

HERONS THRIVE

The Official Newsletter of Vineland's Mental Health Staff

MY CHILD DOESN'T DO THEIR CHORES AT HOME, WHAT SHOULD I DO? DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS FOR CREATIVE CONSEQUENCES?

Within the home, it is recommended chores and tasks are assigned daily/weekly so there is no confusion or arguments. A visual schedule or chore chart may make this easier. Therefore, the expectation is very clear with no confusion or multiple verbal requests. In the event your child did not complete their chores or tasks, you can implement a creative consequence. You can either remove something enjoyable, such as electronics; or you can add in something undesirable, such as picking weeds in the yard. It is important these consequences are clearly articulated within the chore chart. You may also want to consider providing a small reward for completing their weekly chores, such as ice cream or something your child finds reinforcing.

- Lauren Zakaib, School Psychologist

HOW DO I TEACH MY CHILD COPING SKILLS?

Both adults and children frequently find themselves in situations where they are required to cope with emotional, social, and physical discomfort. A person with effective coping skills is able to control their reaction to discomfort by (1) identifying the problem and (2) utilizing a healthy plan or strategy to deal with the issue. You can teach your child healthy coping skills through modeling as well as explicit teaching. For example, when a car cuts you off on the highway, allow your child to hear you identify your discomfort, "I feel really angry right now," then take 3 deep breaths to model an effective coping strategy. Your child will likely also need explicit teaching and support before they can cope independently. Try helping them identify their emotions in uncomfortable situations (i.e. "I see that you're crying, are you feeling sad right now?"). I recommend teaching and practicing coping strategies when your child is calm so that they are prepared to utilize them independently when they're experiencing big emotions. Click on the following links to access my favorite coping strategies to practice with students: [5 Senses](#), [Lazy 8 Breathing](#), and [Friendly Wishes](#).

-Molly Toure, School Counselor

I AM A GRANDPARENT RAISING MY GRANDCHILD, HOW CAN I BEST SUPPORT THEM?

One way grandparents can support their grandchild is by developing relationships with their school. Communicating with teachers, school counselors and administrators is a great way to be involved in their education. Asking questions about their day is also a good way to support them. Questions like "tell me the funniest thing that happened today" or "what's something you learned today?" open the dialog and gives children the opportunity to express themselves. Another excellent way to support your grandchildren is by creating routines and schedules for them and the family. They create stability, healthy habits and help with setting time for the things that matter most. Most importantly, taking time for yourself is the best way you can support them. Setting time aside for yourself, participating in support groups and learning a new hobby are ways you can unwind and recharge.

- Beatriz De La Espriella, School Social Worker