Self-Portrait

1. Think about your unique qualities and strengths
2. Draw these in a way that works for you
   - Stick figures
   - Symbols
   - Words

Helping Children Develop Coping Skills

Presenter

Anna Luther, MSW

Teaching disability inclusion practices to people and organizations who serve children
Learning Objectives

1. Identify the elements necessary for coping skills
2. Plan an activity that will reinforce one of the healthy coping messages discussed in the session

Self-Portrait

1. Think about your unique qualities and strengths
2. Draw these in a way that works for you
   - Stick figures
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Coping

- Ways we manage stress
- Sense that "I can manage the hard times"
The Need

ISC Calls: Social Emotional Support

U.S. Children Experiencing Trauma

Child Trends Publication 2017-19

Adverse Childhood Experiences Study

Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Questionnaire
Finding out ACE Score can be an eye-opener

1. Did you ever feel that... You didn’t have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, or had nowhere to stay?
Yes No

2. Did you ever feel that... Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you?
Yes No

3. Did you ever feel that... You were afraid your parents would hurt you?
Yes No

4. Did you ever feel that... You were i was in a family that was violent?
Yes No

5. Did you ever feel that... You didn’t have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, or had nowhere to stay?
Yes No

6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
Yes No

7. Was your mother or stepmother... Other parent: physically, mentally, or emotionally abused?
Yes No

Adverse Childhood Experiences Impact on Health

Physical & Mental Health

Severe obesity Diabetes Depression Suicide attempts STIs

Heart disease Cancer Stroke COPD Osteoporosis

Rwjf.org/aces
Coping

- Ways we manage stress
- Sense that "I can manage the hard times"

How Do We Develop Coping Skills?

Coping Skills

Self-regulation
Executive Functions
Healthy Environments & Practice

Self-Regulation

Core ability: Involves regulation of emotions, actions, and social interactions

Ability to:
Monitor and control thinking processes (i.e., attention & memory)
InBrief: Executive Function

How Can We Help?
Create Opportunities for Practice

Coming up:
Be a supportive adult
Plan activities to reinforce healthy coping messages
Offer calming tools

Supportive Adult

- Act as buffers
- Top protective factor
Secret Handshake

With a partner, create a unique handshake you could use to greet each other.

Coping Difficulties

• Blame placed on other people or things
• Rigid or unrealistic demands on self or others
• Low frustration tolerance
• Negative situations seen as awful
• View of self worth as conditional

Warren, 2011
Strategies to Support Coping Difficulties

Coming Up:
1. Connect thinking, feeling and behavior
2. Encourage flexible thinking
3. Model acceptance of flaws

1. Connect Thinking, Feeling, and Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Activity to try</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tendency to blame others for feelings</td>
<td>Connect thinking, feeling, and behavior</td>
<td>Situation Breakdown*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Situation
2. Thoughts
3. Feelings
4. Behavior

I have a say in what I think, feel, and how I act

2. Encourage Flexibility

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<td>Rigid or unrealistic demands</td>
<td>Encourage flexible thinking</td>
<td>Popsicle Sticks &amp; Pipe Cleaners*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is more than one way to think about it

6. Adapted from classroommentalhealth.org
8. From Connected Families Blog post: How a Pipe Cleaner Can Stop Your Child’s Meltdowns
We all have gifts to share. Our difficulties do not define us.

Model Acceptance

Difficulty: Conditional self-worth
Strategy: Find ways for children to shine
Activity to try: It's Okay to be Different

Support Healthy Coping Messages

Plan an activity to reinforce a healthy coping message
- What is the coping difficulty?
- What is the strategy?
- What is the healthy coping message?
- What activity could you plan to give youth a healthy coping message?

Help Develop Coping Skills

Create opportunities for practice
- Use strategies to support coping difficulties
- Plan activities to reinforce healthy coping messages
Progressive Muscle Relaxation

1. Take deep breaths, 5 seconds each
2. Squeeze and release the muscles as you inhale/exhale
   - Left hand
   - Right hand
   - Shoulders
   - Mouth

Resources

- http://connectedfamilies.org/2013/03/12/how-a-pipe-cleaner-can-stop-your-childs-meltdowns/
- Mr. White Handshake Video: https://youtu.be/QC3Vsv6OjgA

References

- Centers for Disease Control: https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html
- Harvard Center on the Developing Child: www.developingchild.harvard.edu
Q & A

To help us better serve you and the needs of your program, please take the time to fill out the survey.

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