

# Welcome to Hidden Sparks Without Walls. We will be starting at 8:30pm.

To alleviate background noise and ensure a quiet session, your audio connection has been muted.

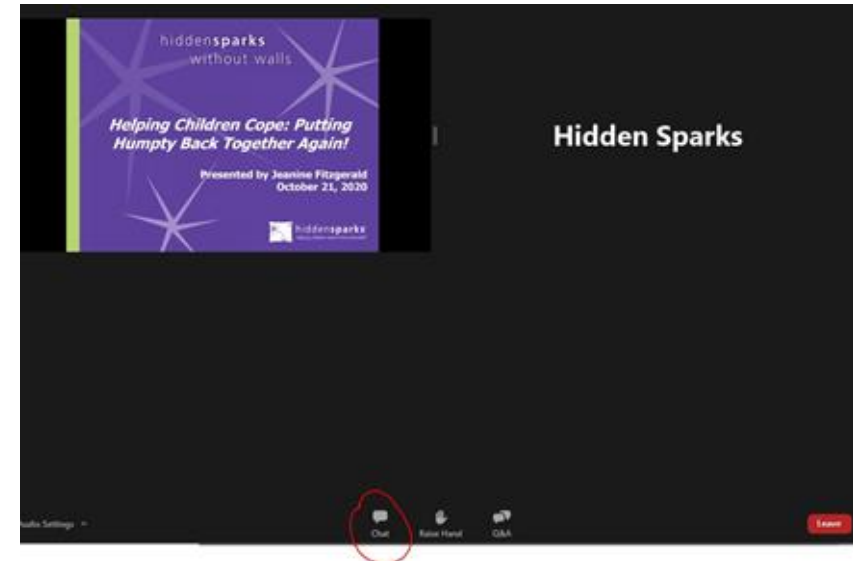
## **Chat: Asking Questions & Sharing Thoughts**

You are encouraged to ask questions and share your thoughts on the chat.

Please activate the chat feature on the bottom of the screen. You may choose to chat to panelists and all attendees or just panelists.

## **Audio:**

If you would like to call in via phone for audio, please look up the call in number, webinar id, and passcode information on your webinar invite.



# ABOUT HIDDEN SPARKS

**Hidden Sparks helps educators and Jewish day schools nurture the Hidden Spark within each student, facilitating professional development to increase understanding and support for the broad range of learners in the classroom.**

Offerings include:

- award-winning **Learning Lenses** course on understanding learning and behavior
- 1:1 **coaching** for teachers
- **Internal** and **Peer Coach mentoring** within schools
- workshop on **Differentiating Instruction**
- **Hidden Sparks Without Walls** webinar series
- **Parent Learning Center (PLC)**

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**The Emotionally Aware Parent: Regulating Yourself to Support Your Child**

**Presented by Ariella Azaraf Schur, LCSW**  
**Tuesday, March 17, 2026**



**hiddensparks**  
helping children reach their potential™

## Our Guest: Ariella Azaraf Schur, LCSW



Ariella Azaraf is a psychotherapist in private practice and speaker in New York City and New Jersey. She enjoys working with emerging adults struggling with anxiety, depression, navigating relationships and boundaries as well as learning to cultivate a sense of self love. With a unique lens of self compassion and self acceptance, Ariella feels passionate about helping and empowering individuals to work through struggle and trauma while also holding space for self compassion and acceptance.

*A Journey Towards Co-Regulation*

# The Emotionally Aware Parent

Presented by: Ariella Azaraf Schur, LCSW  
March 17, 2026

# Overview of the Session



## Foundations

Emotional regulation role in effective parenting and understanding your nervous system.



## Mechanisms

Why parenting activates emotional triggers and practical self-regulation strategies.



## Development

How parental regulation supports child development and the role of co-regulation.

*Goal: Creating a calmer emotional climate at home.*

“  
"Shame is the fear of disconnection — the fear that something we've done or failed to do makes us unworthy of connection."

— Harriet Lerner

# Normalize the Challenge/Being Honest with where you are at



Take a moment to close your eyes and take a deep breath.

- ✓ A child needs a settled body and a present parent, not a perfect parent.
- ✓ Moments of dysregulation do not mean you are failing; they mean you are human.
- ✓ Thank yourself for showing up tonight.
- ✓ Let's normalize that parenting can be challenging.

# Understanding Your Nervous System

## Common Thoughts

'I should be cleaning the kitchen'

'I still have to put the other kids to sleep'

'I haven't eaten dinner myself yet'

'I am failing as a parent'

## The First Step

Have awareness around the thoughts that arise when you are beginning to feel overwhelmed.



# Replacing the Thoughts

Re-routing stressful thoughts helps calm the nervous system and bring you back to the present, making it easier to pause and respond with greater calm and intention.

- ✓ I am exactly where I need to be.
- ✓ Everything else can wait.
- ✓ My child is having a hard time, not giving me a hard time.
- ✓ I can handle this moment.
- ✓ This moment will pass.
- ✓ I am safe in this breath.

# Importance of Regulation

## Tolerating Discomfort

Regulation doesn't mean removing emotions — it means staying with discomfort without reacting immediately.

When emotions are high, we tend to react from our emotional brain rather than respond thoughtfully.

**Parent Takeaway:** Calm the nervous system first.  
Then guide the behavior.



# The Neuroscience Behind Our Brains



## The Amygdala

The part of the brain that looks for danger and keeps us safe. It is our internal alarm system.



## Stress Response

When it senses a threat, it quickly activates fight, flight, or freeze responses.



## Cognitive Impact

Activation makes it significantly harder to think clearly, stay calm, or solve problems.



