

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.

BENIFITS & CHALLENGES OF ADOLESCENCE

- **Novelty seeking:** Increased drive for rewards in the circuits of the brain that create inner motivation to try new things and feel more fully.
 - **Downside:** Overemphasis on thrill and down play of risk. Impulsivity can turn an idea into actions without a risk analysis.
- **Social Engagement:** Enhances peer connectedness and creates new friendships.
 - **Downside:** Isolating from adults can increase risk behavior; including total rejections of adult knowledge and reasoning increases risks.
- **Increased Emotional Intensity {Brain Development & Puberty}:** Enhanced vitality to life.
 - **Downside:** Intense emotion can lead to impulsivity, moodiness, and extreme reactivity.
- **Creative Exploration:** Increased conceptual thinking and abstract reasoning, questioning status quo and creative problem solving.
 - **Downside:** Searching for meaning of life can lead to identity crisis, vulnerability to peer pressure, lack of direction & purpose.



Discuss

What do you love about this age?

What are your biggest challenges of parenting this age?

06 CONNECTION CURRENCY

Think about someone that you feel most connection to:

- What are the things that make you feel connected to them?
- What things do they do or don't do that make you feel connected?
- When you feel deeply connected with someone how does that change the way you interact with them compared to someone you don't feel connected with?

What are the best ways you find to connect with your child?

INCREASE CONNECTION

- One on One Time
 - Don't take the bait: Connection with adults is VERY important; even if they are pushing against it.
 - Gauge your own kid, determine where your 1-1 time is currently at & slowly increase.
 - Starting point might be just asking to sit in their room while they play their video games or while they do their homework.
- Put Away Your Phone
- Enter Their World
 - This is your entry point with your teen, goal is to communicate “what is important to you is important to me.”
- Less Talking, More Listening
 - Reflective listening & asking open-ended questions
 - “Would you like me to just listen or would you like me to share some ideas?”

07

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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