



# INSIGHTS ON ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

FROM YOUR STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM



## HELLO!

2026 and Spring Semester are in full swing! Spring tends to fly by at Altamont, and before we know it will be the end of the year! Spring semester also comes with renewed goals to improve in challenging classes.

In this edition of our newsletter, you will find an exploration on why allowing our kids to fail (literally or metaphorically) is important, and resources on how to help your children get the most out of help sessions they attend (so that they can pick themselves back up after that failure!).

As always, we are here to support you and your children. Don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything.

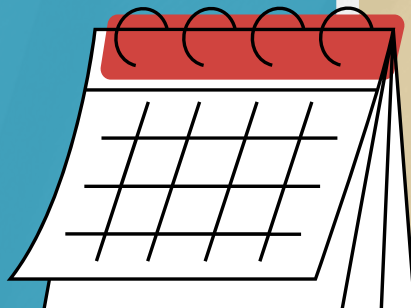
*Lauren Garrett, Head of Student Support Team and High School Counselor*

## AT A GLANCE

- 1) WELCOME
- 2) ARCHIVED NEWSLETTERS
- 3) PLANNING SESSIONS
- 4) NORMALIZING STRUGGLE, ALLOWING FAILURE
- 5) HELP SESSIONS

## Planning Sessions

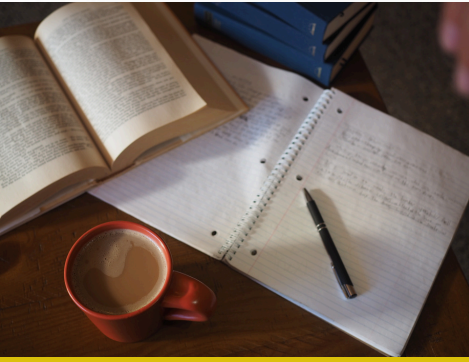
Planning and thinking ahead is a huge part of academic success. Encourage your child to attend a planning session with Mrs. Garrett if they need help with this! **Planning sessions are Monday and Thursday afternoons from 3:30 - 4:00.** Students are also welcome to email Mrs. Garrett for a 1-on-1 session at another time.



If you missed any of our previous newsletters, not to worry! They are all archived and easily accessible through the Altamont website.

Follow this link to explore:

**[Counseling and Support at Altamont](#)**



# Is Failure an Important Part of Healthy Development?

In her book *How to Raise an Adult: Break Free of The Overparenting Trap and Prepare Your Kid for Success*, Julie Lythcott Haims discusses the need to “normalize struggle”. We must push ourselves to re-image challenges and setbacks that we might otherwise dread our child having to experience as an ability to grow, build knowledge, perspective, and confidence. Feelings come in waves - we experience hardship, we feel a difficult emotion, and we engage in a coping mechanism. That is strong mental health. In order to grow into adults who understand this, our children must be given the opportunity to learn it and develop their own coping mechanisms. That does not mean that we do not support our children through the challenge. It means that we sit and listen to them problem solve, instead of problem solving for them.

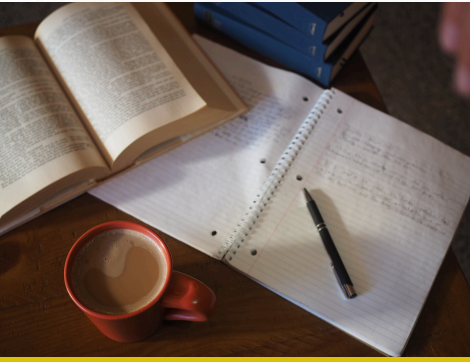
## ALLOWING OUR KIDS TO LEARN FROM STRUGGLE LOOKS LIKE...

1. LET YOUR CHILD MAKE CHOICES AND DECIDE HOW TO APPROACH THINGS.
2. LET THEM TAKE RISKS AND MAKE MISTAKES.
3. ENGAGE IN DIALOGUES WITH YOUR CHILD TO UNPACK WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED FROM AN EXPERIENCE.
4. HELP DEVELOP PERSPECTIVE.
5. GIVE AUTHENTIC, SPECIFIC FEEDBACK



## AVOIDING THE STRUGGLE LOOKS LIKE...

1. RESCUING YOUR CHILD FROM DISCOMFORT TOO QUICKLY.
2. MAKING EXCUSES FOR YOUR CHILD'S MISTAKE OR FAILURE.
3. MANAGING ALL ASPECTS OF A CHILD'S LIFE, SUCH AS REMINDING THEM ABOUT EVERY ASSIGNMENT OR ORGANIZING THEIR SCHEDULE.
4. SOLVING SOCIAL CONFLICTS FOR THEM. ALLOWING YOUR CHILD TO AVOID RESPONSIBILITIES OR DISCOMFORT.



# Is Failure an Important Part of Healthy Development?



## Highlighted Articles on the Importance of Failure and Resiliency

In his article for The Atlantic, Russell Shaw says, “Too many parents, probably unwittingly, are conditioning their kids to be afraid of losing. But experiencing failure and learning to recover from it are prerequisites for long-term success and, crucially, for mental health”. He compares experiencing failure with the support of a parent to early exposure to allergens giving the body the chance to learn that that allergen is harmless. When we’ve never been exposed to something, our bodies and minds see it as dangerous. If we’ve experienced in a safe and supportive environment, we can handle it in a healthy manner. Read more here: [Let Your Kids Fail](#)

Jessica Lahey, author of *The Gift of Failure*, says, “Modern parenting is dictated by fear. Risks seem to lie around every corner.... Maybe tomorrow’ continues until it’s time for them to leave home, and by then they have learned that we will always be there to save them from themselves. When tomorrow arrives, and the responsibilities, freedoms and risks inherent in adult life arrive with it, overparented children will be less likely to manage all of it successfully.” Read more here: [Why We Should Let Our Children Fail](#)

You may be thinking, “The stakes are too high, there is no space to let my kid fall on their face!”. Read more about how to navigate this challenge here: [Why Letting Kids Fail May Be the Ultimate Parenting Win](#)

A Stanford-led study focuses on the importance of letting kids take the lead: [Why You Should Let Your Kids Take the Lead](#)



# Help Sessions - Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

When students are struggling in a class, help sessions are often the first suggested line of defense. But how should students use them? How should students prepare for them so that they are productive?

See the links below for recommendations:

