



Youth  
Services™

# Helping Our Kids Navigate Life

Dawn Neylon  
Certified Prevention Specialist  
Power of Choice Coordinator  
360 Youth Services



Youth  
Services™

**PROVIDES  
LIFE CHANGING  
SERVICES TO YOUTH**

Through prevention education, counseling and shelter

# Lighthouse Parents

“Parents should be like lighthouses for their children, beacons of light on a stable shoreline from which they can safely navigate the world. We must make certain they don't crash against the rocks, but trust they have the capacity to learn to ride the waves on their own.”

Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg  
*Raising Kids to Thrive*



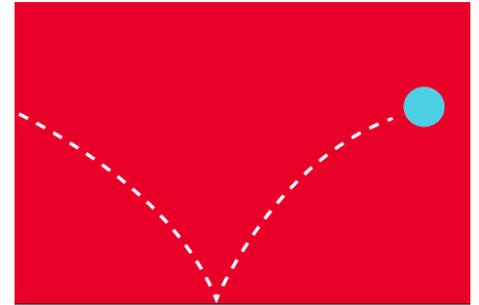
Youth  
Services™

# **Modeling is the *most effective* parenting tool**

"Parents are the ultimate role models for children. Every word, movement and action has an effect. No other person or outside force has a greater influence on a child than the parent."

Bob Keeshan

# Resilience



Resilience is the ability of an individual to overcome challenges of all kinds—trauma, tragedy, personal crises, ordinary life problems—and bounce back stronger, wiser, and more personally powerful.



Youth  
Services™

# Why is resilience important?

- It's about building skills for the future adult that our children will become
- Everyone faces difficulties in life
- Becoming resilient allows individuals to overcome adversity, AND to use those life challenges to become stronger, smarter and have greater potential to succeed and reach their goals
- Resilient individuals make healthier choices about risky behaviors like alcohol or other drug use
- Resilience is not something that you are or aren't born with, it is a group of skills that **each of us can learn and strengthen throughout our lifetime**



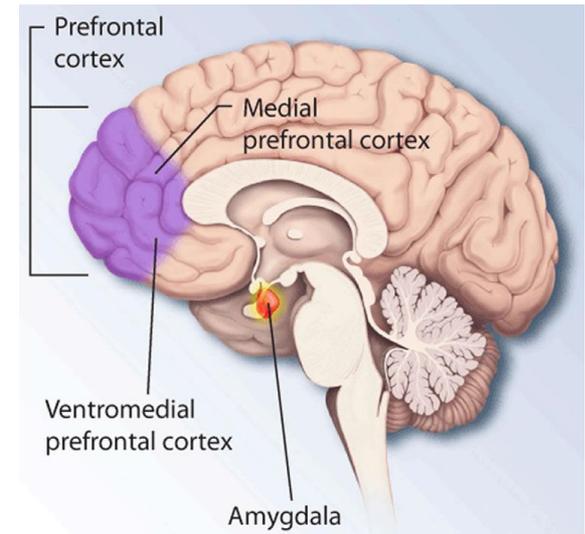
# Developmental Stages

- Infancy/Toddler - Physical
- Elementary age- Educational
- Adolescence- Brain
- Is there anything I can do to help them progress?



# Adolescent Brain Development

- Emotional Brain (amygdala)-  
The part of the brain responsible for emotion. Develops during adolescence and is in control
- Intellectual Brain (prefrontal cortex)-The part of the brain that manages self-control, logic, decision making and planning for the future. Isn't completely developed until about 25 years of age



# Adolescent Brain Development

- Emotional brain (amygdala)
  - ❖ In the moment
  - ❖ Not really thinking about the future
  - ❖ Wants to do what feels good right now
- Intellectual brain (pre-frontal cortex)
  - ❖ Uses information to make decisions
  - ❖ Is able to see how those decisions fit into the future
  - ❖ Able to make decisions that might be difficult even when it's not fun or happy



