

How to assist children and youth in time of war and crisis

Part 6. How teachers and school can help the pupils

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Overview – Section I



- How stress affects school functioning:
 - Cognitive implications
 - Reduction of learning capacity
 - Normal reactions – not behavioral problems

Temporary reduced cognitive functioning



Reduced:

- Auditive memory
- Concentration
- Storing & retrieving knowledge
- Executive functioning
 - Planning / organizing / time-management / task initiation / working memory / metacognition / Self-control / sustained attention / flexibility / perseverance

Normal reactions to un-normal situations

- being afraid
- problems sleeping
- unwanted thoughts
- constantly stressed
- Reduced concentration
- sad or depressed
- social withdrawal
- feeling worthless
- anger

Executive functioning problems I

1. Finds it hard to figure out how to get started on a task
2. Can focus on small details or the overall picture - not both at the same time
3. Has trouble figuring out how much time a task requires
4. Does things either quickly and messily or slowly and incompletely
5. Finds it hard to incorporate feedback into work or an activity
6. Sticks with a plan, even when it's clear that the plan isn't working
7. Has trouble paying attention and is easily distracted
8. Loses a train of thought when interrupted

(Pathways 2 success: Executive Functioning, 2016)

Executive functioning problems I

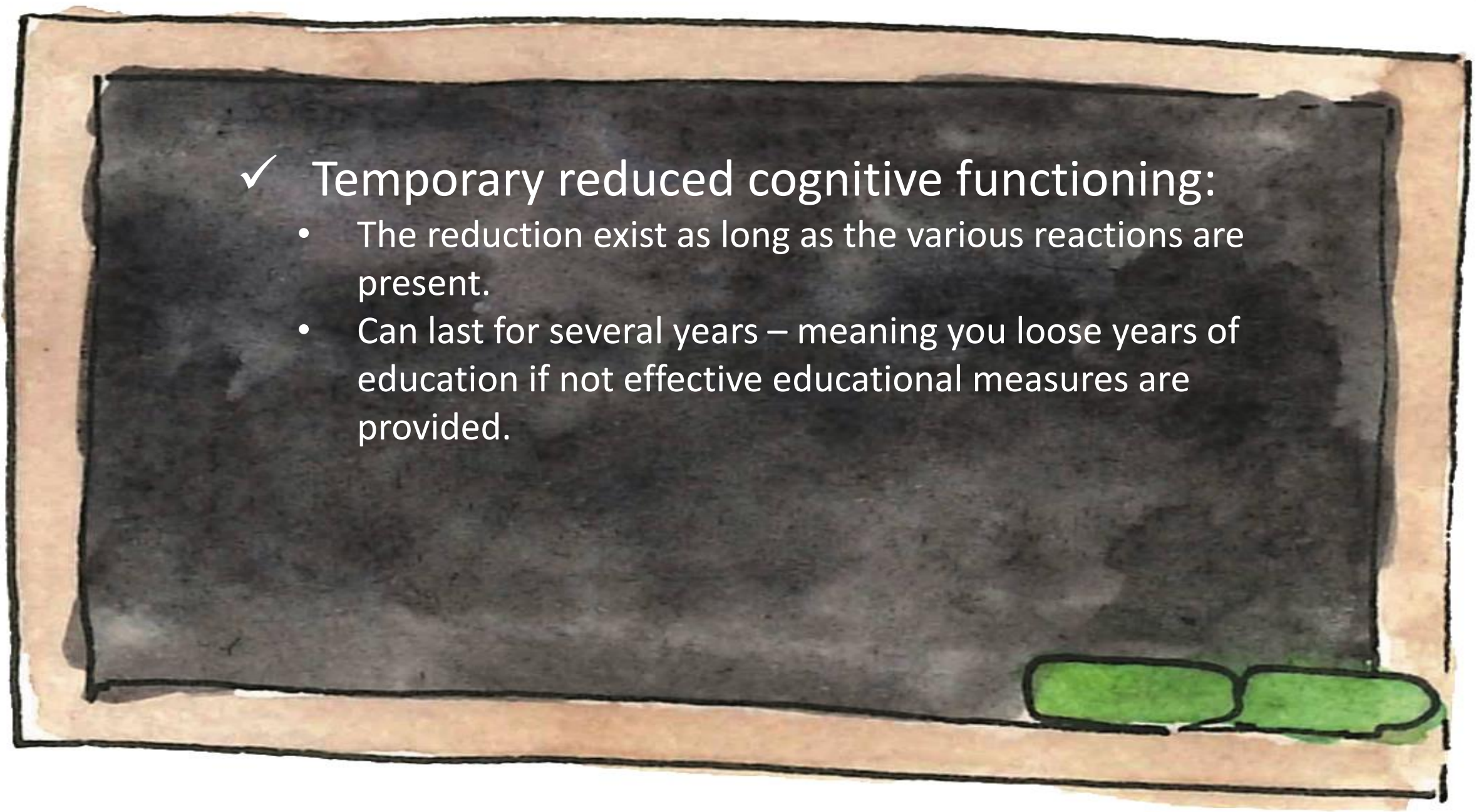
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Executive functioning problems II

