



# Strategies for Perinatal Providers:

Coping During Stressful Times

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Dr. Sheila Marcus, MD and Dr. Maria Muzik, MD

Presentation to: Lifelines4Moms

August 11, 2020

# Enhancing Access to Consults

- All MC3 program resources remained in place.
- Our pediatric and perinatal psychiatrists continue to provide same-day consultation with telepsychiatry available.
- Our BHCs (Behavioral Health Consultants) are available for phone consultations and to provide additional resources.



# Enhancing Access to Consults (continued)

- Our practice-integrated BHCs have moved to working remotely with patients.
- Recent actions taken include:
  - On April 6, 2020, we launched of ***extended evening hours*** on Mondays (until 7pm) for scheduled consults and same-day referrals
  - BHCs surveyed practices to ***identify needs of providers*** regarding consultation and information
  - BHCs have ***reviewed and vetted treatment resources*** in their region to identify all resources available virtually to share with providers
  - BHCs are ***tracking the number and type of consult requests that are the result of COVID-19***. MC3 and MC3 for Moms administration is monitoring these consults to further identify resource needs.

# Provider Education

- MC3 offers providers a monthly didactic series that focuses on strategies for pediatric and perinatal providers.
- With the emergence of COVID-19, these monthly series now focus on COVID-19 impacts on patients and providers.
- Topics include:
  - Strategies for helping patients cope with heightened distress
  - Strategies for provider self-care while caring for patients
  - COVID-19 and pregnancy, birthing, and breastfeeding: clinical updates



# Provider Education (continued)

MC3 hosted:

## Perinatal Webinars:

- “Strategies for Perinatal Providers during the COVID-19 Pandemic”
  - Presenter: Maria Muzik, MD
  - April 13, 2020

## Pediatric Webinars:

- “Strategies for Pediatric Providers during the COVID-19 Pandemic”
  - Presenters: Sheila Marcus, MD and Katherine Rosenblum, PhD
  - April 27, 2020



# Virtual Resources

- We are curating resources for providers to more easily access resources on how to help patients and families at this time.
- The **MC3 website** (<https://mc3.depressioncenter.org>) now hosts a COVID-19 resource page targeted, primarily, to providers. Online resources have been carefully vetted to ensure credibility and sorted into the following categories:
  - Provider Resources
  - Family Resources
  - Perinatal Resources
  - General Resources



# Virtual Resources *(continued)*

***Zero to Thrive*** has a searchable database for COVID-19 information for families and patient-specific infographics.  
(<https://zerotothrive.org/covid-19/#>)

Topics include:

- “Pregnant or Breastfeeding? What You Need to Know about Coronavirus (COVID-19)”
- “Parents’ Guide to Coping with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Crisis”
- “Helping Young Kids through the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Crisis”
- “Helping Children Feel S.A.F.E. during COVID-19

# Virtual Resources *(continued)*

- MC3 collaborated with faculty from other programs to create a Facebook Live series: ***Thrive with Your Family***
  - Format: pre-recorded Q and A
  - Questions or topic suggestions may be submitted through the ***Thrive with Your Family*** webpage.
  - Links to each recorded series will be available on the MC3 COVID-19 web page via the Michigan Medicine YouTube channel.
  - MC3 faculty participated in discussions to plan for ***Thrive with Your Family*** and MC3 faculty have contributed.



# Select Didactic Content Through a Relational Lens

# Helping Moms and Children and Helping Yourself!

Check in with patients

Surface and validate feelings

**Normalize and Contextualize** Four factors are most powerful body's stress activators. COVID-19 hits all and is a perfect storm for the sympathetic nervous system.

- 1. Novelty – First Time**
- 2. Uncertainty**
- 3. Lack of Control**
- 4. Lack of Social Support**

*We'll discuss how to counteract all 4*

*Racism superimposes health disparity on a history of systemic trauma*



# Stress Continuum Model

<b>READY</b> (Green)	<b>REACTING</b> (Yellow)	<b>INJURED</b> (Orange)	<b>ILL</b> (Red)
<p><b>DEFINITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimal functioning</li> <li>• Adaptive growth</li> <li>• Wellness</li> </ul> <p><b>FEATURES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At one's best</li> <li>• Well trained and prepared</li> <li>• In control</li> <li>• Physically, mentally, and spiritually fit</li> <li>• Mission focused</li> <li>• Motivated</li> <li>• Calm and steady</li> <li>• Behaving ethically</li> <li>• Having fun</li> </ul>	<p><b>DEFINITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild and transient distress or loss of functioning</li> <li>• Always goes away</li> <li>• Low risk for illness</li> </ul> <p><b>CAUSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Stressor</li> </ul> <p><b>FEATURES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling irritable, anxious, or down</li> <li>• Loss of motivation</li> <li>• Loss of focus</li> <li>• Difficulty sleeping</li> <li>• Muscle tension or other physical changes</li> <li>• Not having fun</li> </ul>	<p><b>DEFINITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More severe and persistent distress or loss of function</li> <li>• Leaves a "scar"</li> <li>• Higher risk for illness</li> </ul> <p><b>CAUSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life Threat</li> <li>• Loss</li> <li>• Inner Conflict</li> <li>• Wear and Tear</li> </ul> <p><b>FEATURES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of control</li> <li>• Panic, rage, or depressed mood</li> <li>• Substance Abuse</li> <li>• Not feeling like normal self</li> <li>• Excessive guilt, shame, or blame</li> <li>• Diminished sense of purpose, meaning, or hope in the future</li> </ul>	<p><b>DEFINITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unhealed stress injury causing life impairment</li> <li>• Clinical mental disorder</li> </ul> <p><b>TYPES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PTSD</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Substance Dependence</li> </ul> <p><b>FEATURES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Symptoms persist and worsen over time</li> <li>• Severe distress, social or occupational impairment</li> </ul>

