**GCCHM Leadership Certification**

**Level IX, Course #4**

**RAISING EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY CHILDREN**

**By Linda Mei Lin Koh, GC Children’s Ministries**

**(Presenter’s Notes)**

**Introduction**

It is easy for parents to identify their child’s physical needs: nutritious food, warm clothes when it’s cold, bedtime at a reasonable hour. However, a child’s mental and emotional needs may not be as obvious. We often overlook the importance of mental health until something unfortunate happens, such as depression, eating disorder, or suicide. Good mental health allows children to think clearly, develop socially and learn new skills.  Additionally, good friends and encouraging words from adults are all important for helping children develop self- confidence, high self-esteem, and a healthy emotional outlook on life.

**World health Organization**

* **Worldwide 10-20% of children and adolescents experience mental disorders. Half of all mental illnesses begin by the age of 14 and three-quarters by mid-20s.**
* **Neuropsychiatric conditions are the leading cause of disability in young people in all regions**
* [**htps://www.who.int/mental\_health/maternal-child/child\_adolescent/en/**](https://www.who.int/mental_health/maternal-child/child_adolescent/en/)

**National Survey of Children's Health data published online in *JAMA Pediatrics (2016)***

* **One in six U.S. children between the ages of 6 and 17 has a treatable mental health disorder such as depression, anxiety problems or attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).**
* **The analysis also found that nearly half of children with these disorders did not receive counseling or treatment from a mental health professional such as a psychiatrist, psychologist or clinical social worker.**
* [**https://www.aafp.org/news/health-of-the-public/20190318childmentalillness.html**](https://www.aafp.org/news/health-of-the-public/20190318childmentalillness.html)

**Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2017 Study**

* https://files.digital.nhs.uk/A6/EA7D58/MHCYP%202017%20Summary.pdf
* One in eight 5 to 19 year-olds had a mental disorder in 2017

**Rates of Mental Disorder were Higher in Older Age groups**

**Preschool Children: one in eighteen 2 to 4 year olds had a disorder**

**Primary school years: Ins in ten 5 to 10 year olds had a disorder**

**Secondary school years: one in seven 11 to 16 year olds had a disorder**

**Transitioning to adulthood: one in six 17 to 19 year olds had a disorder**

**Characteristics of emotionally healthy children**

* They can initiate.
* They live in reality
* They have empathy.
* They are resilient in hard times.
* They develop techniques to help them deal with strong emotions.
* They are truthful and humble.

**10 important habits of emotionally healthy families**

**By Natasha Sharma --”Motherly” Nov 8, 2017.**

1. Set clear boundaries – how they treat each other, speak to each other.
2. Practice kindness and compassion.
3. Be intelligent with conflict resolution.
4. Express emotions intelligently – practice emotional self-regulation
5. Don’t play favorites – each person’s worthiness is viewed as equal.
6. Celebrate individual accomplishments & embrace the differences – don’t compete with one another.
7. Function as a team.
8. Promote and practice acceptance—of self and others -- know that they are not perfect.
9. Know what you can and cannot control – aware of circumstances that you can’t control, so back away.
10. Have a shared value system -- gives them a sense of belonging.

**Life Counseling Solutions’ habits of emotionally healthy families**

* Join a faith community
* Put marriage as top priority
* Listen
* Say “No”
* Share meals together
* Do not label, name call, or blame
* Laugh and pray
* Spend time together
* Limit time with TV/ internet.

**TIPS ON PROMOTING CHILDREN’S EMOTIONAL HEALTH**

How do we promote healthy children’s mental health? What are some tips for parents to raise emotionally healthy children?

**1. Provide Love and Support for Your Child**

* Value his/her gifts and talents.
* Express your love, tenderness, and kindness through hugs and kisses, telling him he is special.
* Enjoy his uniqueness.
* Show your child respect

**2. Stay Connected with Your Child**

* Keep communication open and talk together.
* Share their joys as well as talk about their challenges and sorrows.
* Talk about school, friends, activities.

**3. Listen to Your Child**

* Put aside doing your own things and listen.
* Listen to the message behind their words.
* Be sensitive to their feelings as you listen to their joy, struggles, frustration, etc.
* Listen before you judge.
* Listen empathetically.

**4. Accept Your Child’s Feelings**

* Allow the child to express his feelings—angry, sad, frustrated, excited, etc.
* Validate his feelings and provide comfort or encouragement.
* Help your child discover appropriate ways to deal with problems and upsetting situations or negative emotions.

**5. Spend Time with Your Child**

* Experts tell us that parents who interact regularly with their children develop stronger bonds.
* They feel belonged and well-loved in the family.
* Spending quality time requires that parents be engaged with your child in activities such as reading, playing, laughing, talking, etc.

**6. Discipline with Love**

* Show patience with the child’s mistakes and inconsistencies.
* Correct misbehavior with kindness and firmness.
* Never raise your voice or shout at them.
* Never correct in anger.
* End your discipline process with a loving renewal experience.

**7. Allow Your Child Age-appropriate Decisions, Responsibility, and Independence**

* Teach your child how to problem solve and make decisions.
* Allow them opportunity to take on age-appropriate tasks and chores as they learn responsibility.
* As they become teens, provide appropriate limits & guidance as they push for independence.

**Counsels from the Bible**

James 1:19: *“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”*

Ephesians 6:4: *“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”*

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**6 Testimonies, p. 201**

“Teachers are needed, especially for the children, who are calm and kind, manifesting forbearance and love for the very ones who most need it. Jesus loved the children; He regarded them as younger members of the Lord's family. He always treated them with kindness and respect, and teachers are to follow His example.”

**Child Guidance, pp 245, 246**

“Mothers, however provoking your children may be in their ignorance, do not give way to impatience. Teach them patiently and lovingly. Be firm with them.” (245)

“When you are obliged to correct a child, do not raise the voice to a high key.... Do not lose your self-control. The parent who, when correcting a child, gives way to anger is more at fault than the child. (246)

**Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 65**

“Parents should be much at home. By precept and example they should teach their children the love and the fear of God; teach them to be intelligent, social, affectionate; to cultivate habit of industry, economy, and self-denial. By giving their children love, sympathy, and encouragement at home, parents may provide for them a safe and welcome retreat from many of the world’s temptations.”

“Emotion-coaching is not a panacea. It doesn’t have Harry Potter magic powers to turn your little devil into a little angel. There will still be outbursts. You’ll still need discipline and limits. But with time it’ll build a tighter bond with your child and help them develop a skill that will benefit them the rest of their life.”

***John Gottman, Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child***

**References**

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**7. Darlene Lancer, Oct. 8, 2018**

[**https://psychcentral.com/lib/*how-to-raise-emotionally-healthy-children*/**](https://psychcentral.com/lib/how-to-raise-emotionally-healthy-children/)

**8. Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance***

***9.* Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education.***

**10. Ellen G. White, Testimonies to the Churches, vol. 6.**