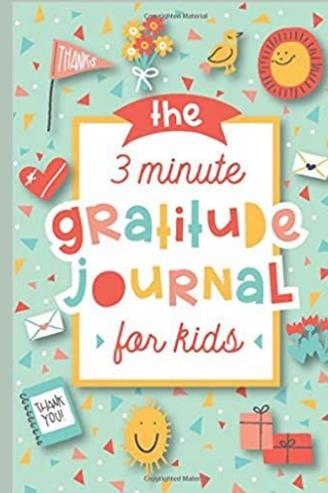
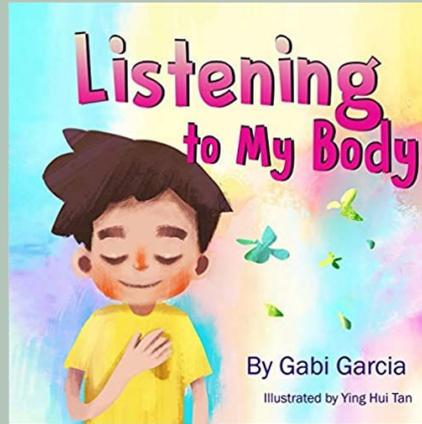
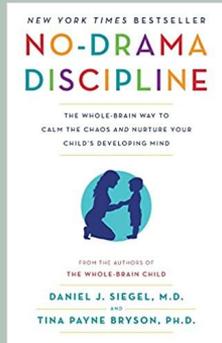
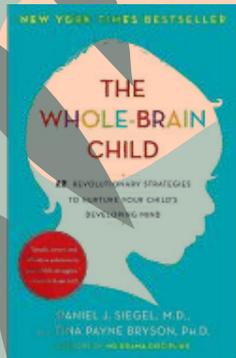
Seen + Soothed + Safe = Security

- Check-In Often: use emojis, Kimochis, colors, likert scale (1-10)
- Practice Active Listening (resist the urge to provide solutions)
- Model the use of a support network
 - Give permission for your child to speak to other trusted adults about their feelings and experiences
- Develop a family self-care toolbox
- Have your child create a calm zone
- Distinction between can't vs. won't
 - "Does the way she's acting make sense, considering her age and circumstances" -No Drama Discipline
- Show Compassion: respond with empathy and keep in mind that a child's response may not be in direct proportion to the situation.
 - Small concerns can become magnified
 - Help your child differentiate between big deal vs. little deal

Teach your Child to Identify & Check in with Feelings



Books & Tools



Resource List Continued

Online Tools

- Self-care toolbox: <https://gritx.org/self-toolkit/>
- Hero Wellness Scale self-assessment:
<https://www.psychu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/HERO-Wellness-Scale.pdf>
- Kimochis for families: <https://www.kimochis.com/families/>
- Mind Up Resources: <https://mindup.org/category/mindup-at-home/>
- No Drama Discipline Refrigerator Sheet:
<https://www.drdansiegel.com/pdf/Refrigerator%20Sheet--NDD.pdf>

Webinars/Podcasts

- CASEL Webinars: <https://casel.org/weekly-webinars/>
- FCPS Parent Resource Center:
<https://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center/register-free-workshops-parent-resource-center>
- Healthy Minds FCPS Podcast: <https://www.fcps.edu/blog/healthy-minds-podcast>