- 9. Needs to be told the directions many times
- 10. Has trouble making decisions
- 11. Has a tough time switching gears from one activity to another
- 12. Doesn't always have the words to explain something in detail
- 13. Needs help processing what something feels/sounds/looks like
- 14. Isn't able to think about or do more than one thing at a time
- 15. Remembers information better using cues, abbreviations or acronyms

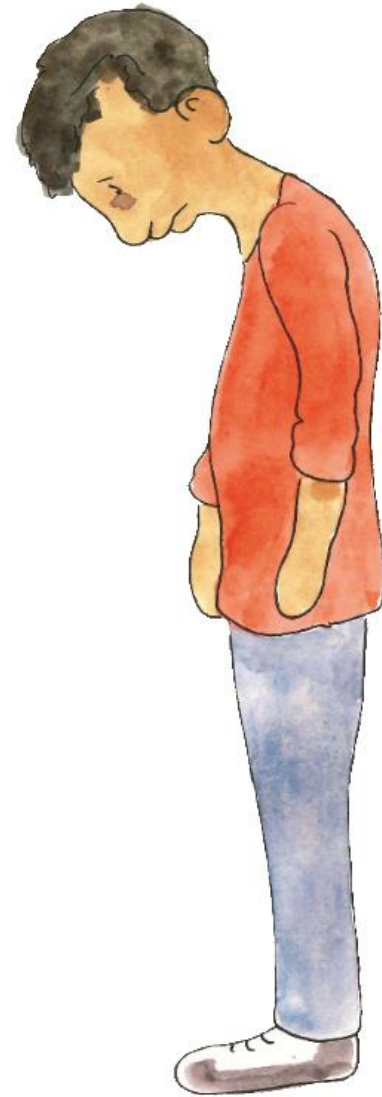
(Pathways 2 success: Executive Functioning, 2016)

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- A hand-drawn illustration of a presentation slide. It features a light brown, textured border. Inside is a large blackboard with a dark, mottled grey surface. A green highlighter is shown at the bottom right, with a green stroke. The text is written in white on the blackboard.
- ✓ Temporary reduced cognitive functioning:
 - The reduction exist as long as the various reactions are present.
 - Can last for several years – meaning you loose years of education if not effective educational measures are provided.

