

Building the Bridge Between Home & School

"This essential bridge is all about creating a healthy partnership with families. For children to thrive, you need parents' support and they need yours. They need to hear from you, they need their relationship with you, and they need to have a continuous conversation with you."

DR. DONNA HOUSMAN
Founder & CEO of Housman Institute



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"We are caring for young people with soaring rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, loneliness, and suicidality that will have lasting impacts on them, their families, and their communities."

AAP AACAP CHA Declaration of a National Emergency in Child & Adolescent Mental Health



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The COVID Generation



- Research shows pandemic-related stress **negatively affects** fetal brain development
- Parents & caregivers **interacting less** with children **impacts physical and mental abilities**
- **Increase** in developmental **delays & challenging behaviors**



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The Impact of Trauma on Young Children

Signs to Look for in Children

- Significant behavioral changes
- Physical complaints
- Regressive child behaviors
- Avoidance of certain situations

What We Can Do

- Model calmness
- Participate in problem solving
- Use emotional situations as learning opportunities
- Validate feelings



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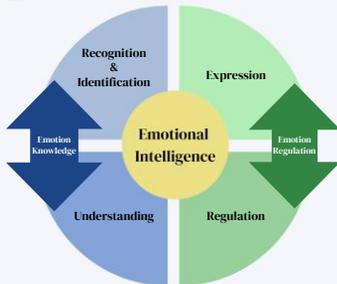
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Four Quadrants of Emotional Intelligence



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The Importance of Responsive Relationships

Children's development of emotional intelligence starts with us

What You Can Do to Enhance Your Emotionality

- ❖ Develop emotional awareness
- ❖ Identify stressors
- ❖ Manage emotions, reactions & responses

What You Can Do as a Key Socializer

- ❖ Heat of the moment = learning opportunities
- ❖ Guide problem-solving
- ❖ Validate feelings with empathy
- ❖ Model expressing emotions

The oxygen mask rule

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The Need for Partnerships Between Parents & Educators

“The council will help foster a collaborative environment where we can work *together* to serve the best interest of students and ensure that they have the academic and mental health support they need to recover from the pandemic and thrive in the future.”

The U.S. Department of Education Parent Council

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The Three-Legged Stool

Children carrying big emotions

+

Parent observations & insight

+

Educator observations & insight

≡ Balanced collaboration & support

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Successful Educator-Parent Partnerships



- ✓ Require nurturing from the start of the school year
- ✓ Rely on trust & consistent, honest, open communication
- ✓ Equal stakeholders with equal commitment
- ✓ Support one another with child supported by all

How Do We Build the Home-School Bridge?



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Strategies for Strong Communication

- ❖ Discuss communication preferences from the start
- ❖ Two-way communication
- ❖ Active listening
- ❖ Adjust approach
- ❖ Consistent updates & follow-up



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Strategies for Making a Joint Plan



Goal = use common language, tools, techniques & approach

- ❖ What parents observe at home
- ❖ Share what you observe
- ❖ Build joint plan for home & school
- ❖ Schedule check-ins
- ❖ Reassurance & empathy



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Strategies for Involving & Engaging Families

Engagement Opportunities

- ❖ Drop-off & pick-up
- ❖ Classroom visitors or "helpers"
- ❖ Curriculum activities
- ❖ Classroom events
- ❖ Community events

Remember To...

- ❖ Meet families where they're at
- ❖ Accommodate family schedules
- ❖ Respect differences
- ❖ Involve families through different avenues



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Strategies for Setting Boundaries & Taking Care of YOU

- Create communication flows that aren't disruptive
- Be friendly but professional
- Pay attention to your own stress
- Work to understand & enhance your emotionality
- Use stress-management strategies that serve you



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Q&A



With Dr. Donna Housman & Emily Stone

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**Housman
Institute**

"Our vision is to have a world where we empower our next generation with the building blocks of emotional intelligence, lifelong learning, mental health and well-being, and success."

- Dr. Donna Housman, Ed.D

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Visit us at: housmaninstitute.com
OR
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