

COFFEE WITH THE COUNSELOR

“WELCOME TO INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL!”

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 26TH, 2019



Presented by
Eliza Hayes
School Counselor

INTRODUCTION

- Eliza Hayes
- What is a School Counselor?
 - Works with and is available to ALL students (& parents 😊)
 - Focus on 3 main areas:
 - Academic
 - Personal/Social
 - Career

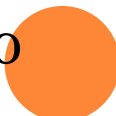


AGENDA

- Review of early adolescent physical cognitive, social & emotional Development
- Technology
- Organization, homework & executive functioning skills & strategies
- Managing worry & anxiety
- Q & A



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Second most rapid stage of development
 - Puberty begins
 - Effects physical growth & mood
 - Starts at different ages & progresses at different rates
 - Hormonal impact on girls **and** boys- lower frustration tolerance, attitude, more sensitive and emotional (boys too!)
 - Self-consciousness, embarrassment, & anxiety are common
 - Want to be like everyone else; not “too early” or “too late”
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COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT –(JEAN PIAGET)

Phases Brown Students are in:
Concrete operational (7-11 years old)
Formal operational (11 & older)

- **Concrete Operational- students in this phase can:**
 - Understand concepts like reversibility, reciprocity, identity, classification, & conservation & can apply these principles to friendships, rules, games, sports, & academics
 - Think logically and better problem solve but cannot think abstractly or consider possibilities for “out-of-the-moment” situation
- **Formal Operational- students in this phase can:**
 - Use abstract reasoning to hypothesize and consider alternatives
 - Plan for & think about their future
 - Use logic to predict consequences of behaviors/actions but cannot always link events, feelings and situations to their own lives

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT –(ERIK ERIKSON)

Phases Brown Students are in:

Industry vs. Inferiority (6-12 years old)

Identity vs. Role Confusion (12-18 years old)

Industry vs. Inferiority Task: to achieve a sense of industry by setting and achieving goals. Failures result in feelings of inferiority.

- Understanding of the world expands
- Personal values & beliefs are developed through peer interactions & through positive reinforcement from adults
 - Praise & specific encouragement (as opposed to complimenting) is essential to develop feelings of self worth
 - This is where we see the “best friend syndrome”

Identity vs. Role Confusion Task: to clarify self-identity, life goals & life’s meaning. Failure results in role confusion

- Peer relationships are extremely significant but students are still preoccupied with their own needs
- Cliques emerge along with social “rules” about how to dress, behave, etc.
- Self worth is reinforced when they feel adults appreciate who they are as unique and worthwhile individuals

SELF DEVELOPMENT

Middle Childhood:

- Self-esteem building (begins around 8 years old)
 - Compare self to others
 - Behave according to preconceived idea of self
 - See themselves as having more complex personalities (the thought that “nobody understands me as well as I can”)
- Internal locus of control
- Afraid to try new things

Early Adolescence:


- Trying to “define” self
- Push for autonomy & independence but are dependent on others
- Imaginary Audience- “Everybody cares about me as much as I care about myself and sees EVERYTHING I’m doing!”
 - Self-esteem actually decreases
- Personal Fable- “I am special & unique” & “Bad things can happen to others, but not me”

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Middle Childhood:

- Begin to experience more complex emotions like guilt, shame & pride
- Become aware that people can experience more than one emotion at a time and feelings can change
- Hide own emotions to protect feelings of others
- Anxiety about school performance and peer inclusion increases

Early Adolescence:

- Moodiness and outbursts are common (roller coaster ride!)
 - Negative emotions can feel overwhelming which can exacerbate the negative feeling
 - Leads to more frequent conflicts with adults
 - **Adults need to normalize the emotions, help them understand what they are feeling and help them develop a “feelings vocabulary”**
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HAPPY



SAD



MAD



BRAVE



EMBARRASSED



FRIENDLY



SORRY



DISAPPOINTED



FRUSTRATED



SILLY



HOPEFUL



LEFT OUT



EXCITED



JEALOUS



CURIOUS



CRANKY



SENSITIVE



PROUD



INSECURE



GRATEFUL



LOVED



GUILTY



UNCOMFORTABLE



SHY



HURT



SURPRISED



SCARED



KIND

WORRY AND ANXIETY

- Many children feel worried and stressed about assignments and tests but being nervous is not always a bad thing, as it can motivate a student to stay on top of their school work.
- Anticipation anxiety is common with this age group.
- Worry becomes a problem when a child's daily routines and patterns (eating, sleeping etc.) or enjoyment in beloved activities starts to decline.
 - If there are concerns speak with your pediatrician and contact your child's school counselor.
- Providing structured routines can help alleviate or help your child more easily manage academic anxiety.
- It is also important for children to have time to decompress and play.



YOUR BRAIN ON STRESS

It's important to help children understand the brain science of stress and how our brain functions.

Message we send to students:

Stress is normal and can be both positive and negative! Check out Dr. Dan Siegel!

The “flipping your lid” response

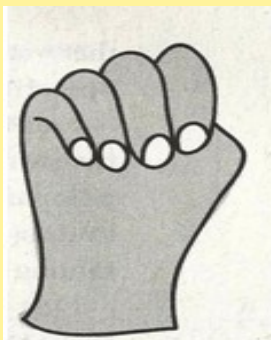


Figure 1. A model of the brain.



Figure 2. Flipping your lid.



