



Positive Parenting Understanding Mental Health

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Future Directions: Counselling, Consultancy, Training

Child Developmental Stages

- ▶ 6–12yrs
 - Social skills
 - Success – learning & physical
 - Morality – rules to learn what is right/wrong
 - Role Models for future identity
 - Preparing for more independence – adolescence
 - Taking more responsibility
 - Abstract thinking – creative play, writing, imagination
 - Using language in various social situations

Adolescent Development

- ▶ Self identity – who am I? My body/sexuality
- ▶ What can I do? – Independence
- ▶ Moral decision making
- ▶ Separation & attachment
- ▶ Hierarchy of needs changes – food/shelter – love/self worth

Building Resilience

- ▶ How can we help our children ‘bounce’ when things don’t go the way we would like?
- ▶ I Have – I Am – I Can (Grotberg)
- ▶ Encourage by finding Strengths
- ▶ What’s working well

Resilient Children

- ▶ Self confidence
- ▶ Sense of competence
 - ▶ Resourceful
- ▶ Normalise instead of personalise
 - ▶ Optimistic explanatory style
 - ▶ Hopeful
 - ▶ Understanding
 - ▶ Appropriate use of humour
 - ▶ Big picture people

Promoting Resilience

- ▶ School connectedness
- ▶ Peer connectedness
- ▶ Teacher connectedness
- ▶ Positive family / school links
- ▶ Family connectedness
- ▶ One caring competent adult outside the family
- ▶ Community connectedness
- ▶ Religious involvement

Explanatory Style

- ▶ How we explain events that happen to us or in our world
- ▶ Modelling is vital especially at early stages of development

Optimistic Thinking

- ▶ Temporary vs permanence – sometimes vs always
- ▶ Specific vs Pervasive
- ▶ External vs Internal – general self blame vs behavioural self blame

Flourish

- ▶ Authentic Happiness – 3 lives
 - Pleasurable life
 - Engaged life
 - Purposeful life
- ▶ Being Present, focused, motivated, involved
- ▶ Authenticity – we gain gratification from positive emotions from practicing our signature strengths

24 Strengths

- ▶ Look from a Strengths perspective not a deficit perspective
- ▶ Some strengths are innate, some are learned
- ▶ Some bring us energy some we work hard at
- ▶ Notice, celebrate top strengths brings more strengths into the light
- ▶ Strengths often produce good outcomes for us and for those around us
- ▶ www.authentic happiness.org – VIA Character Strengths – for children/for adults



Mental Health Continuum

Building mental fitness & capacity

- ▶ Recognising and using Strengths – this is the ‘real’ me
- ▶ Encourage independence – choices & decisions
- ▶ Connectedness with others – caring adult outside the family
- ▶ Building Emotional Intelligence – knowledge of my emotions, impacts on others, others’ emotions’ impact on me
- ▶ Being present – here & now, not in past events, nor in future possibilities

Early Childhood

- Unstructured play in a natural environment
- Quiet time alone
- As little TV and passive visual activity as possible
- Lots of magical stimulation, imaginary games and play before 6 years of age
- No inappropriate TV programs or videos

- Give lots of genuine praise & encouragement
- Don't worry about little things such as messy bedrooms or what they wear
- Offer guidance and direction – not lectures
- Accept their different personalities
- Trust them
- Show affection – suitable to age
- When they make a decision you aren't happy with it doesn't mean they didn't listen – they just didn't agree

- Spend time alone with them
- Allow and respect their privacy
- Be a parent not a ‘best friend’
- Pre plan/ agree on TV viewing times & shows
- Set limits – phone, tv, computer, internet
- Listen more, interrupt less
- Don’t deny the child inside yourself



“One of the reasons why adults should look as if they’re having fun, is to give kids a reason to want to grow up”

Patch Adams



Thank You
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