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Five to Thrive: Concrete Support & Who Should Ask

We started our series last week with Resilience ([click here if you missed it](#)). Our next topic, **Concrete Support in Times of Need**, tucks neatly in beside Resilience among the five resources that all our Knights need to thrive in high school and beyond.

We talked last week about the importance of taking risks to develop Resilience. I suggested that you resist the natural parent temptation to protect your student from failure. Our teens need to feel the stress that results from serious challenges that involve failed attempts.

Managing that stress as a learning tool requires that our students have access to Concrete Support from families, peers, and our community.

Stress has a bad reputation as a whole, but there are three kinds of stress. One is quite useful:

- **Positive Stress** steps up our physical ability to perform, sharpens our senses, and helps our brains make decisions. That critical adaptation kept early man from getting eaten by stronger creatures with less brain power. When teens feel these useful doses of stress, it can enhance their performance.

More importantly for teens, experiences with positive stress develop a healthy stress-response system that gives students a sense of mastery and control. Without this exposure, how is a teen to learn how to effectively manage stress, regulate emotions, and think under pressure? Developing these abilities prepares teens to function in the adult world.

- **Toxic Stress** gives all stress its negative reputation. Exposure to intense and sustained stress inhibits the ability to learn. Violence, abuse, and neglect cause Toxic Stress. Constant but lower levels of stress also can become toxic.
- **Tolerable Stress** falls somewhere in between. For students, families and community make the critical difference between Tolerable and Toxic Stress. Having supportive relationships and environments protect kids of all ages from the effects of Toxic Stress. Supportive parenting, positive peer relationships, and community resources all matter.

Keeping Knights Thriving: A Role for Knight Allies

Coming back around to today's topic of Concrete Support, I want to encourage you again to take an active role in our school community. Reread the above description of the antidote to Toxic Stress: students need family, peers, and community. Without engaged families at our school, there is no community.

There are volunteer tasks that we rely on heavily, but the real value in many of our volunteer opportunities is the meaningful ways they give families to connect to our community. You do not need to lead a committee. Volunteering an hour or two here and there connects you to a few community members. Those acquaintances connect you to many more. That network becomes our community. (Ski Swap jobs below offer short, weekend volunteer spots.)

Our community, and all its connections among educators and families, gives students the Concrete Support that they need to thrive. Without it, teens feel isolated in a school environment wholly disconnected from their family life, they lack the supportive relationships that protect them from too much stress, and those Concrete Resources in times of need may not be easily accessible for them.

Mastering the Art of Getting Help

To effectively tap Concrete Support when they need it as teens and as adults, students experience and develop skills in five concepts during high school:

- **Formal Help:** Knowing that it is the job of various professionals to provide supporting services (e.g., teachers, doctors, mechanics, bus drivers, etc.).
- **Informal Help:** The support students get from family, friends, and other significant (but nonprofessional) people in their lives. And understanding that relying on that support means maintaining those relationships.
- **Self-Determination:** Taking responsibility for their lives and making both the everyday and the life-directing choices that will get them there.
- **Help-Seeking:** Discerning when independence and self-reliance (and sometimes even pride) should be set aside to obtain the tools to solve a problem.
- **Self-Advocacy:** Effectively communicating, negotiating or asserting their interests, desires, needs, and rights.

Data tells us that a critical difference between those who successfully navigate adolescence and those who get lost is the ability to use formal and informal sources of support. That ability takes a combination of understanding the resources and the skills to decide what they want and then access it and advocate for it. The best ways to teach these are modeling them from you at home and coaching students while they practice their own skills. Students learn self-advocacy at different rates, so you may have to participate to some degree, but I strongly encourage you to coach your student and support them as they step into the work of figuring it all out now, before moving off to college.

Between last week's discussion of building resilience through risk taking and now urging you to help your students practice self-advocacy, today's high school environment must feel challenging but it should NOT feel harsh. Your student should feel challenged. They also should feel and be able to access the Concrete Support our community offers with increasing capacity over their 4 years with us.

