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Did You Know?

In physics, resilience is the ability of an elastic material (such as rubber or animal tissue) to absorb energy (such as from a blow) and release that energy as it springs back to its original shape. The recovery that occurs in this phenomenon can be viewed as analogous to a person's ability to bounce back after a jarring setback.

- Merriam-Webster Dictionary

From The Chickering School Principal

Dear D-S Families,

We all have memories from childhood of things falling apart from time to time, like the family pet dying, or wiping out on a bike, or someone close getting gravely ill, or breaking up with someone dear to us, or our plans for adulthood suddenly being dashed. Who did you turn to when those things happened?

This is an important question, because studies show that resilience, "the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties," is an essential element that helps us move through life and deal with the unexpected hardships and everyday challenges we are faced with. In studies of adults across the world, which included people who grew up under dire circumstances as well as under privileged circumstances, the one factor that consistently led to resilience was what psychologists term a "compassionate adult," defined as someone from whom a child or adolescent gathers strength.

Psychologist Dr. Robert Brooks recently presented to the D-S community on resilience as part of the Challenge Success series and he asked who our compassionate adults were when we were children. Think of yours. Think of just three. Then Dr. Brooks asked who we thought would list us as their compassionate adults now. And who would we list, as adults, as our compassionate adults?

So what is the magic that compassionate adults provide, that leads to resilience? It's recognizing that every child, every person, has beauty and

strengths. Sometimes they're not what we expected, or wanted, but we need to honor those. Compassionate adults love people not because they aced their spelling test or won the diving contest, but because of who they are. They love that Johnny and Suzy write stories with crazy characters or "make dinner" and create a disaster in the kitchen. They support (and yes, still guide) the child unconditionally. We must do this for our children because in the larger scheme of life, it helps them become resilient. It prepares children to manage all that life hands them, even beyond childhood and adolescence.

In partnership,

Laura Dayal, Chickering School Principal

Upcoming Events

Middle School / High School Discussion Group: "Building Resilience within our Students"

WHEN: Tuesday, March 21st, 6:30-8pm

WHERE: Middle School Library

Interested in discussing the topic of resilience in greater depth? Join us on Tuesday, March 21st at 6:30pm in the MS Library. Conversation will be initiated with suggested readings from articles and blog posts, but reading them (and/or viewing Dr. Brook's presentation) is not essential for active participation in the discussion group. Click [HERE](#) for a list of readings, and [HERE](#) to view Dr. Brooks' presentation on "Raising Resilient Children and Adolescents K-12".

Teacher/Parent Forums

Back by popular demand, the Teacher/Parent Forums are being offered again this year for Middle School and High School parents. As in the past, the themes of these discussions are closely related to Challenge Success and are co-sponsored by the Guidance Advisory Council.

DSHS: "Achieving Balance: How to Set Limits"

WHEN: Tuesday, March 28th from 7:00-9pm.

WHERE: The home of Kristina Grace, 1 Partridge Hill Road, Dover.

Light refreshments will be served. Please **register via SignUp Genius** by clicking [HERE](#).

DSMS: "Achieving Balance: How to Foster Resilience in Children"

WHEN: Thursday, March 30th from 7:00-9pm.

WHERE: The home of Katie Sullivan, 9 Walpole Street, Dover.

Light refreshments will be served. Please **register via SignUp Genius** by clicking [HERE](#).

Reverse 1/2 Day on Wednesday, April 5th for MS and HS

As you may recall from last year, DS experimented with a late start (10:40am) as a way to provide additional sleep for students while also allowing teachers to have professional development first thing in the morning. And because sufficient sleep is a core Challenge Success principle, please encourage your children to take advantage of this opportunity to get some additional rest. While one late start will not have a large impact on a busy spring, it does provide a break for students in the middle of the week. We will once again survey parents/guardians, students and teachers to see how effective the day was for everyone involved.

Community Speaker Events

Principles of the Playful Parent featuring psychologist and author Larry Cohen, PhD. Tuesday, March 21st from 7-9 pm at Natick High School

Race to Nowhere video screening.
Thursday, March 23rd at 7.00 pm at the Newman School in Needham

Anxious Kids, Anxious Families: How to Stop the Worry Cycle at Home and School

featuring Lynn Lyons, expert on anxiety. Wednesday, March 29th from 7-9 pm at Charles River School in Dover

Highlights of DS Challenge Success Activity

Dr. Robert Brooks Speaks to the DS Community

DS Challenge Success was pleased to host Dr. Brooks on January 26th for his compelling talk on "Raising Resilient Children & Adolescents K-12". Over 300 members of the DS community were in attendance to hear Dr. Brooks speak on important factors for developing resilient kids. Both local papers covered this event (See [DS In The Press](#) below for full articles).