Overview – Section II

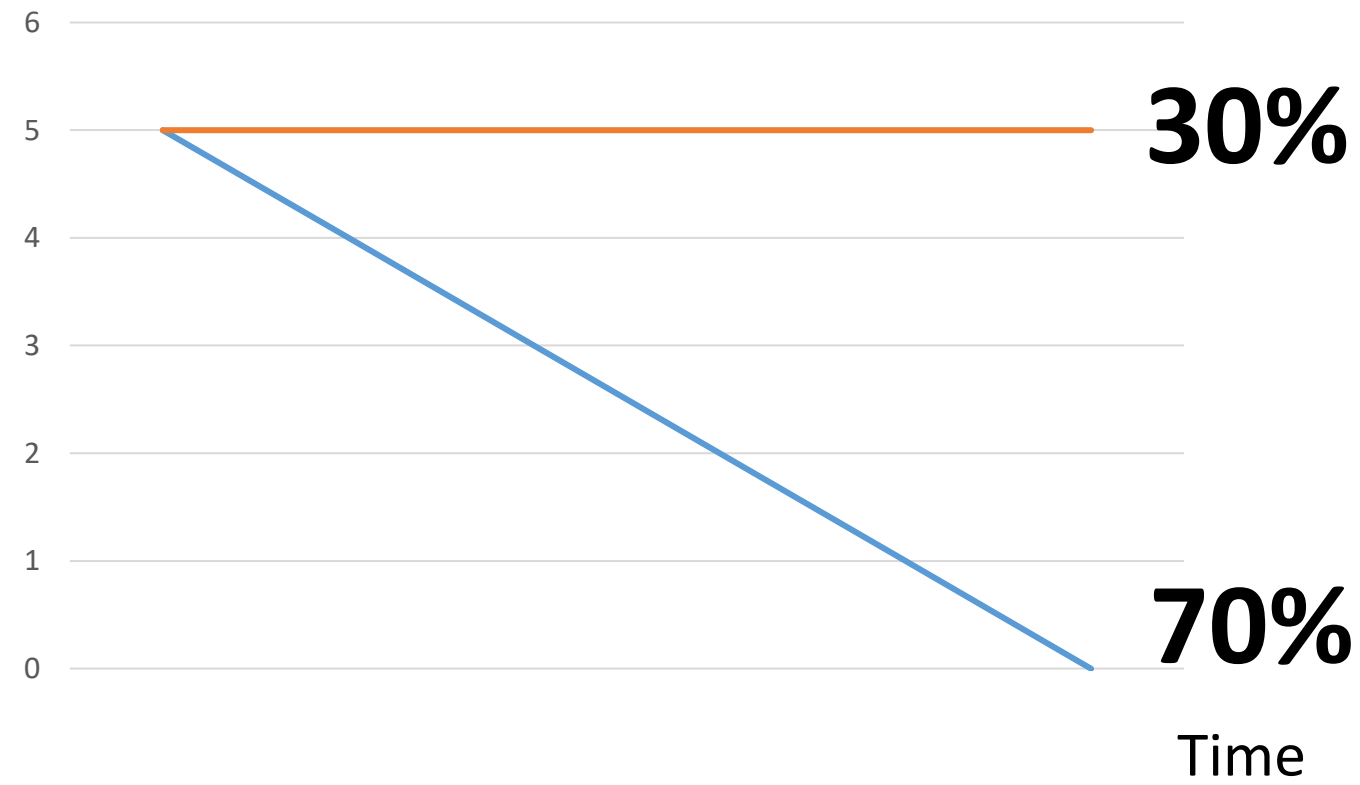


- Empirical evidence for post-disaster intervention - 5 elements of post-disaster intervention



Trauma Recovery

Level of
reactions



Does the problems just go away?

