

Life Hacks for a Happier Teen: Coping with the Loneliness Epidemic

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Can you help your children develop the grit and resilience to cope with everyday life?

Dr. DeTeso's 7C's of Resilience

- **Connection:** in order for our children to develop a sense of security and values, they must develop meaningful relationships with their family, friends, school, and community.
- **Confidence:** in order for our kids to become successful, they must believe that they can achieve success. We must give them opportunities to succeed independently.
- **Competence:** in order for our children to be able to handle situations effectively, they must develop the skills to problem solve on their own. We can't just fix it for them. We must encourage their own decision making by giving them opportunities to problem solve.
- **Contribution:** in order for our children to develop a sense of purpose and become optimistic about the world we live in, children must learn to take actions during challenging situations and understand that positive choices will improve their community.
- **Coping skills:** we must teach and model effective coping strategies, so they are prepared to overcome future challenges.
- **Control:** kids must learn how to control things through the decisions they make and the actions they take (and also understand that there are some things they can't control).
- **Character:** kids must develop a strong sense of right and wrong that will help them make wise choices and meaningfully contribute to their community.

Can you create the right environment in your home and in your relationship with your teen?

Dr. DeTeso's Top 10 Life Hacks for Successful Parenting

- Reduce their stress as much as you possible can. Try not to let them get overscheduled.
- Model good coping skills. What are we teaching them if we scream and yell every time we get stressed?
- Encourage patience.
- Trust and allow them to make their own decisions, even if it means they will make some bad decisions along the way. But be there to listen when they do make mistakes.
- Encourage independence and autonomy.
- Promote responsibility. If they commit to something, follow through and show up.
- Catch them being good and acknowledge them when they do something good.
- Praise their effort not their outcome. Don't focus on a good (or bad) grade, focus on the effort and work that went into achieving that grade. Say "I'm so proud of how hard you worked..." or "What do you think happened..."
- Validate and listen. Listen twice as much as you talk.
- Love them unconditionally. They have to know it and feel it. Be their "emotional trash can."

Jeff DeTeso, PhD is a Certified School Psychologist at Greenwich High School. He works closely with staff and students on individualized psychoeducational evaluations, counseling, interventions, and monitoring. In addition to his work at GHS, Dr. DeTeso has a private practice with Waverly Group in Greenwich and is the father of a recent GHS grad. If you have any questions or concerns, you can reach Dr. DeTeso by phone at (203) 625-8020 or by email at Jeffrey_DeTeso@greenwich.k12.ct.us

