

Coping Together:

How to Support My Child With Their Mental Health Challenges

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+ The idea



- Family as a support/relief or as a deterrent?
- “My family won’t help.”
- “Don’t even tell my parents... they won’t care”
- “My mom is super supportive. I can tell her anything.”

+ My Project

- **Family functioning** and **parental competence** positively predicted level of functioning in children
- How can we better support parents so that they can have the tools to better support their son or daughter?





Skyview Therapeutic Day School



- 18 Students
- Each mental health challenge and each adolescent presents *unique* needs and symptoms
- Different cultural backgrounds
 - First generation families
 - Strong religious backgrounds
 - Monolingual parents
- Varying family make-ups





Severely Emotionally Disturbed

- **5-26%** of children and adolescents in United States have experienced a mental health difficulty
- **9-13%** have experienced a *serious* emotional disorder





Interviews



- Is it difficult to discuss your mental health challenges with your parent?
 - If so, what makes it difficult?
 - If not, what makes you feel comfortable talking to them?
- What would you like to tell your parents in regards to improving communication?
- How can they better support you?

+ Responses

- “I want them to be more gentle”
- “I want them to have an open mind”
- “I don’t want them to be scared when I disclose things”
- “I don’t want them to call the police whenever I say I’m depressed or suicidal”
 - “Suicidal” vs. “I’m going to kill myself”
- “If I have social anxiety, soothe me. Don’t get mad at me.”
- “You’re only 15. You don’t know anything”
- “Leave it to God”



+ Research

Grief Symptoms

- Loss of child's former or idealized personality
- Loss of certainty about their youth's future
- Loss of parental confidence and control
- Loss of financial stability
- Limited chances to engage with their children

Participation

- Knowledge
- Coping strategies for dealing with child's mental illness
- Family cooperation
- Self-perception

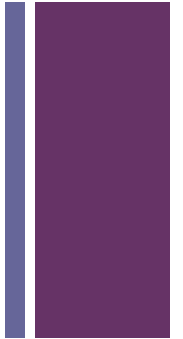
+ You are NOT alone!

- Parents who felt supported by others shaped their ability to cope



+ Family Therapy

- Psychoeducation
- Normalize their experience
- Coping strategies
- Collaborate with primary therapist



+ Youth Mental Health First Aid

- FREE!
- 8-hour public education training program
- How to help a young person who may be experiencing a mental health challenge or crisis



+ Parent Project[®]

- Free, 12-week course t
- Offered in English and Spanish
- Free childcare and dinner
- Learn and practice skills such as:
 - appropriate ways to discipline
 - preventing or stopping alcohol, drug and tobacco use
 - improving communication skills
 - improving grades and school attendance





A worthwhile
+ investment with
lasting benefits



References



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