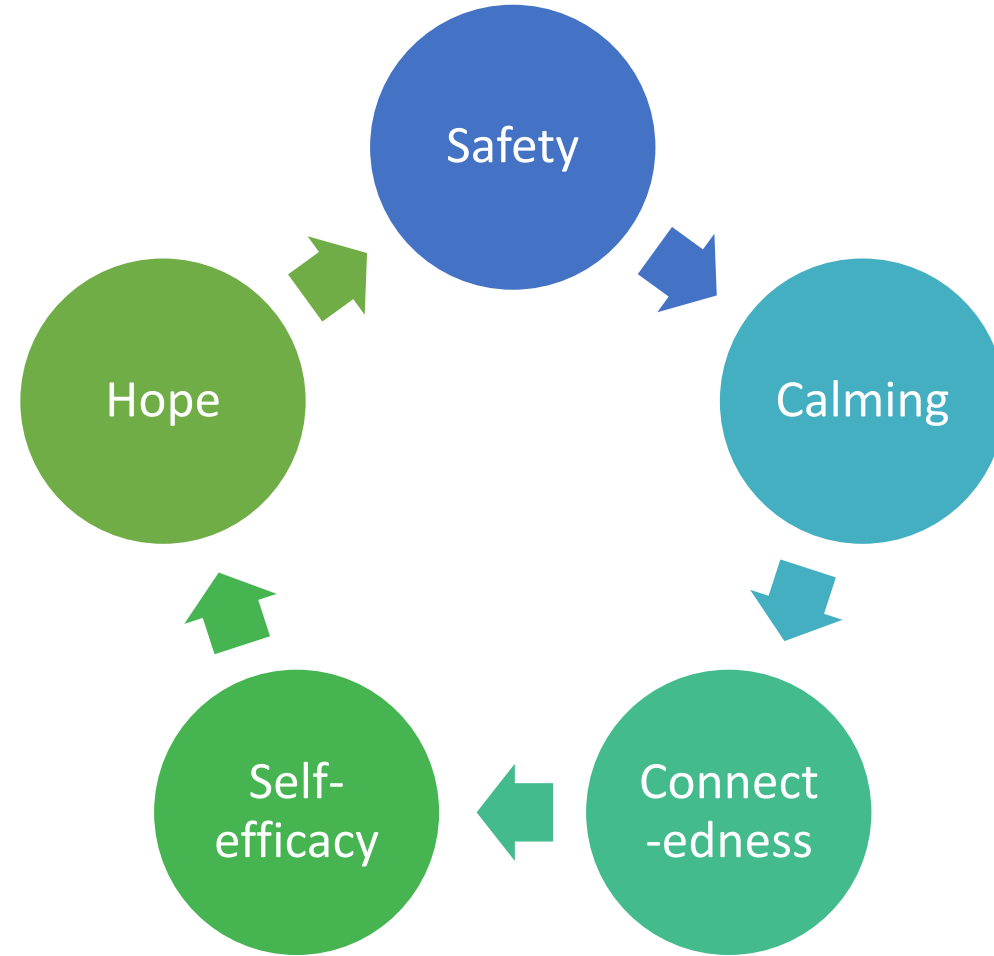
Evidence-informed framework for post-disaster intervention

Five Essential Elements of Immediate and Mid-Term Mass Trauma Intervention: Empirical Evidence

Stevan E. Hobfoll, Patricia Watson, Carl C. Bell, Richard A. Bryant, Melissa J. Brymer, Matthew J. Friedman, Merle Friedman, Berthold P.R. Gersons, Joop T.V.M de Jong, Christopher M. Layne, Shira Maguen, Yuval Neria, Ann E. Norwood, Robert S. Pynoos, Dori Reissman, Josef I. Ruzek, Arie Y. Shalev, Zahava Solomon, Alan M. Steinberg, and Robert J. Ursano

Given the devastation caused by disasters and mass violence, it is critical that intervention policy be based on the most updated research findings. However, to date, no evidence-based consensus has been reached supporting a clear set of recom-

