

Mental Health Minutes

Welcome to the first edition of "Mental Health Minutes", a bi-monthly newsletter from the Charles E. Walter's Mental Health Team. Each month we will include parenting articles, news from the mental health team and a list of helpful community resources.

Mary Ellen Mullen
School Psychologist
Monday -Friday

Stephanie Columbia
School Social Worker
Monday-Tuesday

Amy Garbacz
School Counselor
Wednesday -Friday

Community Resources

New York State's Child Health Plus by Healthfirst

1-800-58-08540 ext. 1141

Family Health Plus Health Insurance for Adults by Healthfirst

1-800-582-8540 ext 1141

The Ministries, Inc. (food, clothing, counseling)

(631) 736-4800

HEAP (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program)

1-800-342-3009

Suffolk County Department of Social Services

(631) 854-2300 PA/FS Applications

80 Middle Country Road Coram, NY 11727

Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk

(631) 360-3606

Town of Brookhaven Help Line

(631)698-2074

November/December 2011

When Kids Bring Home Problems Tip from the Love and Logic® Experts

Connor was having trouble making friends. "None of the cool kids will play with me. Only the dopey kids will," he complained.

"Oh, no," Dad said with a wrinkled forehead and sadness in his eyes. "That sounds rough. What do you think you can do about that?"

"I don't know," Connor whined. "The teachers won't help me."

"Hmm," Dad paused. "Would you like to hear what some other kids have tried?"

Connor grunted, "Guess so."

"Well," Dad continued, "some kids decide to forget about having friends. How would that work for you?"

"Not good. I'll never have people to do stuff with."

"Yeah, good thinking," said Dad. "Some kids decide to pick out some cool - or maybe just nice kids and try to be super friendly to them. They go out of their way to say nice things - stuff like that. How do you think that would work for you?"

Connor thoughtfully frowned. "I guess I could try that. But what if it doesn't work?"

Dad replied, "It'll be interesting to see, won't it? That's all the ideas I have right now. Thanks for telling me about this. Good luck, buddy."

Connor's dad gave him the gift of struggling with a problem. Many Love and Logic parents have enjoyed empowering their kids to solve problems using this five-step process:

- Respond with empathy: "That's a tough one."
- Send the power message: "Would you like to hear what some kids have tried?"
- Offer ideas: "Some kids decide to..."
- Ask about the expected results: "How do you think that would work for you?"
- Give permission to solve the problem: "Let me know how it goes. Good luck."

Have fun experimenting with this technique next time your child brings home a problem regarding friendships, or just about anything else.

Dr. Charles Fay