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Five to Thrive: Social Connections

Our series continues this week with the third of **five resources teens need to thrive**. Last week we talked about the [Concrete Support](#) our Knights need and the skills they rely upon to access it. Before that was [Resilience](#). (You can find both those resources on our website by clicking the titles above.)

I pointed out last week how important **Concrete Support** is to students as they build **Resilience**. I think you will find that all five of these resources intertwine. This week's **Social Connections** skills and resources support students' access to Concrete Support and help them with the ups and downs of developing their Resilience. Support and comfort from others (both adults and peers) decreases the intensity of the human stress response.

We often think of **Social Connections** rather superficially in terms of our students' same-age companions. But high school students also need strong connections to adults throughout their community. Through these adult and peer relationships, teens develop powerful feelings of trust and belonging, and most importantly, a sense that they matter. All three protect them in ways that may surprise you.

Why Your Involvement at School Matters

You hear me repeat *frequently* that your involvement and engagement here at our school matters to your student's success. I hope this column makes it clear why we cannot substitute for your presence in your student's educational life.

In contrast to the common belief that adult influence is overshadowed by one's teen peers, we have solid data that instead, emotional connectedness to parents facilitates a healthy transition from childhood to adult independence.

What Teens Need from Adults

All youth need adults, inside and outside their family, who can offer the following specific building blocks of trust, belonging, and a sense that our teens matter:

- Adults who care about them;
- Adults who can be non-judgmental listeners;
- Adults who they can turn to for well-informed guidance and advice;
- Adults who they can call on in times of stress and for help in solving problems;
- Adults who encourage them and promote high expectations;
- Adults who help them identify and nurture their interests; and

- Adults who set developmentally appropriate limits, rules and monitoring.

Those **What Went Well** conversations we have talked about offer perfect opportunities to play each of these adult roles in a student's life.

One of several reasons I encourage your active involvement is that teens must have adults outside their family that they trust if they are to thrive. It follows that no family can provide all the adults that their students need. You must become a part of this community and rely on one another to be the "outside-the-family" adults to one another's children. That is the only way that the math adds up.

Why Peers Matter

Of course, our Knights need Social Connections with their peers as well. These peer networks help youth transition from a childhood identity tied to their family, to an early adolescent one that is defined by friends, and finally, to an individualized identity that blossoms and strengthens through high school.

While they progress through this metamorphosis, your children rely on a strong emotional connectedness to you that gives them a sense of security and influences their judgment in making healthy choices as they select peer friends.

Just as adults play critical roles, your teen's positive peer connections provide a critical context for adolescent development in the following areas:

- Development of autonomy;
- Learning to practice and trust emotional intimacy;
- Understanding their sexuality;
- Pursuing academic achievement; and
- Refining their individual identity, as someone separate from their family identity.

Forging Connectedness

These resources from both adult and peer relationships allow teens to develop a sense of connectedness that protects them from a danger more threatening than tobacco to their health— isolation and disconnection. As teens forge this connectedness, they collect the following ingredients for a thriving life:

- They feel loved and valued;
- They have people who care about them as individuals now and who care what happens to them in the future;
- They feel secure and confident that they can share the joy, pain, and uncertainties that come with being an adolescent and young adult;

- They tend to seek timely assistance and resources from people and institutions—their school community of engaged families—that they have learned to count on when faced with challenges.
- They find meaning, a positive purpose in their lives, and have an optimistic view of the future.

All these elements of connectedness shelter teens from both physical and mental ravages of feeling isolated, alone, and unappreciated.

Build Your Connections in a Toolbox Workshop

Beginning with the “Angst” film in August, I have hinted at upcoming workshops that will help parents develop robust skills to support their teens. We need opportunities to fill our toolboxes with the resources that we have discussed in the first three of our Five to Thrive series.

Mark your calendars for the evening of Wednesday, 11/29. That’s when our first workshop will focus on Building Resilience. All the workshops in this series will offer concrete skills—and opportunities to practice them—that you can implement immediately. More details next week.