An evidence-informed framework for post-disaster intervention



Promotors of school functioning



1 Being able to calm down



2 A sense of safety and stability



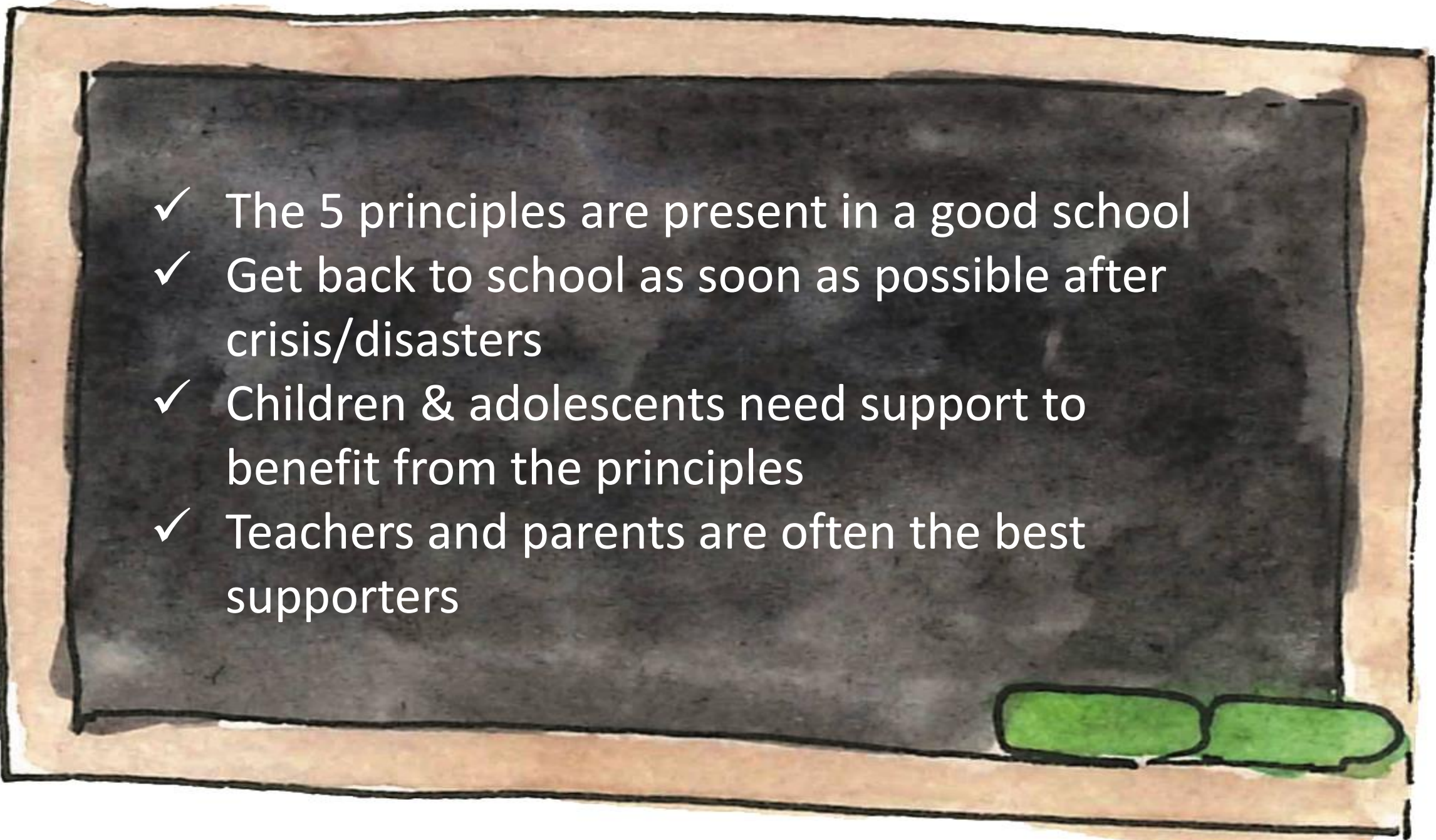
3 The power to change the situation



4 Connecting with others



5 Re-establishing hope

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- ✓ The 5 principles are present in a good school
 - ✓ Get back to school as soon as possible after crisis/disasters
 - ✓ Children & adolescents need support to benefit from the principles
 - ✓ Teachers and parents are often the best supporters

