

COUNSELING CORNER

Monthly School Newsletter from Lutheran Counseling Services

Resilience Building

For the 2020-2021 school year, Counseling Corner will focus on **RESILIENCE!**



Car Conversations

In the car, classroom or dinner table, try some of these ideas to promote resilience in yourself, your family or your class.



◆ Parents and teachers can dive deeper into each of the 7 "Cs" [here](#). Which of the 7 is the strongest in your family or classroom? Which one may take the most effort to build? Which do you display most strongly in your daily life? Which may be lacking? Talk about these 7 traits as a family or class, and brainstorm ways you have shown each one, as well as ways to strengthen each in the future.

◆ To build resilience through the 7 Cs, write them each down on paper pieces/

The Greatest Gift

In a month that is often focused on gifts, we can take a different perspective as we connect to our year-long theme of resilience to think past the wrapping paper and ribbons. Resilience expert and pediatrician Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg hones in on the importance of adults serving as role models for children and teens in modeling self-care and demonstrating resilience. He shares that this is the **greatest gift** we can give our children as parents, educators, or anyone important in the life of a child.

Nothing parents say is as important as what children see them doing. -Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg

So what should we be doing? According to Dr. Ginsburg, children need 7 "Cs" to build resilience, and these are to be built at all times, not only when a problem has arisen. He focuses on building each of these traits in children. Think of how many ways you encourage these traits in yourself as well as in children in your life:

Competence Confidence Connection

Character Contribution Coping Control

As you look over the list, which traits show up most strongly in your own life? Which are weaker than you would like?

These 7 traits allow children to not only survive hardships and challenges, but to really thrive in their own lives. They can have the same impact on your life! And research repeatedly demonstrates that adults can't teach kids what they don't possess themselves. Which of these traits would you like to gift to your kids? How can you practice it in your own life?

popsicle sticks/ stones and pick one out daily at the dinner table or during a classroom meeting. Share what that trait means, how each member has demonstrated that trait, and how it could be put into practice in the next few days.

◆ As a family or class, draw an imaginary line down the room with the far end of the line representing 100%, the opposite end representing 0% and the middle percentages filling in the rest of the line. Read each of the 7 Cs, describing them in an age appropriate way. Then have each family or class member (including teacher & parents) line up on the continuum to rate their strength in each of the traits. Have a few of the highest raters share ideas about how to build that trait or share a story of how they strengthened that trait in themselves.

◆ Discuss how the wise men brought Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Discuss which of these gifts each family or class member would want to receive and why, and discuss which of the 7 Cs each would want to be gifted with and why.



Adding on to the above "Cs", Dr. Ginsberg adds an additional trait during this coronavirus pandemic. While always important, he notes that it is especially transformative now: Co-Regulation. As children or teens become dysregulated due to uncertainty or the challenge of managing changes and big emotions, they look to adults in their lives to "borrow their calm". From toddlers to teens, they look around to see how others are managing a situation and base their response off of others' responses. Using an example of flying in an airplane, he asks how you know if turbulence is OK, answering that you look to the flight attendants to watch their response. If they continue serving peanuts, you know you are OK. Consider who is watching you this month. Consider what they are seeing. Find a way to share your calm, even as the world is full of uncertainty and challenges.

Dr. Ginsburg uses another metaphor to connect to kids at this time, especially when things seem overwhelming. He asks a child to find a stick and to snap it to represent feeling overwhelmed and "at a breaking point". This can be a time to talk about what has led to those feelings. He then suggests having the child grab a handful of sticks and hold them together, trying to break them. What you find is that the bundle of sticks does not break. The sticks are strong when grouped together. This is also true of people. When we come alongside and support kids (and adults), we can collectively handle more than we can individually.

Consider as a family who might feel alone this month, and devise a way to offer support. Is it a family member, neighbor, classmate, work colleague, a resident of an assisted living home, or someone else? How can you come together to offer support this month?

Ginsburg KR & Jablow MM. (2011) *Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Kids Roots and Wings*. Elks Grove, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics.

Dr. Ken Ginsburg - Building Resilience in Challenging and Turbulent Times; retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mIRWz4n4V5k>

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