# Concrete thinkers/Egocentric

- Children & adolescents are concrete thinkers
- Not always able to process subtlety and innuendo.
- Don't always think about future consequences.
- It's about "me"
- Beginning to see possibilities, imagine the future and recognize that individual choices lead to specific outcomes
- Parents can challenge and help them grow

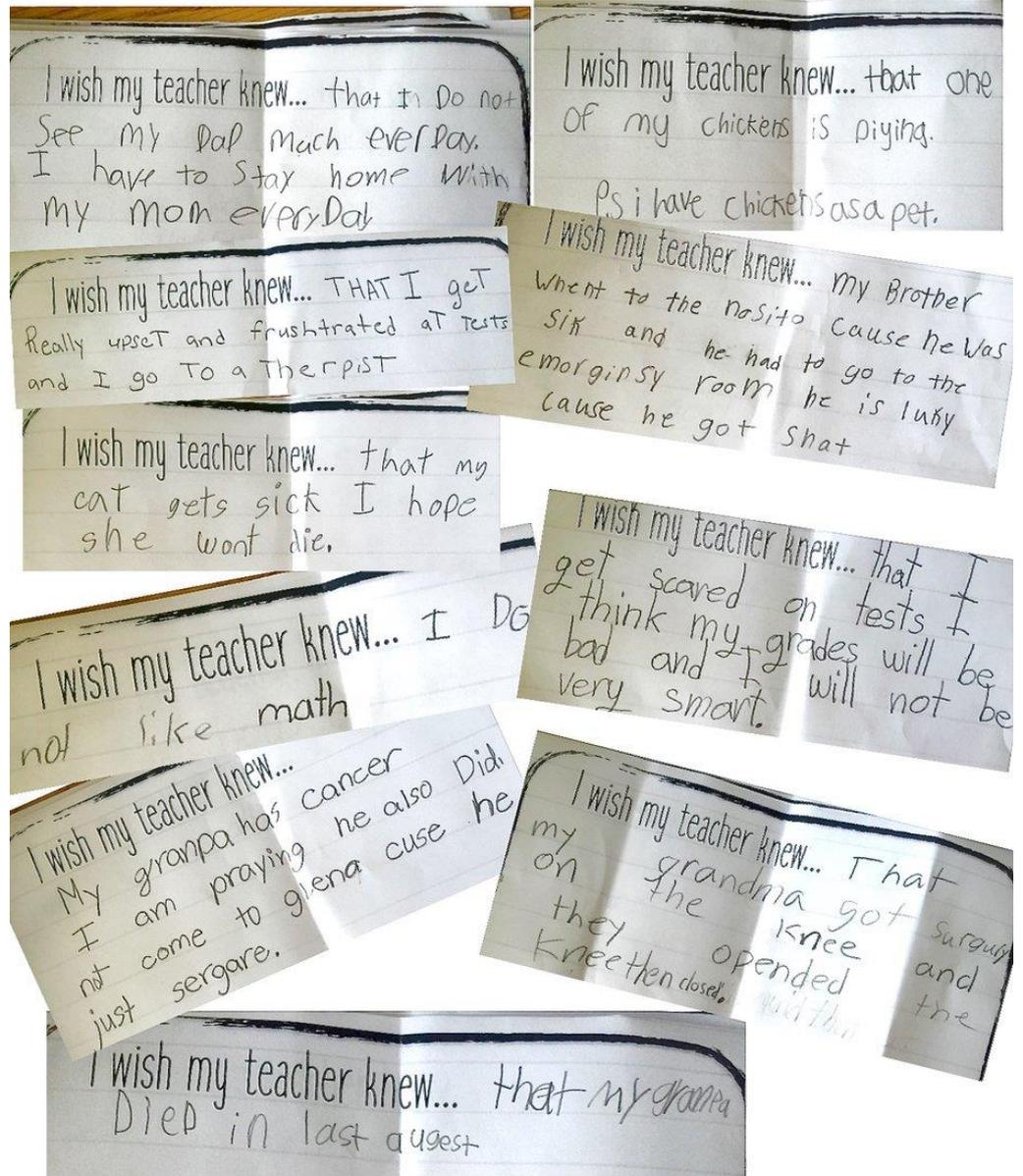


Youth  
Services™



**Our kids  
face many  
emotional  
challenges...**

**which can  
lead to  
stress and  
anxiety...**



**So, what can parents do?**





## The capacity of individuals to:

- Recognize their own and other people's emotions
- Discriminate between different feelings and label them appropriately
- Use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior
- Manage and/or adjust emotions to adapt environments or achieve one's goal(s)

# Recognize their own & other people's emotions

- My emotions are my own and they are an important part of who I am
- Other people have important emotions too
- Sometimes people have different emotional reactions to the same situation



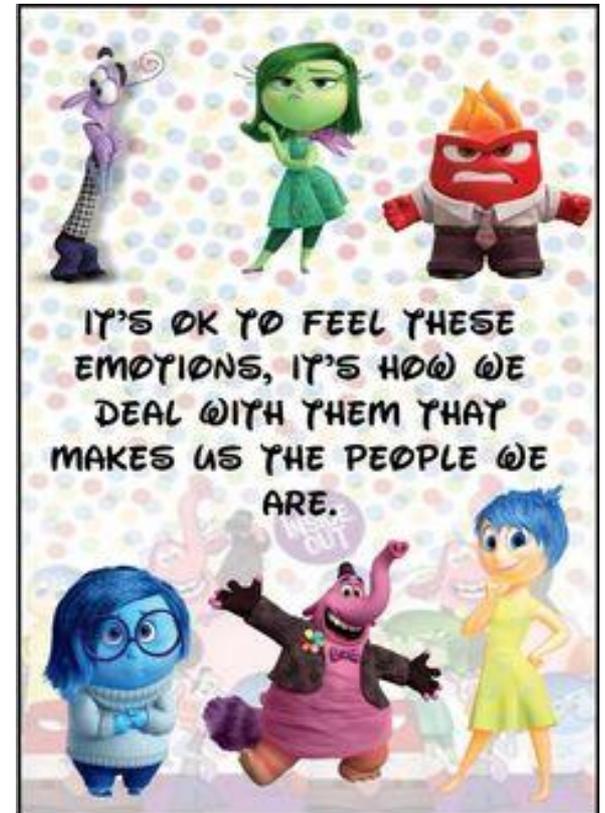
# Discriminate between different feelings and label them appropriately

- Emotions are more than “good,” “fine” or “bad”
- Being able to identify feelings gives us control over them
- Helps us to identify and predict the actions of others



# Use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior

- Emotions are “in control” at this point in **brain development**
- **Duplicate** actions and behaviors that produce **positive emotions**
- Find appropriate solutions to resolve negative feelings
- Use emotions to facilitate critical thinking or problem solving



## Manage and/or adjust emotions to adapt environments or achieve one's goal(s)

- Use information about emotion to respond appropriately in different environments
- Emotions can interfere with goals
- Manage or adjust



# Emotional Intelligence



- The ability to accurately perceive, control and evaluate emotions
- Allows us to develop personal and social competence through recognition (**awareness**) and regulation (**management**)
- Four Domains of Emotional Intelligence:
  - ❖ Self Awareness
  - ❖ Self Management
  - ❖ Social Awareness
  - ❖ Relationship Management

# Self Awareness

- ✓ Take time to reflect on your reaction to situations (parents assist)
- ✓ Ask others for feedback (both positive and negative)

# Self Management

- ✓ Problem solve to increase appropriate responses
- ✓ Did you react (emotional) or respond (logical)?