INSIDE THE TEENAGE BRAIN

Adolescents are prone to high-risk behaviour

Prefrontal Cortex

Its functions include planning and reasoning; grows till 25 years

Adults Fully developed

Teens Immature, prone to high-risk behaviour

Amygdala

Emotional core for passion, impulse, fear, aggression.

Adults Rely less on this, use prefrontal cortex more

Teens More impulsive



Parietal Lobe

Responsible for touch, sight, language; grows till early 20s

Adults Fully developed

Teens Do not process information effectively

Ventral Striatum

Reward centre, not fully developed in teens

Adults Fully developed

Teens Are more excited by reward than consequence

Hippocampus

Hub of memory and learning; grows in teens

Adults Fully functional; loses neurons with age


Teens Tremendous learning curve

MINDFULNESS STRATEGIES WHEN WORKING WITH WORRY AND ANXIETY


You can reinforce and practice stress relieving and mindfulness exercises such as:

- Deep breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation (involves tensing and relaxing muscles throughout the body)
- Replacing negative worrisome thoughts with *positive affirmations*, ex. “I have prepared and I am ready for this test...” or even if life gets in the way and they didn’t get to study as much, “I will try my best to remember what I have learned... I can talk with my teacher about how to study more next time....” You can post positive statements on the bathroom mirrors or write them in the planner.


HOW DOES ALL OF THIS IMPACT MY CHILD'S SUCCESS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL?

- During these developmental stages, students are only just LEARNING basic school and executive functioning skills
 - At Brown there's a spectrum regarding the development of these skills
 - If your 4th or 5th grader is struggling please know that this is normal and that the skills are being taught and refined by Brown teachers and counselors
 - As adults, we need to help foster these skills (through modeling and other strategies) so students see success and can gain independence and confidence
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STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING SKILLS

- Use checklists
 - Create a household schedule
 - Prioritize to help with busy afternoons (prioritize assignments, studying, preparation for sports/activities etc.)
 - Set a designated work or study space
 - Keep an organized planner and binder by checking daily
 - Conduct a weekly clean-up of backpack, binder etc.
 - Keep a master schedule
 - Prepare for the day ahead
 - Provide support, pull back, support again (the dance)
 - Limit tardies (homeroom begins at 8:05) and absences
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AT HOME ACADEMIC & ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

- Encourage planner use to keep track of assignments, projects and activities
 - While homework policy is limited, executive functioning skills are being developed at this age and creating a habit of regular planner use will help to build these important skills
 - Use of home calendars and checklists
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IF
MORNINGS
ARE A
BATTLE, TRY
USING A
CHECKLIST!

GOOD MORNING CHECKLIST

TIME	TASK	DONE? (check)
	Wake-up	
	Brush teeth	
	Shower/hair	
	Get dressed	
	Eat breakfast	
	Check backpack (to make sure I have everything I need, including lunch)	
	Be ready to leave for school	



WEEKLY CALENDARS



These DIY magnetic whiteboard weekly calendars are a great tool to help children (and adults) keep track of after school commitments.



HOW MUCH SHOULD I HELP?

- Daily check-ins regarding organization, assignments and routines
- Conference with the teachers (email or a meeting) to find out how things are going.
- Model effective time management.
 - If there is a long term assignment ask your student to do one page tonight, the next page the following night, etc.
- Set limits
 - If the work is too difficult or is taking too long, write a note on the assignment and email the teacher saying that your student tried for 20 min and couldn't understand. The teacher will work with you and your child to ensure understanding and work completion.



SCHOOL STRATEGIES

- Planner
- FinalSite
- Encouraged Binder/Folder Use (and proper cleaning/organization)
- Study Guides
- Team initiated organizational strategies
- Some students are using Google Classroom
- School Counselor meetings and lessons



WHAT ELSE CAN WE TRY?

- Parent Portals for FinalSite & Infinite Campus
- Separate Homework Folder
- After School Time Management Sheet
- At-Home Homework Center
- Checklists (at school & at home)
- Academic Intramurals
- Team Meetings
- Meeting with the School Counselor



A NOTE ABOUT TECHNOLOGY

- With texting, group texting, face time, instagram, email and social networking sites, students at this age can make socially motivated impulsive mistakes as well as be negatively affected themselves
- As adults in their lives it is important for us to build in parameters and boundaries for technology usage.
- Screen Addiction
 - http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/07/06/screen-addiction-is-taking-a-toll-on-children/?_r=0



HOWEVER... CHECK OUT THESE APPS

- Breathe
- Calm
- **Website:**
- Generation Mindful
- Random Acts of Kindness
- Mindfulschools.org



CYBER SAFETY RESOURCES FROM

[HTTP://WWW.TECHNOLOGYROCKSSERIOUSLY.COM/](http://www.technologyrocksseriously.com/)

Before You...



THINK

T = Is it True?

H = Is it Helpful?

I = Is it Inspiring?

N = Is it Necessary?

K = Is it Kind?

www.technologyrocksseriously.com

BEFORE You



Is it true? Is it helpful? Is it inspiring? Is it necessary? Is it kind?

THINK

www.technologyrocksseriously.com

A FINAL THOUGHT...

“There is in every child at every stage a new miracle of vigorous unfolding, which constitutes a new hope and a new responsibility for all.”

~ Erik Erikson ~



WRAP UP

Any Questions??

Thank you for joining us today! Please be in touch with any questions or concerns.

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