On rougher days, remember to ask, “**What Went Well?**” Remind them of all they know, of all the skills they have mastered since learning to walk. Help them remember that feeling of competence and confidence. In time, they will follow that pattern on their own. They will assess what went well and the competencies they have. Their confidence will return.

The last skill-building of childhood happens in high school and bridges the gap toward college and the adult world. Your critical role during these years is supporter and ally—of Concrete Support. Our maturing Knights must do the work of mastering these "soft skills" as they prepare themselves to thrive now and in their transition towards college, career, and life.

Only Three 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.

Great Holiday Bargain Supports Seniors

Order Poinsettias and wreaths to support GradKnight 2018 before October 27. Pickup your order of Poinsettias and wreaths in Newport HS Commons on Wednesday, 11/29 from 2 to 7 PM. Order form is [here](#).

These are great quality plants and wreaths and make wonderful holiday gifts. Deadline says October 27th, but if postmarked by then, we'll take mailed orders up to November 5th. Online orders are not available, please print the PDF.

Apply for Service Award

Just three weeks remain for students to apply for 2018 [Prudential Spirit of Community Awards](#) for volunteer service. Encourage your young volunteers to consider this unique opportunity for recognition.

Middle level and high school students who have volunteered in the past year can earn local, state and national honors — in addition to cash awards and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C.

This year's application deadline is November 7. Complete details and the application are available at <https://spirit.prudential.com>.

Library Offering Teen Summit

Are your students feeling stressed out? Do they want a chance to just talk about things like pressure to succeed, mental health, immigration and American identity, breaking the gender binary and more? Encourage them to join in the King County Library System's Teen Voices Summit on Saturday, 10/28, 10 AM-3:30 PM at the Redmond Library. There will be speakers, food, and fun. Lunch will be served. No registration needed.

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 Involved

Winter Sports Options Ahead:

Winter Sports Tryouts and team meetings happen soon for Girls and Boys Basketball, Gymnastics, Boys Swim & Dive, and Girls and Boys Wrestling teams. To find out about participating in a sport at Newport High School, click [here](#).

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.

Gymnastics

Is your student interested in joining the gymnastics team? Come to an informational meeting on Wednesday, 10/25 in room 3115 at 1:30 PM (lunch provided!). Bring a friend! Interested but cannot make it? Please email Coach Stacy at stacysfoodfun@hotmail.com.

Color Guard

Did you miss your chance to join the Newport Color Guard team during their fall season? The Color Guard is having tryouts for their winter season – Winter Guard. Tryouts will be held in the outside gym on November 2nd, November 7th, and November 9th from 6 to 9 PM. Students interested must attend all tryout days. Winter Guard requires no prior experience and is a coed activity.

And for Those Looking for a Club Activity:

- Does your student like Jeopardy or other trivia games? Encourage them to join **Knowledge Bowl**. We meet every Monday at 3:40 PM in Portable 8.
- Does your student love watching movies? Interested in making films? Would they want to help plan Newport's Film Festival? **Film Making Club** meets every Monday in room 2412. There will be food.
- For our female students: Would they like to learn more about Computer Science? Encourage them to check out **Girls Who Code Club** every Monday after school at 3:40 PM in room 1403. No prior coding experience is required at all.
- How about students interested in learning and solving puzzles or finding patterns? **Linguistics Olympiad** meets every Tuesday in Portable 2 after school at 3:40 PM.
- **Ocean Science Club** invites those interested in marine science. Join us for lessons and buzzer questions as we prepare for the annual Orca Bowl, a high-stakes marine science trivia competition. We meet every Wednesday morning at 7:50 in Mrs. Gray's room, room 3111. Snacks will be provided.

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
- No School, Thursday and Friday, 11/9 and 11/10
- 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