Overview – Section III



- Being a teacher for war and crisis affected students:
 - Negotiating the teacher role to be more suited for a crisis context
 - Providing educational measures

Well-being
+ Academic functioning
= School functioning



Improving school functioning



Negotiate the teacher role to include both:

- School well-being
- Academic functioning

Empower teachers

Teachers need information on how stress alter students school functioning

- Sleepy or un-concentrated students does not necessarily mean un-motivated students

Teachers have a crucial role
in the context of crisis



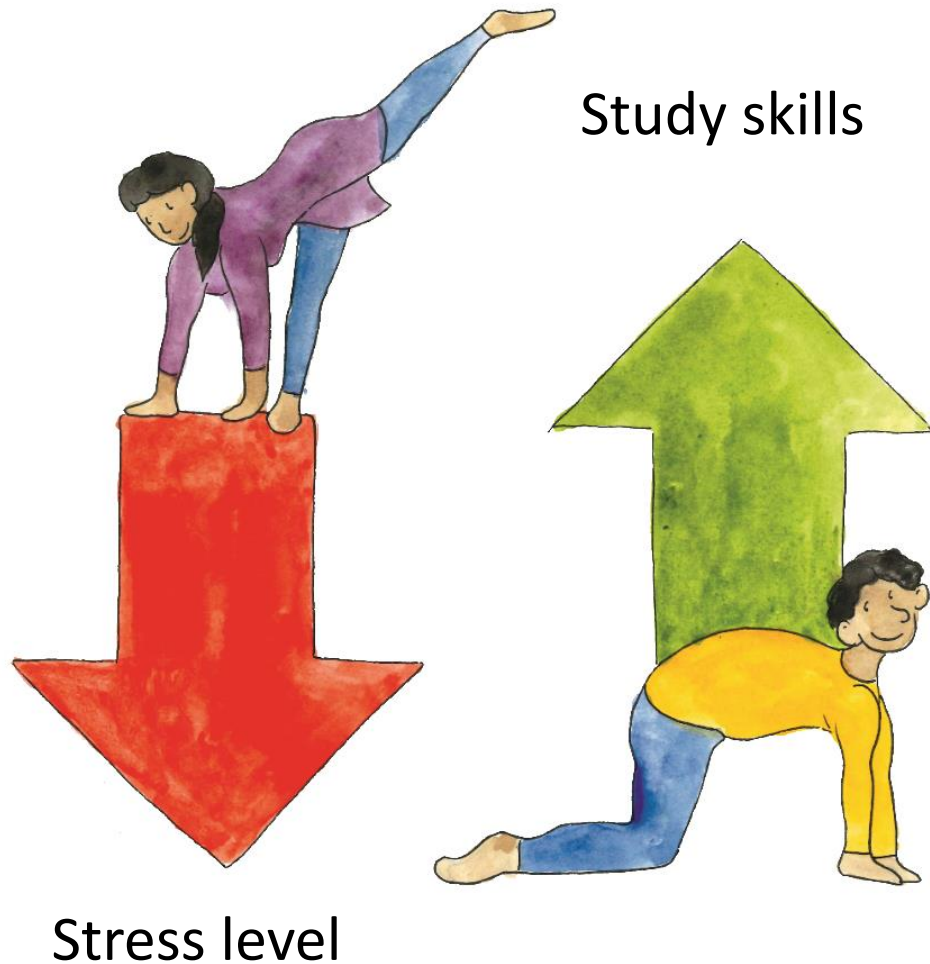
Educational measures I

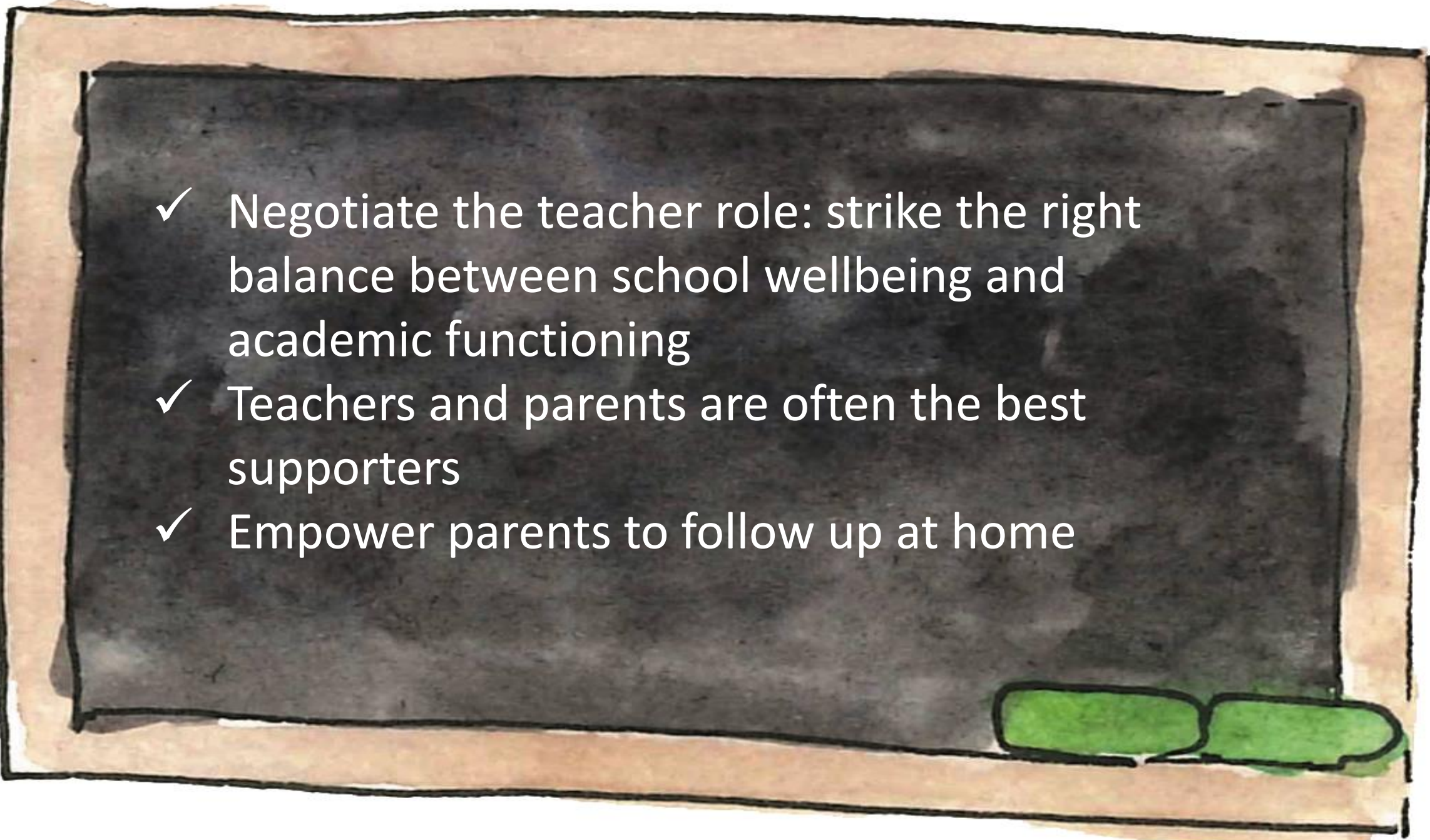


Provide adapted measures – for both well-being and academic functioning

- Academic functioning:
 - Identify academic “rest capacity” and build on what works
 - Help the student prioritize their work
 - Give them fewer assignments
 - Improve study skills

Summary: Educational measures for Education in Emergencies



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- ✓ Negotiate the teacher role: strike the right balance between school wellbeing and academic functioning
 - ✓ Teachers and parents are often the best supporters
 - ✓ Empower parents to follow up at home