**Counselor’ s Corner**

**January 2020**



For further details or information contact your child’s school counselor:

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**Reframe Weaknesses as Hidden Strengths**

Convince your child that his/her so-called “weakness” is actually his/her strength. For example, a child may think being sensitive is a “weakness;” however, there is much skill and strength in being sensitive to others. Sensitive people can end up flourishing in artistic and altruistic endeavors. Foster resilience by modeling “non-conformity.” Being or feeling “different” may draw attention, but different doesn’t mean “broken.”

**Pick a Mantra or Song**  
Ruminating on pain can magnify it. A mantra and/or music can help kids combat intrusive, negative thoughts like “I’m useless.” Model positive affirmations and positive self-talk, such as “I deserve better.” Let your child choose their mantra or song, it gives them a sense of ownership and power.

**Encourage a Like-Minded Social Network**

Steer your kids towards activities where they are likely to make friends. This way they have the opportunity to connect to those with similar interest and curiosities. Also, seek out activities where your child has a high chance of success to build self-confidence.

**Mindful Word Choice**

Children need to know that the adults in their life both believe them and believe in them. Acknowledge their wounds without “interviewing for pain.” Choose to instill hope instead of focusing on the negative. Point out your child’s strengths and help them hone his/her/their social skills.\*\*

\*\*The Washington Post, “9 Ways Parents can Help Bullied Kids Learn Resilience”; by Phyllis L. Fagell, June 2017

**Building Resilience**

As the supportive adults in a child’s life, we have a great responsibility to role-model and teach skills related to resilience. Support is the key to recovery. “Building resilience — the ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress — can help our children manage stress and feelings of anxiety and uncertainty.”\* By building resilience in children, they are able to cope with difficult situations, learn from them and grow into more self-aware and more adaptable in various situations.

In order to foster resilience, youth need to perceive their adults as available and supportive. As a parent, you are your child’s first and most important teacher. You have the most influence in shaping your child’s sense of self-worth. Below are some skills needed for building resilience.

\* Teach social skills, which includes both friendship skills and developing empathy.

\* Teach problem solving skills and decision making. Encourage youth to help other people.

\* Teach them self-awareness and skills for managing emotion

The first start to helping kids build resilience is to help them change the narrative. Help your child reframe the situation. Shape it so they see themselves as the main character in their story. The unkind/hurtful thing that happened is just one small part of it. You are not dismissing what happened, but you are reframing the unkind thing as to not give it so much power. It is suggested to use literature to parallel the lessons, to underscore themes where the hero learns and emerges from their struggles.

\*American Psychological Association