from **Stress First Aid Self Care / Organizational Support Model;**  
**National Center for PTSD, US Department of Veterans Affairs**

# Help Moms and Help Yourself

## 1. Novelty:

- Provide accurate information on illness, recovery, reputable sources
- Right-size media exposure: “is this helpful?” “how much is helpful?”
- True for COVID and protests and media exposure around racism

When Covid-19 enters my body and sees how it's running on nothing but caffeine and anxiety



# Help Moms and Help Yourself

## 2. Uncertainty

- Leads to anxious rumination/cortisol driven
- The first person in the room whose affect you need to regulate is your own.
- How to counteract rumination and uncertainty? Turn on the parasympathetic nervous system.
  - a. Mindfulness 10% Happier Live (Walking, Breathing, Gratitude, Body Scan) “Don’t Get On the Bus”
  - b. 5-4-3-2-1
  - c Breathing - Square or Box Breathing
  - D. Exercise
  - e. Yoga (Cosmic Kids Yoga/Sitting Like a Frog)



10% HAPPIER



**MC3**  
*Perinatal*

# Help Moms and Help Yourself

## 3. Lack of Control

- Agency!
- Controlling behaviors is easier than controlling thoughts
- Focus on what you can control: wash, face, mask, distancing
- Focus on exposure to diverse array of literature and books that are “antiracist”
- Move! The antianxiety “dose” of exercise is about 40 min, 4X weekly
- (Just Dance-Kids/Families!)



# Help Moms and Help Yourself

- 4. Lack of Social Support
  - Connect with family, friends, via social media – Zoom Cheeseboard
  - Caribu - schedule with grandparents/friends
  - Humor/laughter-soothes and connects



# Advice from the world of trauma

- Be kind to yourself! Don't let the perfect be the enemy of good enough.
- Gratitude – nightly ritual
- Empathy+Desire to Help=Compassion
- Altruism
  - Cards, groceries, thank you notes, financial and practical contributions to causes that support racial justice
  - Relationships foster resilience
  - Family Zoom, Caribu, Reading Time, Dance Parties, Facetime, Drive by
  - Screen time – Not all screen time is created equal (Mr. Rogers/DT/Zooks)

# Be curious: Techniques to help moms with young children

- Ask questions
- Opens the door – what does your child know? What is he or she thinking about?
- Simple is fine– for example: “Hey bud, there is a lot of talk about coronavirus these days- I wonder what you’ve been hearing about it?” “I know things are different and mom isn’t coming home after work, and we have to talk with her on the computer. Why do you think she has to stay at [..]?”
- Exposures to books, play-materials that are multi-racial, and not “color blind” discussions of race, skin tone and human differences are natural in early childhood. “Yes Jamie’s mom and dad look different, her mom is white and her dad is black” and Jamie looks a little like both of them”
- Try displacement– “Do any of your friends have parents who work in the hospital? What is that like for them?” “What are you hearing from other kids about coronavirus?”
- Ask, and listen, listen, listen.. What do they know? Are there misunderstandings? Blaming themselves?
- It is ok to “buy some time”– “hey, I’m so glad you told me what you are thinking about, that is so important, I’d like to think about it and come back to you later to talk more, ok?”

# Then have a conversation

- You said “...” and “Can you tell me more about that?”
- Acknowledge feelings – including “mixed” feelings that might be both good and bad (e.g., proud but scared)
  - “It makes sense to me that you sometimes feel...”
  - “I wonder if sometimes you might feel...”
- Empathize and normalize
  - “I think lots of kids feel...”
  - “Sometimes I feel sort of scared, or mad, too...”
- Identify coping strategies– what can we do when we feel worried, scared, sad, angry
  - What have you done before when you’ve felt (feeling) that helped you to feel better?



## MC3 Monthly Pediatric Educational Presentations and Case Discussion (2020)

Sponsored by:

### MC3 Monthly Pediatric Educational Presentations and Case Discussion (2020) April Session: Strategies for Pediatric Providers during the COVID-19 Pandemic

#### Lecture(s):

April Session: Strategies for Pediatric Providers during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Sheila Marcus, MD  
Katherine Rosenblum, PhD

#### Financial Disclosure Information:

April 27, 2020  
12:00 - 1:00 PM  
BlueJeans Video Conferencing  
Room: Audio/Video Connection



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