We want our Knights thriving while they master their academics. I hope you will partner with us. There simply is no substitute for a community of caring adults in building a school environment where students thrive and grow into resilient, resourceful adults.

Band Marches to Victory

Congratulations to the Newport Marching Band for their recognition at the recent Issaquah Salmon Days Parade. The band, directed by Cory Edwards and Todd Mahaffey, won first place for High School Bands. Check out dozens of photos of the band at <http://www.newportband.com/football-games/>.

Gates Foundation Honors a Knight

Next Thursday, 11/2, the Gates Foundation opens a new exhibit featuring people from around the world who are creating change to better their communities. Our Knight Malaya Medrano will be featured in an interactive media presentation.

Malaya has worked with the foundation for five years in various volunteer roles, including Youth Ambassador, which requires her to speak to crowds of 200 people. Her primary focus is outreach to youth in our community, inspiring them to Take Action!

The free exhibit will be open for several months at the foundation's center in Seattle.

Funding News

Join us Monday, 11/20, at 7 PM for an hour-long forum on education funding. Bellevue Schools Foundation and our PTSA will host our Bellevue Schools Deputy Superintendent Melissa DeVita to talk about funding in our state and district. We will gather in the library.

Join in the Laughter

Tonight is our first Friday Knight Live of the year. Join our students for a night of frivolous laughter. Friday Knight Live is an SNL-styled sketch comedy show. This Friday, 10/27, is the only time these sketches will be performed. Hosted by Ms. Atabelo at 7 PM in the Newport PAC. Tickets are \$5 at the door. Come join us where students come to “laugh the pain away!”

More Fun Entertainment Next Week

Next weekend is Newport Idol 2017. This Choir Booster Club event on Friday, 11/3, at 7 PM, features the entertaining and musical talents of our students in the NHS Theater. More fun, and this time with more music.

Tickets:

- \$10 for adults/general admission,
- \$5 Newport Students with ASB Card, and
- \$8 Students without ASB.

Purchase tickets at the door, on the [Voices of Newport website](#), or during both lunches next Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. ALL ticket sales will go to Voices of Newport Choir Booster Club to help support our wonderful choir program.

How to Report a Safety Concern

Bullying and safety concerns always can be reported to any staff member at our school. The Bellevue School District also uses an anonymous reporting tool called SafeSchools Alert. Anyone can make a verbal or written report of harassment, intimidation or bullying, or contact a school administrator or any staff member through SafeSchools.

Information on how to submit a report via any of these methods is available on the district website at www.bsd405.org/help/report.

Schedule Changes for Veteran's Day Week

With the no-school days coming up, along with an assembly, we need to change up the schedule. Here are the highlights:

- Monday, 11/6, we will run a regular schedule with periods 1-7.
- Tuesday, 11/7, we will run a BLOCK SCHEDULE with periods 1,3,5,7 (typical Thursday Schedule)

- Wednesday, 11/8, we will run a BLOCK SCHEDULE with periods 2,4,6 (regular Wednesday) adjusted to accommodate a required Veterans Day Assembly.

The day will start at 8:30 AM and end at 1:25. You can download a detailed schedule by [clicking here](#).

Ten Colleges Next Week

Check out [Naviance](#) for a complete list of all colleges visiting Newport High School. Please remember these events are intended for students only. All visits are in the library, unless otherwise posted. Next week 10 colleges will visit on Thursday and Friday.

Winter Sports Registration and Physicals

Registration for Winter Sports on FamilyID is live until Friday, 11/10, at 4 PM. If your student wants to participate in a winter sport, they must have a current physical on file with Mrs. Jones, ASB Secretary. Students also must have no outstanding fines and will need to register on www.FamilyID.com.

Basketball, wrestling, girls' gymnastics, and boys' swim and dive are our winter sports offered. The first day of gymnastics will be Monday, 11/6, all other winter sports will begin Monday, 11/13.

