

NO DIFFICULT PARENTS: STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNICATION AND SELF-CARE

#AHEPPP17 - DALLAS, TX

JOHN GUTHMAN, PHD, HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

BRANKA KRISTIC, MA, HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY



Session Objectives

- Communicating with and educating parents
- Conflict transformation: Strategies for de-escalation
- Role play
- Self-care



Share a difficult moment you had with a parent or family member on your campus.



How Students Learn Best

VYGOTSKY'S THEORY OF EDUCATION

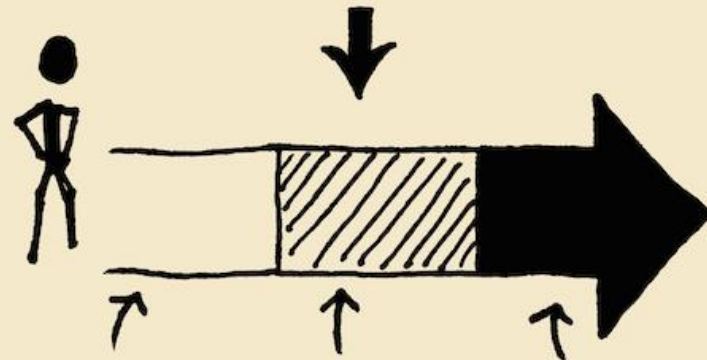


Lev Vygotsky

students learn
when they are in
their zone of proximal
development
(ZPD)

@chardycam

VISUALIZING THE ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT



THINGS YOU CAN
DO ALL ON
YOUR OWN

THINGS YOU
CAN DO WITH A
BIT OF HELP

THINGS YOU CAN'T
YET DO, NO MATTER
HOW MUCH SUPPORT
YOU GET

VERBALTOVISUAL.COM



How Students Learn Best (cont.)

Failure

Persistence

Resilience



Phone Calls in Crises

- Create a collaborative environment
- Identify caller's concern
- Building rapport
- Establish yourself as someone who can assist with that concern



Verbal Communication Skills

Reflective Listening

- Paraphrasing
 - Restate in your own words, clarify, ask for more information
“So what I’m hearing you say is...” “It sounds like you haven’t gotten information you’ve been looking for ...”
- Reframing
 - Interpret in a different way
 - *“Of course you want to know that we’re doing all we can to keep your daughter safe. Please understand that the information posted is all we know now. It is really important that we’re getting accurate information to students and you.”*

Verbal Communication Skills

Reflective Listening (cont.)

- Empathic Listening
 - Acknowledge their expressed emotion
 - *“I am hearing that you sound so worried that this event could happen again.”*
- Validation
 - Show understanding and compassion
 - *“I understand that, as a parent, you would be very upset by this event.”*
- Summarizing
 - *“If I can just sum up what your concerns are...”*

Problem Solving

- Problem identification:
 - define
 - clarify
 - prioritize

- Generate solutions and alternate options



Emotional De-Escalation

- Read the signs (verbal and nonverbal)
- Don't avoid; acknowledge the emotion being expressed (for yourself and others)
- Display emotional tone consistent with the situation
- Don't engage; use self-talk to keep your cool. Avoid:
 - Sarcasm
 - Defensiveness
 - Win/lose attitude
 - Allow venting
- Anger de-escalation



Role Play Exercises

Scenarios



Scenario 1

A first-year student found his roommate playing loud music in their room; the roommate appeared to be “on” something. The student reports to his RA that his roommate has prescription psychiatric medicine in the room, is frequently inappropriate and disruptive.



Self-Care

- Routine self-care: walking, running, gym, meditation, good food, pottery, knitting, massage, spa, create a good communication plan
- Self-care in a crisis: vent with a colleague (AHEPPP!), eat, drink plenty of water, sleep as much as you can
- What do you do when you are stressed out?



Self-Care

Connect to your values

- Be authentic
 - Why we do what we do: Build meaning





Resources

AHEPPP (Association for Parent/Family Programs Professionals) resources at aheppp.org.

Cintròn, R., Weathers, E.T., Garlough, K., Eds. (2007). *College student death: Guidance for a caring campus*. Lanham, MD: American College Personnel Association (ACPA).

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Harper, K. S., Paterson, B. G., & Zdziarski II, E. L. (Eds.) (2006). *Crisis management: Responding from the heart*. Washington, D.C.: National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).

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Contact

John Guthman, PhD, Executive Director of Student Health and Counseling Center, Hofstra University

John.C.Guthman@hofstra.edu

516-463-6745

Branka Kristic, MA, Director of Parent and Family Programs, Hofstra University

Branka.Kristic@hofstra.edu

516-463-7055