# Social Awareness

- ✓ Serve others
- ✓ Identify emotions of others, talk about “why” they might feel that way

# Relationship Management

- ✓ Be part of a team or group
- ✓ Use your skills and talents to “mentor” another



# Why is it important?



- High levels of EI have been linked to higher job performance and academic success
- Studies have shown that people with high EI demonstrate stronger mental health and more developed leadership skills
- Enhances empathy and builds stronger relationships
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Moderates conflict

# Stress

- We are all faced with stressors
- Resilient individuals cope with stress in positive ways.
- The stressors that our children face are very different than the ones their parents have
- Because of brain development, they process stress differently
- Is stress bad?



Youth  
Services™

# Effects of Stress

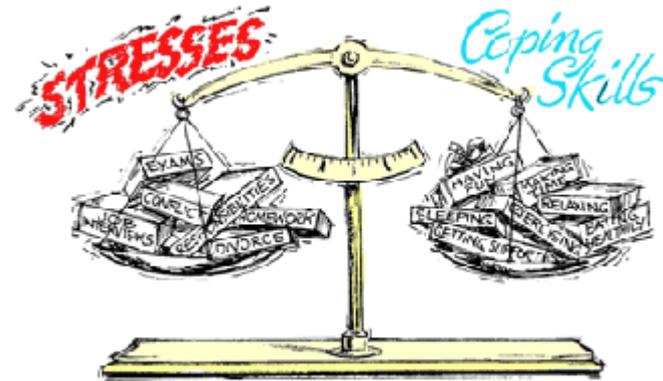
- Stress can motivate
- Our bodies were designed to help us survive during stressful situations
- Today's stressors aren't all physical
- We need to find healthy ways to manage stress
- Emotional awareness helps facilitate **healthy coping strategies**



# Healthy Coping

## What is it?

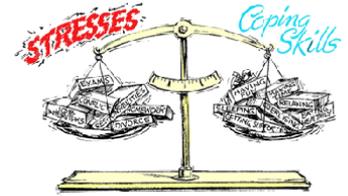
- Accurately identifying cause and severity of stressors
- Using effective strategies to manage stress
- Managing stress or challenges in healthy positive ways that result in relief from stress



Youth  
Services™

# Healthy Coping

## What can I do?



- Do I help my child understand the difference between a real crisis and something that just feels like an emergency?
- Do I guide my child to develop positive, effective coping strategies by modeling exercise, good nutrition, seeking help and adequate sleep?
- Do I recognize that for some young people, risky behaviors are attempts to alleviate their stress and pain?
- Do I model the response that sometimes the best thing to do is conserve energy and let go of the belief that I can tackle all problems?
- Do I create a family environment in which talking and sharing are safe, comfortable and productive?
- Do I listen without giving judgement or advice?



# Delayed Gratification

- Teaches children that they may have to wait to get what they want...and it sometimes doesn't happen at all
- Keeps focus on long-term rewards
- Helps them to see the value in long term planning and goals
- Means not giving our children everything they want—right now



Youth  
Services™

# **Modeling is the *most effective* parenting tool**

"Parents are the ultimate role models for children. Every word, movement and action has an effect. No other person or outside force has a greater influence on a child than the parent."

Bob Keeshan

# Extreme challenges and seeking help

- Parents can do all the right things, but still face challenges
- Don't let stigma or concerns about what others may think keep you from reaching out for support. The health of your family is more important than the opinions of others



# Resources

- **School counselors and social workers**
- [www.ThePowerofChoice.info](http://www.ThePowerofChoice.info) (newsletters, resource links)
- [www.360YouthServices.org](http://www.360YouthServices.org)
- *Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Kids Roots and Wings* by Kenneth R. Ginsburg, MD
- [www.FosteringResilience.com](http://www.FosteringResilience.com)



Youth  
Services™





THANK YOU

Dawn Neylon  
360 Youth Services  
Dneylon@360youthservices.org



Youth  
Services™