A video of Dr. Brooks' presentation is available to the DS Community *during the month of March ONLY*. Dr. Brooks has requested that we **do not download or copy** it. To view the entire presentation, including the Q&A, click [HERE](#).

Community Education Campaign with Challenge Success Student Advisory Group



From one DSHS SAG member:

One of the main goals for Challenge Success this year is to bring it to the student level at Dover-Sherborn. We thought what better way to do this than by hanging brightly colored posters around the school! Our CS Student Advisory group had a ton of fun coming up with cool and easy ways to get in the spirit of Challenge Success. Some

examples of our posters featured our hashtag #YouDoYou
examples of our posters were "Challenge Success is... A Balanced Schedule," and "Challenge Success is... PDF Time".

We are excited to continue to share what we have learned about Challenge Success with the rest of the student body - and we're planning to work with the DSMS students to make posters for their school, too!

Zones of Regulation Program

Pine Hill and Chickering Schools use the Zones of Regulation program to build children's awareness of their feelings, and their behavioral and emotional responses to situations. The program then helps children develop strategies to deal with situations and move to a zone ideal for learning. For example, to move from a "yellow agitated" zone or "blue sad" zone to a "green learning" zone, children may find that doing "chair push-ups" or deep breathing (mindfulness technique) or writing down worries helps them cope and move on successfully. Feeling some control over their emotions and situations helps children feel less vulnerable and more resilient, able to handle a wide variety of situations. These early experiences can help them deal with larger issues in adolescence and adulthood more successfully, such as heavy workloads, time constraints, social pressures, and peer conflicts. For all of us, being "compassionate adults" and helping children build strategies and resilience in the early years is critical to the future of our children.

Good Reads & Tips on Building Resilience

Articles

Resilience: The Common Underlying Factor (April 2015) by Dr. Robert Brooks

Further Thoughts About Resilience (May 2015) by Dr. Robert Brooks

How People Learn to Become Resilient by Maria Konnikova, The New Yorker, 2/11/16

The Seven Ingredients of Resilience by Karen Reivich, Ph.D., CNBC

Tip from Challenge Success National's Website "Parenting Guidelines"

Allow kids space to develop on their own and make mistakes.

Kids today experience unprecedented levels of adult direction and intervention. Whenever possible, let kids play and work on their own. Encourage appropriate risk-taking and allow kids to make mistakes-and learn from them. Self-direction and risk-taking breed resilience, creative thinking, and long-term success. **To read more Challenge Success Parenting Guidelines, click [HERE](#).**

DS In The Press

Recent Articles on Dr. Brooks' Presentation

[Dr. Brooks Visits Dover-Sherborn, Speaks on 'Resilient' Children](#), DS Press
[Psychologist/Author Brooks Speaks at DS](#), HomeTown Weekly

From our DSHS Headmaster, quoted by Challenge Success National:

"Since change can be difficult, major adjustments do not happen overnight - but we are creating a culture now where we constantly ask ourselves some important questions:

Is this good for our students? Is this reasonable for our students? Will these changes allow our students to enjoy their educational experience?"

John Smith, Headmaster, Dover-Sherborn Public High School
A Challenge Success Partner School

Mission of Challenge Success

In June of 2014, the Dover-Sherborn Regional Schools launched the Challenge Success Initiative for grades K-12. The Initiative was undertaken based on recommendations from the DS Regional School Improvement Plan and the School Council Surveys, both sources identifying student stress and anxiety as a priority issue to be addressed. The Challenge Success program is based out of Stanford University's School of Education and has worked with more than 100 schools nationwide over the past decade. Dover-Sherborn was the first school to launch Challenge Success on the East Coast, although this year several more Boston area schools have come on board. The primary goal of Challenge Success is to help students and the larger DS community create better balance in their lives by:

- (1) reducing unhealthy pressures and demands*
- (2) promoting a broader definition of "success"*
- (3) building resilience among our students*

The program accomplishes these outcomes by implementing proven strategies for effective change, drawing from research data as well as best practices from other schools. We have been very fortunate to receive generous funding support from DSEF as well as a private donation each year.



Challenge Success.... Graciously funded by DSEF and a private donation.

STAY CONNECTED to Challenge Success National (www.challengesuccess.org):

