

Fostering Emotional Strength and Instilling Hope in Your Child

*Learning the Difference Between
Healthy Support and Enabling*

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Outline of Presentation

- A Time to Reflect....How Would My Child React?
- Definition of Resilience
- Where Does Resiliency Come From?
- Communication: A Key to Building Resilience
- Helping Children Grow From Mistakes and Failure
- Hints for Experiencing Success
- Reinforcing Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills
- Establishing Effective Relationships with Your Child's school

A Time To Reflect

How would my son/daughter react?

Would they..... or would they.....?

Change in Peer Relationships (i.e. – breakup, rejection, etc.)

- Cry endlessly for days and days, or
- Be sad for a while and move on

Change in Family Structure

- Become very angry, sullen, quiet and withdrawn; maybe even seek unhealthy ways of feeling better or
- Be willing to talk about how they feel with someone who they trust

Extreme Pressure to Succeed Academically

- Become almost immobilized by their fear of failure, or
- Study hard, try their best and accept what happens

Pressure to Use Alcohol or Other Drugs

- Try it just to be cool and to fit in, or
- Resist the pressure no matter how persistent

Pressure to Become Sexually Active

- Give in, wanting peer acceptance and approval more than mine (parent), or
- Does not give in and keeps fighting for what they believe is right

Gets into Trouble in School

- Look to me (parent) to solve it, take my side or rescue, or
- Use their own strengths and abilities to redeem the situation

How do we achieve the result we
want?

Answer:

Build Resilience

Definition of Resilience

- The ability to face, overcome and be strengthened by the problems of life
- The ability to prevent, minimize or overcome the damaging effects of life's tough "stuff"
- The ability to bounce back
- The ability to cope with life's adversities

Where Does Resiliency Come From?

- Internal Resources (Who the child is and what they can do)
 - See themselves as loveable and acceptable
 - Know that mistakes are a part of life, they are forgiven and learned from
 - Healthy, age appropriate interdependence
 - Core values and morals
 - Take responsibility for what they do
 - Have hope, faith and can trust others
 - Have pride and self-confidence

Where Does Resiliency Come From?

- Internal Resources (Who the child is and what they can do) – continued.....
 - Can show concern and compassion
 - Can communicate
 - Manage feelings and impulses (self-regulate)
 - Understand how others feel and think

Where Does Resiliency Come From?

- External Resources (What the child has)
 - People they can trust
 - Positive role models (i.e. – people who teach them how to behave and encourage them to do things on their own)
 - Structure, limits and boundaries for security and safety
 - Opportunities for experiential learning
 - Access to education, health and other resources as needed

Two Key Places Where Resiliency is Developed

Home

School

Communication: A Key to Building Resilience

- Establish time to discuss family issues and problems as well as solutions....be proactive
- Be clear and concise when setting limits and giving feedback
- Be patient...you may need to repeat things
- Use humor to lighten the mood that doesn't make them a target
- Be nonjudgmental and nonaccusatory
- Be empathic and active in your listening
 - Listen without making assumptions
 - Pay attention to verbal and non verbal messages
 - Seek to understand before speaking
 - Appreciate and validate their point of view...this does not mean that you agree with them!

Helping Children Grow From Mistakes and Failure

- Model for children how to react to mistakes and setbacks
 - Examine how you react to stressful setbacks.
- Set realistic expectations with appropriate consequences
 - You need to do well in school, if you don't you will be attending summer school
- Accept and expect mistakes as a part of life with direction for how to correct
 - How would you do this differently? What did you learn from this?
- Mistakes don't negate love. Communicate this!
 - I will always love you, but I'm disappointed...

Hints for Experiencing Success

- Celebrate accomplishments—even if they are minor
- Get your child's input to create success
- Concentrate on strengths to “build them up”
- Strengths are unique and take time to develop
- Help your child feel ownership and responsibility for their successes

Reinforcing Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills

- Model how to solve problems
- Teach how to define problems, generate solutions
- Set up ahead of time how to handle when decisions aren't followed through on
 - “You’ve decided that you’ll do chores and then homework, so I don’t become a nag, how should we handle it if you don’t follow through on your responsibilities?”
- Give them choices
 - “Do you want to do your homework before or after your chores?”

Establishing Effective Relationships with Your Child's School

- Be patient with decisions made...ask staff for more information....believe it or not, there may be another side to the story....kids like to play us against each other
- Allow your child to “appropriately fight their own battles”
- Go over the school rules and make sure your child understands consequences
- Discuss issues that arise with your child
- Get involved in school activities
- Be careful when and how you intervene....avoid tossing pillows and rescuing