01

MIDDLE SCHOOL

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

02

WELCOME!

WE'RE GLAD TO HAVE YOU HERE.

Who we are?

What is our goal & purpose with this group?

A SET OF BELIEFS:

- Kids & Parents are doing the best they can with the resources they have and the skills that they currently have. (Kids do well if they can)
- All feelings can be accepted, some behaviors need to be limited.
- Two things can be true.

THOUGHTS ON FRIENDSHIPS

- Accepting that teenage social strife is a normal part of growing up and not something to help kids avoid at all costs.
- Teens will get left out and leave others out as a normal part of growing up.
- The solution to kids getting left out is not- everyone gets invited to everything. The solution is helping kids, teens, and frankly, adults, accept that it's impossible to include everyone in everything. It's normal to have a negative emotion about it, then move on and make your own plan.
- They have to go through this season in order to build the brain pathways to do it on their own, the pathways need help being coached, mentored and shaped.
- Your child only need 1 or 2 really good friends, research shows that the higher number of friends in a group the stress and conflict increases.
- Learning the difference between uncomfortable and unmanageable. Just because a teen (or an adult) is an uncomfortable situation, that doesn't make it a problem we need to solve immediately. This is an opportunity for growth and competence and confidence.

- **Parents often time make a much bigger deal about social dynamics than kids do. Let them lead.**
  “What did you think about that?”
  “How did you respond to that situations?”

- **Identifying your own vulnerabilities regarding Middle School years.**
  Is this about my child is this about my experience?
  Is this an adult size problem or a child sized problem?

- **Shift your expectations. Conflict is going to happen, your kid is going to mess up. Resist trying to save or prevent. Parents should focus on addressing it and helping to manage the uncomfortableness.**

Parents must identify what is HER discomfort and what is their CHILD'S discomfort.

Discussion.

When do you need to step in more directly with friendship conflict?

06

WHAT IS CURRENTLY CHALLENGING FOR YOU IN SUPPORTING YOUR MS REGARDING FRIENDSHIPS?

Share & Support

4 Step Process from Connected Communication

- Stay Calm and think of your kid’s strong emotions as a great opportunity to connect
  - Regulate Self, Most Generous Interpretation {MGI},connected conversations can not happen when the moment is TOO HOT.
- Understand and Accept rather than Judge
  - Be curious rather than accusatory.
  - People are always doing the best they can.
- Reflect & Validate their Feelings
  - Careful listening helps kids feel heard. When kids feel heard research shows kids listen BETTER *after* they are heard.
  - WIG {What I Got} Statements
- Explore & ask Follow-up questions
  - Instead of You vs. Me it becomes Us vs. Problem
  - Questions to better understand the child's experience and explore their openness to hearing advice, or considering ways to solve problems.

Take-Home Scripts

Language that communicates careful listening when kids have strong emotions models after paraphrasing which signals that we are trying to understand their feelings. ***This is when teens feel seen, heard, & understood increasing connection.***

"What I got" Scripts	
"What I got from what you said is that you feel like Erin betrayed you."	"Am I getting this right-that the way she said it made you feel like she was trying to embarrass you?"
"It sounds like you are pretty disappointed about your performance."	"I think you're saying that your emotions were so strong in the moment that you freaked out."
"Let me see if I'm understanding? Other kids were doing it, too, and you feel like your teacher singled you out and that it's not fair."	"You seem to be pretty mad about this."
Normalizing Scripts	
"I'd be scared too, if someone much bigger than me was threatening me."	"That sounds like it would be painful."
"That must have been hard for you."	"I think I know how you feel."
"I can see why you say you had a bad day."	"I think most people would be upset by that."
"I get scared sometimes, too."	
Dos & Don'ts	
"That must be frustrating because I know you really wanted to do well in that class."	"You know you really didn't study very much." "What did you expect?"
"You sound pretty upset about your grade." "It sounds like you think Ms. Coleman is unfair."	"Don't worry; you'll be able to make it up on the next test." "I think you need to study harder for the next test."
"I bet the other kids were upset, too, when they saw the material on the test that hadn't been covered in class."	"Ms. Coleman is an excellent teacher. I'm sure she wouldn't test you on materials you hadn't been taught." "Maybe if you had/hadn't..."

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next Group:

Questions, comments, additional suggestions:
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