

Building Resiliency In Our Youth & Learning to Help Our Children



Gilbert High School's Parent Workshop on Youth Stress & Resilience

By The JEM Foundation

with Vanessa Ridgewell, MS, NCC, LPC



PURPOSEFUL LIFE COUNSELING

Introduction

- The JEM Foundation – An all volunteer non-profit
 - Ben and Denise Denslow
- Vanessa Ridgewell, MS, NCC, LPC



Jacob Edward Machovsky

- **What is Resiliency: the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties.**
- **Resilient children can rise above challenging circumstances and have the ability to recover from setbacks, i.e., bounce back**
- **Resilient does not mean perfect or invulnerable**



Challenges Teens Face

- Academic pressures
- Social pressures
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Loss
- Divorce
- Moving
- Self-esteem & body image
- Stress
- School violence
- Sex
- Eating disorders
- Single-family households
- Dating & relationships
- Sexual identity and orientation
- Trauma
- Social status
- Isolation
- World unrest



Traits of a Resilient Child

- Positive self-esteem
- Healthy relationships
- Ability to care for others
- Effective problem-solving skills
- Able to cope with change
- Ability to make better decisions
- Understands that mistakes happen and they can learn from them
- Maintains a positive outlook
- Confident
- Can ask for help



How parents can help

Make Connections – Spend quality time with your child. When a child has a robust support system, they feel secure and empowered to seek guidance.

Empower them to help others – When teens feel helpless, assisting others can strengthen them. Find age-appropriate volunteer work or find a task they can master at home.

Maintain a daily routine – Structure provides stability. As your child gets older, encourage them to develop a regimen that works for them. This also provides them with choices that help them feel more secure.

Take a break – Our teens face a lot of pressures, and sometimes they need a break. Just as adults take mental health days, your teen may need a day to decompress. Look for burnout in your teen and encourage a break if you feel they need one or allow for occasional breaks if they come to you.

Teach Self-care - Self-care is critical for all of us. Educate your child on self-care and brainstorm some ways they can care for themselves (eating right, proper sleep, exercise, time with friends, meditation, reading, writing, etc.).

Label emotions – we all feel emotions, and it is essential to teach our children that emotions are OK. Helping them label what they are feeling can help them make sense of it. Help them work through negative emotions and help them understand they often don't last long.



How parents can help, Continued

Resist the urge to fix-it – When our children come to us, we often lecture or explain. Try asking questions instead. When you discuss the problem with your child, you help them think through the issue and come up with solutions.

Teach Problem-solving skills – Teach children that it is OK to ask for help, and it is OK to need help but work through problems with them. When facing an issue, work with them to come up with a list of ideas and weigh the pros and cons.

Embrace mistakes, yours, and theirs – Mistakes are a normal part of life. Not accepting mistakes can create kids that are terrified of failing. Risk avoidance is unhelpful. We all learn from our mistakes. It may be helpful to talk about an error you made from which you learned.

Experience Nature – Studies show that spending time in nature can reduce stress. Go for hikes together, or a simple walk, take a bike ride, or go for a picnic but find time to enjoy the outdoors.

Exercise – Exercise strengthens not only the body but also the mind. It is also a great stress reducer. Encourage regular exercise.

Talk about something normal–You don't always need to talk about serious issues when your child is struggling, sometimes they just want to feel normal and talk about regular, mundane topics.



What do you think a child in crisis looks like?





Signs we don't always talk about

- Hygiene goes downhill.
- Drastic changes in behavior are happening but you can't seem to put your finger on it.
- Your "mom and dad" radar are going off, you know something is not right. Trust your intuition and remember, that you are your child's best and sometimes only advocate.

More common signs of crisis

- ANXIETY
- DISTURBED SLEEP OR CHANGES IN SLEEPING HABITS
- ISOLATION
- UNEXPLAINED RAGE OR ANGER
- UNUSUAL SENSITIVITY
- HOPELESSNESS
- TALK OF SUICIDE (SUICIDAL IDEATION)
- TALK OF DEATH OR FASCINATION WITH DYING
- IRRITABILITY
- MOOD CHANGES, INCLUDING IRRATIONAL MOODS OR IMPROVED MOOD (THIS MAY BE ESPECIALLY TRUE OF SOMEONE STRUGGLING WITH SUICIDAL IDEATION)
- USE OR INCREASED USE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL
- WITHDRAWING RECKLESS BEHAVIOR



**PLEASE NOTE THAT EVERYONE IS UNIQUE AND WILL NOT DEMONSTRATE THE SAME SYMPTOMS OR BEHAVIORS*

What to do if your child is in crisis

1. Get your child professional help
 - Talk to their pediatrician for guidance
 - Take them to a mental health professional
2. Provide emotional support
 - Spend quality time with your child
 - Encourage open and honest conversations
 - Listen to what your child has to say without judgment
 - Acknowledge their inner struggles
3. Encourage a healthy lifestyle including exercise, healthy meals, and regular sleep
4. Help them feel connected
 - Spend time as a family
 - Encourage spending time with friends
 - Encourage attending social activities
5. Be patient with your child and yourself
6. Engage with your child's school
7. Educate yourself
8. Show lots of love and acceptance
9. Monitor their social media for signs of anxiety or depression
10. Show them lots of love and attention



Resources

Teen Lifeline 602.248.8336 (TEEN), Statewide in AZ 800.248.8336

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1.800.273.8255

Crisis Text Line, Text Talk to 74174

211.org

Community Bridges 480.834.0468

AZ Crisis Line (Maricopa) 602.427.4600

MIKID 602.253.1240

FITT (Families in This Together) Parent/Caregiver Support Group by JEM 480.930.1733

Trevor Project (LGBTQ) 1.866.488.7386

National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline 1.866.331.9474

La Frontera Empact Suicide Prevention Center Crisis Hotline 480.784.1500

Tempe Youth Resource Center 602.263.7654

Parent Support AZ 480.382.4020

Marc Community Resources 480.994.4407





Contact

- For more information, or to make a donation please visit thejemfoundation.com or call 480-930-1733
- To obtain a copy of tonight's presentation please visit our website under support/parentsupport
- To speak with Vanessa Ridgewell, or make an appointment call 480-480-444-8067



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