# Understanding the Nervous System

State	Experience	Typical Behaviors
<b>Calm / Regulated</b>	Patient, present, safe.	Listen effectively, guide behavior, respond thoughtfully.
<b>Activated / Stress</b>	Overwhelmed, frustrated, reactive.	Snap, yell, rush to control, intense anxiety.
<b>Shutdown / Freeze</b>	Emotionally drained, numb.	Withdraw, lack of energy to engage, disconnecting.

# The Vagus Nerve: Your Soul Nerve

**The soul nerve regulates the nervous system.**

It is the main nerve of the parasympathetic system, responsible for returning the body to a state of safety after stress.

- ✓ Helps us connect to ourselves and others.
- ✓ Allows us to think clearly when calm.

**Polyvagal Theory:** Explains how we scan for safety/danger. Sensing threat shifts us into fight, flight, or shutdown.



# NATURAL TECHNIQUES FOR STIMULATING THE VAGUS NERVE



## SINGING

Humming, chanting and singing are all exercises that increase heart rate variability (HRV). Higher HRV is linked with reduced morbidity and mortality and improved psychological well-being and quality of life.



## EXERCISE

Exercise is good for your brain's cognitive faculties, your mental health and your gut flow, thanks to its ability to stimulate the vagus nerve.



## COLD EXPOSURE

Exposure to cold dampens the fight or flight response and increases the rest and digest response, like taking a cold shower or drinking ice water.



## YOGA

Disciplines like yoga increase vagus nerve activity to help keep you calm and are particularly effective for people suffering from anxiety or depression.



## LAUGHING

Laughter is a natural immune booster which, like singing, can increase HRV in a group setting.



## DEEP BREATHING

Breathing slowly and deeply activates your vagus nerve to send messages to your brain that help lower your blood pressure and heart rate.



## GARGLING

Gargling with water stimulates the muscles of the pallet and has been shown to improve working memory performance.



## THOUGHTFUL MEDITATION

You can improve your mood simply by silently repeating positive phrases about your friends and family.

# The Power of Co-Regulation

## Children Borrow Our Calm

Regulation is a shared process, not something children do alone. They rely on our internal state to find theirs.

## Parent Takeaway

**Your calm nervous system helps your child's nervous system settle.**

You are the anchor in their emotional storm.

# Simple Ways to Co-Regulate



## Breathe

Take slow, intentional breaths together.



## Name It

Notice and name the feeling without judgment.



## Body Check

Bring attention to the body. Feet on the ground and slow down.

# The Pause: Reacting vs Responding

“*Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.*”

— Viktor Frankl

# Parenting Triggers

**Normalize it:** All parents feel dysregulated sometimes. Why is it hard to stay regulated?

## External

Work pressures, financial stress,  
sensory overstimulation.

## Internal

Unmet personal needs, deep guilt,  
perfectionism.

## Situational

Whining, transitions, bedtime,  
sibling conflict.

**Reflection:** Pause and name 1-2 of your own common triggers.

# Building Emotional Resilience

## Small Daily Habits

Daily habits that support regulation are the foundation of a resilient nervous system.

- ✓ **Sleep:** Prioritizing rest to allow the brain to recover.
- ✓ **Breaks:** Moments of stillness throughout the day.
- ✓ **Movement:** Releasing stored physical stress.
- ✓ **Support:** Connecting with others to share the load.

# Helping Your Child Through Big Feelings

## Modeling Regulation

It's okay to say "I need a moment."

Show how you calm yourself explicitly.

## Validating Emotions

"You're really mad right now. I'm here."

Avoid jumping to solve or fix immediately.

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**Loving Boundaries:** Warm, clear, and consistent limits.

# The Power of Repair

**No one gets it right all the time.**

Repair is vital because it teaches resilience and trust. It shows your child that disconnection is not permanent.

*"I got frustrated and yelled. That must have felt scary. I am sorry, I am working on taking a pause next time."*

Focus on what different looks like next time.



# Key Takeaways for Parents

- ✓ Children can't calm down until they feel calmed by you.
- ✓ Your calm becomes their calm.
- ✓ Connection is the fastest path back to regulation.
- ✓ Children don't borrow our logic first; they borrow our nervous system.
- ✓ Your calm nervous system is your most powerful tool.

## Main Takeaway

Your calm nervous system is the most powerful regulation tool your child has.

**Please stay connected!**



**@AriellaAzarafLCSW**



**www.AriellaAzarafLCSW.com**



**AriellaAzarafLCSW@gmail.com**



# Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Sessions

<b>Tuesday, April 28, 2026</b> <b>For Teachers</b>	<b>The Visual Literacy Classroom: From Pictures to Words</b>  Presented by Hollis Dannaham
	<b>Please check our extensive HSWOW Archives for teachers and parents</b>

**If you are interested in bringing  
Hidden Sparks  
to your school or city, please contact us:**

**[212-767-7707](tel:212-767-7707) or [rabbihus@hiddensparks.org](mailto:rabbihus@hiddensparks.org)**

# Contacting Hidden Sparks

## Contact Presenter:

### Ariella Azaraf Schur

Email: [AriellaAzarafLCSW@gmail.com](mailto:AriellaAzarafLCSW@gmail.com)

Instagram: @AriellaAzarafLCSW

Website: [www.AriellaAzarafLCSW.com](http://www.AriellaAzarafLCSW.com)

## Contact Hidden Sparks:

[www.hidden-sparks.org](http://www.hidden-sparks.org)

[news@hidden-sparks.org](mailto:news@hidden-sparks.org) (212) 767-7707

[www.facebook.com/HiddenSparks](https://www.facebook.com/HiddenSparks)



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