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”
  - “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”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grief Symptoms</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of child’s former or idealized personality</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of certainty about their youth’s future</td>
<td>Coping strategies for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of parental confidence and control</td>
<td>dealing with child’s mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of financial stability</td>
<td>illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited chances to engage with their children</td>
<td>Family cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-perception</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
- 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


