

Building Bridges of Support: Part I -

# Help First:

## Building a Strong Foundation for Kids' Emotional Safety

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# Presenter



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PPMD's information, resources, and trainings can be made available in languages other than English, including sign language, upon request. Please contact us regarding your translation and interpretation needs.

# Our Mission

Our mission is to empower families as advocates and partners in improving education and health outcomes for ALL children with disabilities, special healthcare needs and those impacted by behavioral health challenges.



# Who is PPMD?

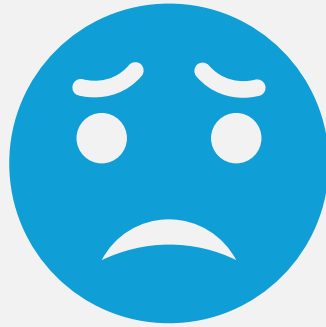
- Maryland's Special Education, Health, & Behavioral Health Information Center
- Established in 1990
- Governed by parents
- Our team is fully made up of parents and family members of children with disabilities, special healthcare, and behavioral health needs



# Workshop Overview

- PPMID mission and Who we are
- Understand common signs and triggers of anxiety and stress in children
- Learn evidence-based techniques to help children manage anxiety
- Develop practical strategies for creating a supportive environment
- Equip participants with tools to teach relaxation, grounding, and emotional expression

# What Is Anxiety & Stress?



Anxiety: Excessive worry or fear that interferes with daily activities



Stress: The body's response to perceived challenges or threats

# Common Signs & Symptoms

Physical: stomachaches,  
headaches, rapid heartbeat

Emotional: excessive worry,  
irritability, withdrawal

Behavioral: avoidance, tantrums,  
difficulty concentrating

# Identifying Triggers

- Common triggers include:
  - Academic pressures
  - Social situations
  - Changes in routine
  - Family conflicts



# Evidence-Based Techniques:



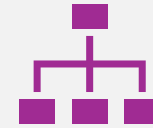
Deep  
Breathing  
Exercise



Mindfulness  
Practice



Grounding  
Techniques



Establishing  
Routines &  
Environment



Encouraging  
Expression  
of Feelings

# Establishing Routines & Environment



Consistent daily schedules



Clear expectations



Calm, predictable environments

# Building a Team of Care for Children

- Creating a Supportive Network:
  - Collaboration among parents, teachers, mental health providers, and caregivers
  - Consistent communication and shared goals
  - Recognizing each person's role in the child's well-being
- Why It Matters:
  - A strong, coordinated team ensures consistent support, reduces confusion, and promotes better outcomes



# Creating Emotionally Safe Spaces

- Key Elements:
  - Use respectful, non-judgmental language
  - Encourage children to share feelings without fear of punishment or dismissal
  - Promote independence and decision-making
  - Validate feelings and teach coping skills
- Why It Matters:
  - Children learn to trust their environment, develop resilience, and express themselves openly when they feel safe and supported

# Closing & Takeaways

- Recognize signs early
- Use simple, evidence-based techniques
- Create supportive routines and environments
- Foster emotional expression



Please tell us how we did today!



Scan the QR code with your phone or [click here](#).

# THANK YOU!

For more information, or if you have questions, contact us!

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