PTSA Notes:

- The next PTSA Membership Meeting is Wednesday, 11/15, at 7 PM in the NHS Library. Follow-up on Grants and Ski Swap tops the agenda.
- Newport High School PTSA is enrolling all members on-line using PT-Avenue. No more forms to complete. [Please click here](#) to self-register. Questions? [Contact NHS PTSA](#).
- PTA website: <http://newportptsa.org/>

Only Two Fridays Until the 32nd Annual SKI SWAP

Shop the Swap:

- Friday, 11/10, noon to 9 PM (\$10 early entry fee for 12 noon admission; General Admission begins at 1 pm)
- Saturday, 11/11, 9 AM to 5 PM

[New & Used Consigned Gear](#)

- Volunteer [here](#) for one of the four days. Setup begins Thursday and teardown happens Sunday. Sales days are in between. Students can earn community service hours for helping their PTSA raise funds for our school.
- Donate Food to feed the wonderful student and parent volunteers [here](#).

- Register your gear to consign [here](#).

The Newport Ski Swap sells downhill and X-C skis, snowboards, boots, bindings, poles, jackets, pants, helmets, hats, goggles, gloves, socks, under layers, and more.

Hundreds of individuals and seven snow sport shops consign about 10,000 new and used items. We organize the sale throughout our two large gyms, 17,000 sq feet. Last year, sales topped \$500,000.

The event is not actually a "swap" but rather a [consignment sale](#). The Newport High School PTSA uses the profits to support unfunded educational needs.

Admissions Essay Support at Newport

College Corp volunteers are here every Tuesday and Thursday after school in the library to help seniors with essays. They help students prepare for the college application, essay, etc. Check in with Ms. Lopez-Kopp in our library early this week.

Also, encourage your students to ask their Senior English teacher for feedback on their essay during tutorial.

College Fair Next Saturday

Attend the National College Fair at the Washington State Convention Center on Saturday, 10/28, from noon to 4 PM.

Get Them Going

Winter Sports Conditioning is Here! The Newport Girls Basketball coaching staff is proud to announce the start of a winter sports conditioning program. The sessions will run every Tue/Thu from 5:30 to 6:30 PM. All Newport High School students are eligible. Activities will vary among track work, hills, stairs, plyometrics and more! The program will help any winter-sport participants prepare for their upcoming season. Open gym will follow each workout from 6:30 to 7:30 PM.

Reflections

Newport participates in the PTA Reflections Competition for high school students. Calling all writers, artists, photographers, film producers, composers and choreographers: This years theme is Within Reach.

Read the rules [here](#). Newport High PTSA will collect submissions on November 27th. The Reflections form on newportpts.org site offers further instructions. Email lisa.shank@newportpts.org with questions.

Dates to Remember:

- 2018 Senior Class Meeting/Photo: Wednesday, 11/1
- End of First Quarter: Friday, 11/3
- Tryout and Practice for Gymnastics: Monday, November 6th
- Veteran's Day Assembly, 11/8
- No Students: Thursday, 11/9
- No Students/Veteran's Day Holiday: Friday, 11/10
- Tryout and Practice for Girls and Boys Basketball, Boys Swim & Dive, Girls and Boys Wrestling: Monday, 11/13
- No School/Thanksgiving Break: Thursday & Friday, 11/23 & 11/24
- Winterfest Week: Monday, 12/11 to Friday, 12/15
- Semester Finals: 1/24/18 to 1/26/18
- End of First Semester: 1/26/18

Useful Links:

[Daily Bulletin](#)

[Newport Website](#)

[PTSA Website](#)

[Bell Schedule](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Counseling Assignments](#)

[Newport Television](#)

[Naviance](#) for college admissions planning and information

[Counseling Center](#)

[Community Service](#) for volunteer listings

[Athletics](#)

[Club Directory](#)

Newport Athletic Hotline at [425.456.7522](tel:425.456.7522) for daily updates