

COUNSELING CORNER

Monthly school newsletter from Lutheran Counseling Services

Resilience Building

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

RESILIENCE!



Free Call-In Line

Talk to a counselor
Monday - Wednesday
between 3 - 5 p.m.
Call (407) 644-4692 ext. 5
Schedule your call by e-
mailing oncall@lcsfl.com

Car Conversations

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



◆ Talk as a family or as a class about how the different parts of the brain work. When reading a story or watching a movie, pause to share what each part of the brain is doing. Notice that the parts work together at the same time. As a challenge, notice if a character has a Fight/Flight/Freeze/Faint moment and if anything helps calm down the overactive parts of the brain.

Back to Brain Basics

To understand human behavior and mental health, we often have to go back to basics.... Brain basics.

Our brains are structured with different regions that each address their own tasks, yet also work together. A brief overview could be to divide the brain into 3 regions:

- **Brain Stem:** At the back of the head near the neck, this area is responsible for bodily reflexes and main functions of keeping the body alive, such as breathing, sleep & digestion.
- **Limbic System:** In the middle of the brain, this area is the emotional area of the brain that alerts us to danger (the Fight/Flight/Freeze/Faint response is triggered by this area)
- **Neocortex:** The outer area of the brain, made up of ridges and folds, is responsible for complex thinking, processing, problem solving, creativity and much more!

Our brains alert us to threats in our environment by sending warning signs that alert the rest of the body to prepare to fight a threat (such as a wild animal predator), to flight (by running away from the threat), to freeze (getting caught in panic mode like a deer in headlights) or to faint due to the brain and body being overwhelmed by the threat. When the threat is neutralized quickly, the body returns to its state of calm.

What we know through neuroscience is that for kids who have a lot of difficult or traumatic experiences in childhood as their brain is developing, their brain adapts to keep a heightened state of alertness



◆ With middle & high schoolers, watch [this video](#) about resilience. How is resilience defined? Who can help build resilience? How does stress play into resilience? Where is your starting position for resilience? What positive supports do you have or could you add to tip towards resilience? (socially, opportunities, self-care, nutrition, sleep, exercise, enjoyable activities, etc.)



◆ Talk with younger children about resilience as “bouncing back” from something difficult. Find a ball that bounces. Use chalk to write challenges you have bounced back from on the ground. Bounce the ball on the chalk and notice how it falls and bounces up again. Can you get it to bounce higher than it started? Have you bounced back from something and ended up better than before the challenge?

LCS is hosting a Virtual 5K to support our Older Adult ministries. Sign up yourself, your family or a team of 5 [here](#).

Thank you to [pexels.com](#) for all images.



(overbuilding the limbic system area) and makes less connections in the neocortex (the problem solving and more “academic” area of the brain). Children with overactive limbic systems may have trouble concentrating, solving problems, thinking creatively, remembering important information, and so on due to their adverse experiences dulling the functioning of this brain region while it was developing.

Parents and teachers who are aware of brains development can put practices into place to help children’s brains function better, and restore peace and calm to an overstressed brain. Neuroscience continues to show that our brains change over time and can rewire themselves! See if you can make brain healthy practices a routine in your home or classroom as often as practicing reading, writing and arithmetic!

Here are some ways to do that:

- Learn more about brain structure from Dan Siegel (author of [The Whole Brain Child](#), [The Yes Brain](#), and many more neuroscience based parenting books) by watching [this video](#).
- Use several of Dr. Siegel’s strategies with upset kids (or adults), such as Connect & Redirect (connect emotionally and then bring in lessons or consequences) or Name it to Tame it (name the emotions and talk about what is upsetting, guiding brains to make sense of the experience and introduce more logic). A list of all strategies from [The Whole Brain Child](#), is [here](#). Or check out the LCS [parenting webinar](#) from 2019 about this book. Ideas for the next webinar? [E-mail us!](#)
- Generate a list of positive supports for kids and adults, including some that are already in place and some to add. Regular physical activity through an enjoyable sport, eating healthfully, getting enough restful sleep, having supportive relationships and coaching through challenges can be helpful strategies. What are some other supports?
- Take a look at this infographic of [10 Ways to Develop Resilience](#) and pick a few to implement this month.

Finding ways to prioritize brain health and emotional functioning can reap many benefits. Add these strategies to your family or classroom routine. Watch how supporting positive brain functioning helps to support your positive functioning overall!

Lutheran Counseling Services, Inc.,
a nonprofit organization, has a
mental health crisis fund.
Could you [offer support](#)?

[Donate](#)

(407) 644-4692

www.lcsfl.com

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