



# Belief in Others

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Peer Support

School Support

Family Coherence

# QUESTIONS ASKED

	<b>Belief-in-Others</b>	
<b>Peer Support</b>	I have a friend my age who really cares about me.	1 - Not at all true of me; 2 - A little true of me; 3 - Pretty much true of me; 4 - very much True of me
<b>Peer Support</b>	I have a friend my age who talks with me about my problems.	1 - Not at all true of me; 2 - A little true of me; 3 - Pretty much true of me; 4 - very much True of me
<b>Peer Support</b>	I have a friend my age who helps me when I'm having a hard time.	1 - Not at all true of me; 2 - A little true of me; 3 - Pretty much true of me; 4 - very much True of me
<b>School Support</b>	At my school, there is a teacher or some other adult who always wants me to do my best.	1 - Not at all true of me; 2 - A little true of me; 3 - Pretty much true of me; 4 - very much True of me
<b>School Support</b>	At my school, there is a teacher or some other adult who listens to me when I have something to say.	1 - Not at all true of me; 2 - A little true of me; 3 - Pretty much true of me; 4 - very much True of me
<b>School Support</b>	At my school, there is a teacher or some other adult who believes that I will be a success.	1 - Not at all true of me; 2 - A little true of me; 3 - Pretty much true of me; 4 - very much True of me
<b>Family Coherence</b>	My family members really help and support one another.	1 - Not at all true of me; 2 - A little true of me; 3 - Pretty much true of me; 4 - very much True of me
<b>Family Coherence</b>	There is a feeling of togetherness in my family.	1 - Not at all true of me; 2 - A little true of me; 3 - Pretty much true of me; 4 - very much True of me
<b>Family Coherence</b>	My family really gets along well with each other.	1 - Not at all true of me; 2 - A little true of me; 3 - Pretty much true of me; 4 - very much True of me

# PEER SUPPORT

“I have no friends...No one likes me...I’m always left out... I feel alone...I feel like I don’t fit in...”

How do we feel when we hear this?

How do we respond?

What are we trying to accomplish in our response?

Are we:

The Detective: (How did this happen? Who did what? Where did this happen?)

The Fixer: (What you need to do...Tomorrow, I want you to say... Have you tried?...)

The Booster Club: (That’s terrible. I can’t believe they did that to you. That’s so unfair.)

The Defender: (I’ll call her mother right now. I’m calling the principal. I’m going to their house to talk to his dad.)

## Typically effective approaches (understanding we can only control our own actions):

- **Use empathy when your child is talking to you about friendship challenges.** Walk in their shoes to figure out what emotion they may be feeling and ask if they are feeling the way you imagine they would. Resist putting value on the feeling (good or bad). The goal is to acknowledge the feeling while not adopting the feeling ourselves.
- **Encourage more in-person and unstructured time with peers.** This is where the most social learning and growth will occur.
- **Encourage and model self-reflection and self-awareness.** Explore with your child (when not emotionally heightened) how individual actions and words have consequences. Think through situations and/or challenges together by rehearsing various outcomes to better understand our roles and how we influence outcomes.
- **Practice and model good communication skills.** Model to students/children how to listen to others, taking turns in a conversation, suggesting an idea, providing praise to others, saying thank-you, keeping confidences and apologizing. These are all skills of a good friend and take time to develop.
- **Help students to understand that what you project, you attract.** Students will typically avoid classmates who present as upset, sullen or agitated, which can unfortunately create a negative cycle. Helping students to adopt a more positive, optimistic attitude will help to build peer connections.
- **Encourage practicing forgiveness (within limits).** It's important to be able to forgive mistakes, even hurtful ones, and not carry upset, especially when the other person owns their mistake. We just have to be careful that we're not staying in friendships where the hurt is intentional and repeated.

# SCHOOL SUPPORT

## Taking some of the same perspectives and mindset from Peer Support:

- **Normalize the need for seeking personal and academic support in school.** Having the courage to ask for help is a skill that will benefit students throughout their lifetime. Routinely seeking help to build an in-school support network will create a greater feeling of connection and safety. Students will also learn to quickly address issues that distract from learning.
- **Encourage persistence in seeking support.** School professionals can get busy, and students who are shy about seeking support may be quick to see people as unavailable. It's important to encourage the value of being persistent in securing meaningful time to talk (appointment time).
- **Encourage students to share their personal experiences with school staff to build stronger connections.** School staff will frequently seek to build connections with students. When students meet that outreach with responsive sharing, the foundation for positive connections are formed.
- **Build greater connections as a parent through school involvement.** Connecting with school staff regularly can help in building confidence towards understanding school staff's
- **Demonstrate a positive view of education at home.** Communicating support for the value of education and trust in the school motivates young people to be persistent when faced with academic or social challenges.

# FAMILY COHERENCE

- **Always talk, even about something unimportant, so that you're in the habit of talking when important things need to be discussed.** When something difficult comes up, it's hard to simply move into healthy communication if that habit doesn't already exist. Talking about things not directly affecting us, where everyone can offer their perspective is a good routine to practice.
- **Practice active listening with one another, with less advice and less judgment.** As hard as this may be, it's often the most important strategy to encouraging healthy communication. This requires patience and restraint as parents.
- **Eat a phone-free dinner together daily (or as much you're able).** Does this need any explanation? The phone is an explicit barrier between people and even if not in use, having it on the table represents that whatever might come over it is priority over the people you're eating with.
- **Let "it" go and apologize for upset caused.** Similar to peer relationships, but even more emotionally charged, holding grudges and upset between family members will carry throughout a student's day and affect learning. Students are also learning habits of resolving conflict (or not).
- **Have a weekly movie night, family game night, or both!** Similar to unstructured time with friends, unstructured time with family reinforces connections and feelings of togetherness and creates opportunities for learning in a safe, social structure.
- **Regularly give a hug and say, "I love you", and have the courage to do so even if it's awkward.** Doing so has emotional and physical benefits. In addition to creating a feeling of safety, it reduces cardiovascular stress, which subsequently lowers feelings of anxiety and depression.
- **Choose a volunteer activity to do together as a family.** This "next level" activity of working towards a positive cause creates a shared experience of happiness and gratitude. This will likely also be immune from critical fire as "dumb". This can give us all perspective, appreciate what we have and appreciate each other.

Ideas we missed and feedback on what we discussed:



Thank you for joining us! We can  
do this!!