

STRESS HAPPENS. YOU GOT THIS!

THERE'S
A HERO
IN YOU

YOU
ARE
BRAVE

YOU ARE
A ROLE
MODEL

2018 DECEMBER B NEWSLETTER

Brought to you by Kohl's Cares® and Beacon Health System

Over much of the past year, these newsletters have been highlighting facts and myths about Stress. They have addressed questions such as: What is stress? Why does it happen? Is it all bad? How can our children develop resilience in the face of Stress? When is stress helpful? Please feel free to visit www.stresshappens.org to review past newsletters to find some answers to these questions. The website also features helpful videos about stress management, as well as links to health care professionals and mental health organizations.

Stress Provides Teachable Moments: Building Life Skills

Ever since our children were born, we have worked to protect them. For example, when our children were first able to walk, we would hold them back from a busy road to keep them safe from harm. As they got older, we began to teach them about the busy roads and how to be safe around them. We knew that we would not always be there to protect them from traffic, so we gave them the skill to cross the road safely. When we give our children the gift of self-sufficiency, we teach them to say, "I got this!"

Stress presents a similar challenge, and opportunity, for us to prepare our children to proceed into life with the skills and knowledge to survive, and even thrive. As caregivers, when our children encounter stressful situations, our challenge is to decide: When do they need protection from the stress? When do they need instruction on how to manage the stress? When do they need compassion? When do they need to experience the consequences of their own choices?

Your Experience: Wisdom for Our Youth

The good news is, you have been answering these questions for your child all along, as the traffic example suggests. As your child gets older, these questions can get trickier to answer, but just as your child learns from experience, you have, too. When your child experiences a stressor, whether school work, peers, family strains, their own self-doubt, or more, you have the opportunity to decide—is there a lesson to be learned? Can this situation help them learn a new skill, increase resiliency, or build self-reliance?

As parents and caregivers, we work hard to do what we feel is best. Sometimes we feel that despite our best efforts, our efforts aren't good enough for our kids. Keep in mind... our children don't need, or even expect, us to be perfect. What they need is to know that they are loved, and that the adults they love believe in them. What does this mean? Do what you can to be a role model for how you want your

children to act when they face a challenge. Be sure they know that you love them, even when they aren't 'perfect.' Coach them through difficult experiences and help them find their own skills. Also, and very importantly, praise them for their efforts, not their results. Not everyone can get the 'A' or score the most points in a game. But the true winners are the ones who step up, stay in the game, and do their best. In other words, stress happens, but...you GOT This!



NEXT MONTH

Healthy Boundaries program starts in the fifth grade classrooms. Start now to have conversations about what is a boundary? How do you set healthy boundaries? Stay tuned for more information.

