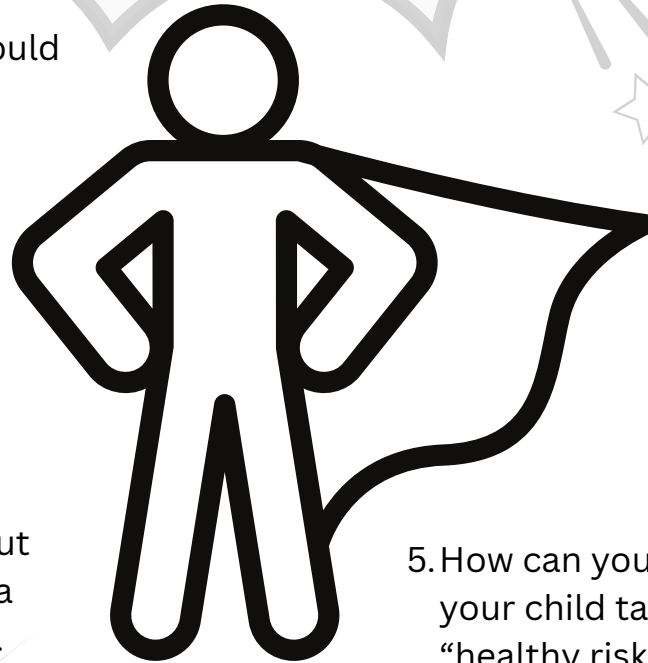


Middle School Superpowers

Raising Resilient Tweens in Turbulent Times

By Phyllis L. Fagell, LCPC



1. What superpower would you like your child to develop, why?

2. Which superpower did you possess in middle school? How did you develop that skill?

3. The author talks about being a “buffer,” not a “fixer,” for your child. Can you recall a time when you had to resist fighting a battle on behalf of your child? Describe. When should you intervene?

4. The author talks about “normalizing” behaviors such as “asking for help” and experiencing “challenges” in life. What other middle school behaviors could be normalized to help your tween know that they are not alone?

5. How can you help your child take “healthy risks” so they can be more Super Daring?

6. What were your “Ah Ha!” moments from the book?



Book Rating Scale



Additional Talking Points

- The author spoke a lot about personal values helping with decision-making (p.51; p.124). Try this activity at home.
- The author mentioned talking to your child about their strengths, verbalizing at least 5; (p. 175). Try this activity at home.
- Kids may be more open to talking if you reference movies, TV shows as examples...this creates more organic conversations about stereotypes, underdogs, decision-making. Try this strategy the next time you sit down to watch a show.
- p. 43 Try *normalizing* insecure feelings, p.73 help-seeking behaviors, p. 137 experiencing challenges, p.142 needing and asking for help. Students feel more confident when they know others are feeling the same way.
- (p.5) “Good judgment comes from experience; experience comes from bad judgment.” Discuss.
- (p.9) Tweens need more freedom to make mistakes, learn, and recover. Discuss.
- (p. 74) Discuss these statistics for establishing “school connectedness” (Super Belonging)
- Technology and Social Media: (p.134, 135) Asking your child questions...What do you want to do with the app? Assess the child’s readiness. Or ask, “Is the way you are using social media working for you? When you log off, do you feel better or worse about yourself?”

Ah-HA Moments from the Book:

- (p.22) “Feeling with someone is the best cure for depression.”
- (p.132) Family cohesion, parental support, strong identification with one’s own ethnic group...are buffers against suicidal thoughts.
- (p.156) Parents are not only a model for how to handle big emotions (so stay calm!), but they can protect them from self-harm. Having a warm, healthy relationship with caregivers is a protective factor.
- (p.185) Research shows...earlier bedtime protects against depression and suicidal ideation.
- (p.209) Forgiveness...can stop rage, rumination, improve academics, promote well-being, and peer acceptance
- (p.213) Most children who experience trauma develop resilience...” post-traumatic growth.”

Additional Tips:

- (p.158) Anytime you’re unsure what to say, stop talking and simply listen.
- (p.161) Super Healing: Coping “out loud,” model, share, be authentic with your child.
- (p.180) Goal-setting: 42% of people who write down their goals and regularly review them are more likely to achieve them.