

The Self-Reg Journey of

Cathy Lethbridge and Crystal Carbino



Simcoe CDSB: From A Grassroots Initiative To A Board Wide Thirst For Self-Reg Learning

Cathy Lethbridge and Crystal Carbino's focus on the individualized nature of Self-Reg and supporting co-regulating adults has sparked a fountain of interest in Self-Reg learning.

Why Self-Reg

"Many of our students were dysregulated leaving us constantly reacting to behaviour. Cathy stumbled upon presentation information from Dr. Stuart Shanker that outlined the science behind Self-Reg and what we had been trying to do. We kept fine tuning throughout the school to be more aligned with Stuart's work and keeping the focus on the individualized nature of Self-Reg."

Big Picture

"Self-Reg can't be a top-down initiative. It works best when it starts from the grassroots. When people start to see what others are experiencing with Self-Reg, they become curious to learn more. Our Self-Reg team goes where we are invited. Providing TMC learning opportunities for more staff was necessitated by the fact that our current team cannot meet the requests for more Self-Reg learning."

Process at this Point

"At the board level the concept of self-regulation kept coming up. At first it was very much a self-control view of self-regulation. However, over time, with the work Crystal and others were doing in the field, the mindset started to shift. Various schools and school staff were dabbling in Self-Reg."

Since then Crystal and Cathy have been integral in:

- Introducing hundreds of educators and board staff to Shanker Self-Reg,
- Promoting that Self-Reg is part of the board's 'Well-being of Students and Staff' strategic priority,
- Supporting staff to participate in SRSS and Foundations courses,
- Creating a Self-Reg Communities of Practice,
- Offering non-school hours Self-Reg as a tool for personal well-being PD sessions that are well

attended,

- Facilitating Self-Reg learning sessions for parents and families,
- Introducing our community partners to Self-Reg to support consistent practices across the lifespan.

"Self-regulation in children and youth is developed as they experience co-regulation with and witness self-regulation in the adults in their lives. Parents and adults in schools are co-regulators for children/students and it's important for them to be self-regulated. Much of the work we've done in the past two years has been to introduce staff from across the board to Self-Reg as a way of managing energy and tension in themselves."

Challenges

"Sometimes schools would "implement" Self-Reg but without a full understanding of the framework. Sometimes that looked like one-size-fits-all calming activities. When these didn't work or didn't fix the problem it was supposed to fix, people declared "Self-Reg" doesn't work. Sharing the Self-Reg framework with more and more people and focusing on adult Self-Reg helped more people make the shift to Self-Reg."

Fond Memory

"I often pull up old shared Google documents when doing a search and notice our early understanding of Self-Reg (or lack of understanding). Seeing the evolution of our presentations over the past 3 years tells a story. It makes me smile to see how far we've come in our understanding and application."

Hope!

"Self-Reg has completely changed my life and my professional practice. For my students, I was stuck looking for ways to motivate and control behaviour. For me, I had always been beating myself up for stress behaviour. When I learned to look at my own "misbehaviour" as stress behaviour, it changed my life. When I started looking at student "misbehaviour" as stress behaviour, the climate changed in our school."