

# SDUHSD MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELING NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018

SDUHSD middle and high school counselors are committed to working in partnership with parents/guardians in supporting student social and emotional well-being. Recognizing that middle school is a time of significant change, middle school counselors will be using this bi-monthly newsletter as a forum to share information about essential topics using a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) framework that focuses on five key areas: relationship skills, responsible decision-making, self-management, self-awareness, and social awareness. Social and emotional well-being sets the groundwork for a safe and positive learning environment and enhances a student's ability to lead a well-balanced life.

## Raising A Confident Teen

Teens need to know how to speak up for themselves. A teen who can speak up for himself is less likely to be treated poorly by peers. He'll be able to speak up for himself when he is being mistreated.

***Middle School can be a challenging time in which parents often report that their kids who were once always confident seem to struggle to maintain self-assurance through the teen years. These few tips will help you to build and sustain their self-confidence.***

Role model how to face new situations with confidence and demonstrate the importance of loving yourself. Talk to your teen about times when you've been brave or things you've done in your life to help build your confidence.

Help your teen build a healthy and stable foundation for her self-worth. Emphasize your values and teach her that true self-worth is about living according to those values. Help her see that it's more important to be kind and caring rather than popular.

Don't be afraid to let your teen practice the skills you've taught her. Let her experience natural consequences and she'll learn from her own mistakes. Over time, she'll develop increased confidence in her ability to overcome obstacles.

*"While parents can't make friends for their kids, they can help them to practice key social skills."*

**Help your teenager improve his conversational skills.** Most children who don't fare well with peers are sensitive about their social limitations. They're so used to editing themselves (*What do I say to him? What if I sound stupid?*), that they often develop the equivalent of stage fright and say nothing at all.

**Encourage your teen to join a club or group activity that appeals to him,** whether it's through the school system or through religious or community organizations. There he's more likely to meet kids who share a common interest or purpose—always a promising foundation for new friendships.

**Plan structured, pressure-free activities.** Ask your teen if he would like to invite a friend over on a weekend afternoon for some structured activity. If you're looking for something physical for them to do together, choose a noncompetitive pastime that plays to your child's strengths and promotes sharing and cooperation.

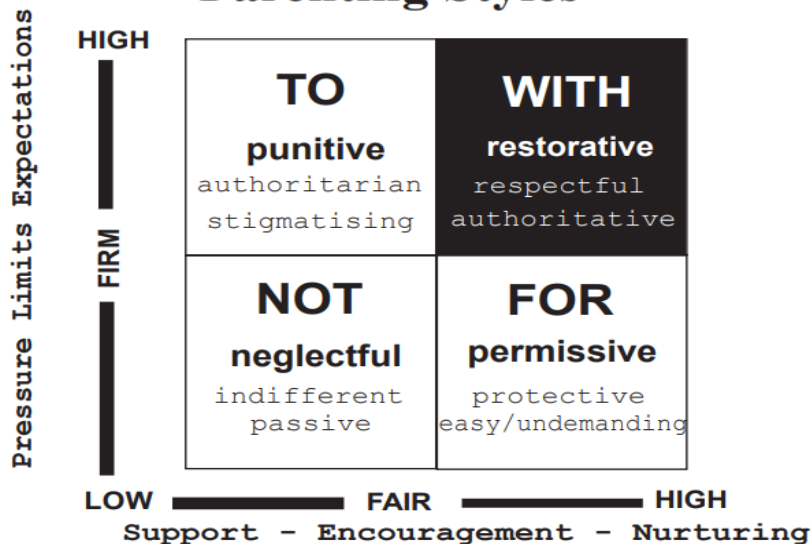
## Building a healthy relationship with your teen:

### A Restorative Approach

It's inevitable that you and your teen are going to disagree. More often than not you will be responsible to set down some clear ground rules. This can create conflict and become a stressful situation for both you and your teenager. Whatever your parenting style, these few suggestions taken from a Restorative Practice approach may help you to avoid conflicts and still get the results you want.

It is important to get the balance right between being firm and fair. When we are high on rules and low on respect or support, we operate in an authoritarian way. Blaming others then becomes a normal way of parenting. When we are low on firmness yet high on fairness, we become permissive, meaning we do not set clear and reasonable boundaries/expectations. Making excuses becomes our usual response. When we are neither fair nor firm, in other words have no interest, we will be neglectful as parents. The goal is to find the balance between our high expectations while offering appropriate support. Relationships are built or strengthened when we are able to parent consistently whatever the circumstance.

### Parenting Styles



Adapted from *Social Discipline Window* - Paul McCold & Ted Wachtel - 2000

SDUHSD strives to increase school connectedness and provide resources and training for staff and parents to implement and expand activities that promote student wellness at each school. Social and Emotional Learning is about helping students develop a range of skills that they need for school and for life. Our goal is to increase protective factors, build resilience, and coping skills for all students. Please visit the [Student Support and Wellness resource page](#) on our districts website.

## PTMS

### Middle School

### Counseling

### News

The counseling office is safe and supportive environment for students and a welcoming place for parents/guardians

#### Wellness Wednesdays

Starting Wednesday, December 19, School Counselor Lisa Curry, School Social Worker Rachel Gasca and Physical Education Teacher, Coach Bell will be offering a weekly Wellness enrichment opportunity, called Wellness Wednesdays. Wellness Wednesdays will be open to all students, and will meet weekly on Wednesdays during Homeroom. Students will learn and practice mindfulness exercises, including mindful movement and yoga stretches as well as coping skills to address typical adolescent stressors. Students who are interested can sign up in the Counseling Office on a sign-up sheet with Ms. Mona. Parents can also sign their child up for this enrichment opportunity by [completing this form](#).

#### 2nd Quarter Physical Wellness continues!

The PTMS Wellness Walk is coming this week during Homeroom. 7th grade Homerooms will walk on Thursday, 12/6 and 8th grade Homerooms will walk on Friday, 12/7. Please remind your child to wear comfortable shoes!