

Letting your kids fly: Building resiliency and the skills to succeed

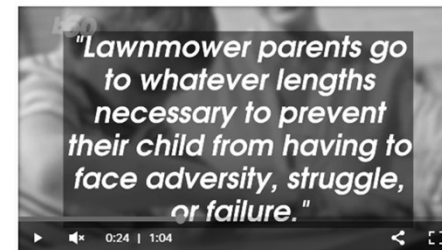
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About the Presenter

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 - Certified Clinical Trauma Professional

Self-esteem is not a lesson we teach kids, but is a neurochemical response we rob them of when we don't let them do things or face challenges on their own.



"I think everybody has been a lawnmower parent at one time," Hudson said. "Even teachers because they're parents, too. It's a natural tendency to want to help kids."

Parenting Styles Have Changed

- Used to think "failure and tough times built character"
- Now we don't want to ever see our kids struggle
 - We are creating a generation who panics or shuts down with the smallest failure
 - No appropriate coping skills so they turn to addiction, blame and internalization to cope
- Are we spending as much time on emotional skills as we are academic skills?
 - 60% of college students said they wished their parents had taught them emotional skills. They need these skills- to reach their potential
- It's becoming more common for parents to intervene even when the children become young adults- going on job interviews, negotiating salaries- because they can't let their child fail since they never have done so in the past

What Message are We Sending to Kids?

<https://www.today.com/video/mom-sues-school-after-son-didn-t-make-varsity-soccer-team-1334712387849?v=raila&>



What does Research Say?

- Eastern Illinois University, Pautler, 2017
 - Helicopter parenting = **protecting the child from risks, removing obstacles, and managing the child's emotions and mood**
 - 'Helicopter parents' tend to think that they are doing what is best for their college-aged offspring by ensuring their success and happiness
 - "Helicopter parenting" was
 - Positively correlated with depression and anxiety in college students
 - Negatively correlated with self-efficacy
 - Children with over-involved parents feel less competent coping with life and its stressors
 - Parents send the message that their child is helpless

Different Types of Helicopter Parents

- Consumer advocate parents
 - Request/demand anything that they think could benefit them or their child. If these parents do not obtain what they think their child is entitled to, they will seek 'consumer justice' by making threats
- Quality or fairness advocates
 - Ask for equal treatment of their child but imply the desire for better than equal treatment. This type of 'helicopter parent' expects the best for their child and view any difficulties their child encounters (e.g., bad grades) as the university's fault.
- Vicarious college students
 - Parents who may have missed out on college experiences and want to experience them vicariously through their children's experiences (e.g., attending every sports activity).

Somers (2010)

Real Life Examples – Parents are:

- writing papers for their college students
- checking cell phone and & text message history
- attending classes for their children when they were unable to (whether because they were sick or other reasons)
- attending office hours and arguing grades
- willing to cheat to get their child into college (aka the recent scandal)
- seeing that the "dot" hasn't moved, calling to make sure their college student is awake for class
- calling professors to help negotiate roommate disagreements
- writing cover letters & resume to apply for their children to get a job
- showing up at a job interview with their young adult
- calling the boss to ask why their child did not get the promotion

Self-Determination Theory

- People have 3 inherent psychological needs that are necessary for healthy development and functioning
 - Autonomy
 - The need to be in control of their lives
 - Competence
 - The needs to be effective in dealing with their environment
 - Relatedness
 - The need to have close, affectionate relationships with others
- When these needs are met people tend to be more satisfied with life and exhibit lower levels of depression and anxiety
- Helicopter parenting can invade & hinder a child's autonomy and competence

Ryan & Deci, 2000

Self•Situation•Supports•Strategies

- Self
 - Are we capable?
 - What do we think of ourselves?
- Supports
 - Do we have a good support system?
- Situation
 - Have we experienced a situation like this before?
- Strategies
 - Do we have strategies that have worked in the past?

The way we think about The Four Ss of Resilience determines our response to any challenge.

Academic Skills Needed for College

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills
- Research Skills
- Desire and ability to write well (in all subject areas)
- Ability to read deeply a large amount of material
- Change in focus from getting the "A" to learning deeply and applying knowledge
 - You can't Google your way through college

Tips from a College Professor

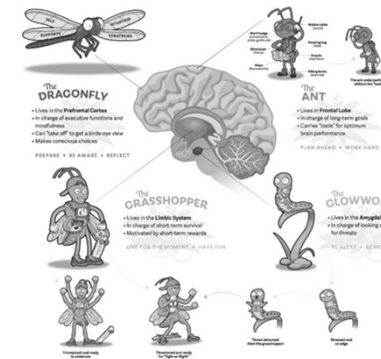
Personal Skills Needed for College

- High Emotional Intelligence
 - Self-Awareness
 - Self-Regulation
 - Motivation
 - Empathy
 - Social Skills
- Growth Mindset
- Strong Self-Efficacy (belief in one's capacity to succeed in a certain situation)
- Grit
- College success skills are based more on "habits of mind" than on academic skills

Tips from a College Professor

The Resilient Mindset Model™

Created by an educator, Donna Volpitta, Ed.D., a neuroscientist, Pincy Quadros Mennella, Ph.D. and a designer, Dian Wessels.



This model is used to help people make **mindfully resilient choices**.

Mindfulness is the **focusing** of **attention** and **awareness**.

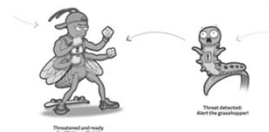
The idea behind the model is that by becoming consciously aware of what is happening in the brain, **we are empowered to make more mindful, intentional choices**.

Social Threats and Rewards for the Brain: **REACTS**

Respect • Equity • Alliances • Control • Territory • Similarity

The brain interprets physical threats and social threats in the same way. When any one of those threats is present, the glowworm switches control of the brain from the ant to the grasshopper for fight/flight mode.

Social Threats =
cyberbullying, news reports,
social media, etc.



Priming our brains for addiction, anxiety & depression

- #1: Lack of "unstructured time"
 - Schedules are packed with structured activities
 - Our "down time" is filled with electronic devices
 - Higher level thinking pathways (executive functions) are not being forged
 - The brain needs "unstructured time" to develop these pathways, which help to develop a healthy brain
- #2: Protection from struggle
 - Without struggle, we don't experience the large burst of dopamine and serotonin
 - Serotonin is key for helping us to develop a sense of purpose

Priming our brains for addiction, anxiety & depression

- #3: Priming the limbic system for short-term rewards
 - Short-term rewards are over-feeding our limbic system:
 - Sugar, fast-food, social media, new stories, cell phones, etc.
 - The limbic system is the emotional brain and is in charge of short-term decisions/survival, so it loves all of this stuff
 - Each time we get a little short-term reward (say a piece of candy, a social media "like," or a piece of juicy gossip to share), our limbic system gets a little burst of dopamine, which tells it to seek out more.
 - The more short-term rewards, the more we begin to seek them out, distracting us from those longer-term, harder to reach rewards.
 - This primes the brain for addiction.

Priming our brains for addiction, anxiety & depression

- #4: Starving the cortex
 - The cortex is in charge decisions that are going to benefit us in the long-term
 - Ex: studying for the test, working on the project or leaving the party to get a good night's sleep
 - The cortex needs a lot of care in order to work effectively
 - We don't make our best long-term decisions when we are not taking care of the cortex.
 - Some of the things that help the cortex work effectively are
 - Sleep, focused attention, good nutrition, in-person social interactions, and exercise

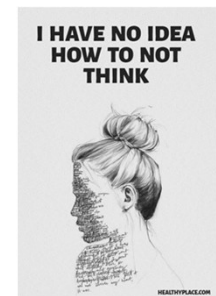
Priming our brains for addiction, anxiety & depression

- #5 Over-triggering the amygdala
 - Same response to social threats & rewards as physical threats & rewards
 - When we experience social threats, we get ready for fight or flight and short-term decisions.
 - Fight or flight comes with neurochemicals that help us react
 - Adrenaline (a message to move)
 - Cortisol (a stress-response message to be on high-alert)
 - Constant stream of potential social threats (cyberbullying, news reports, social media) has primed our amygdalas to be on high alert.
 - With our cell phones, threats are always at our fingertips.

Things Parents Can Look Out For



Hidden Depression



High Functioning Anxiety

Why is Mindfulness Important?



YouTube - Under Pressure - Mindfulness for Teens
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJ-ZAyxD9Y>

Podcasts

- How to Talk to Kids About Anything
 Dr. Robin Silverman
 - What to do (and what not to do) to become mentally strong parents with Amy Morin, LCSW
 - How to Prepare Kids to Lead & Succeed in a Changing World
 - How to Talk to Kids about Sports with Dr. Ross Flowers
 - How to Raise Happy, Confident, Resilient Kids with Sue Atkins
 - How to Talk to Kids about Stress Management with Lori Lite

Website

<https://collegehoodadvice.com/>

 Collegehood Advice



Books



Documentary



Race to Nowhere / Available on



YouTube
From \$3.99



Amazon Prim...
From \$3.99



Google Play ...
From \$3.99



iTunes
From \$4.99

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