PART 4
So What Did You Really Expect?

Challenging Our Kids to Be Their Best

Family Assets Webinar Series

November  | May*  | TODAY | March*  | July*
---|---|---|---|---
Nurturing RELATIONSHIPS  | Establishing ROUTINES  | Maintaining EXPECTATION S  | Adapting to CHALLENGES  | Connecting to COMMUNITY

* Archive: www.parentfurther.com/webinars/family-strengths
What expectation do you bring to this webinar today?

- a. It will change my life
- b. I’ll learn something useful to me
- c. It will be a waste of time

Session Overview

- So Easy, Yet So Hard
- Why Expectations Matter
  - For Children and Youth
  - For Families
- Unpacking Expectations
- Getting Expectations Right
- Some Starting Points
So Easy, Yet So Hard
The Challenge of Getting Expectations Right

On the One Hand . . .
High expectations influence behavior and fuel achievement.

High expectations are the key to everything.

High achievement always takes place in the framework of high expectation.
- Charles Kettering

Sam Walton
On the Other Hand . . .

We can resist or resent expectations that other people have for us.

Expectations are resentments under construction.
- Anne Lamott

Expectation is the root of all heartache.
- William Shakespeare

So maybe it’s better to expect less after all

“If you expect nothing from anybody, you’re never disappointed.”
— The Bell Jar (1963)

Sylvia Plath

“I find my life is a lot easier the lower I keep my expectations.”
— Bill Watterson (Calvin & Hobbes)
High Expectations: Youth Report

Youth report that both their teachers and their parents “push me to be the best I can be.”

For families
For children and youth

Why Parental Expectations Matter

Parental expectations can influence (e.g.) . . .

• Academic achievement
• Career aspirations
• Prosocial, civic behavior
• Athletic achievement
• Nutrition & health habits
• Alcohol and tobacco use
• Delayed sexual activity
• Religious commitment
• Money management

And can contribute to . . .

• Stress
• Perfectionism

• Influence child’s own goals and expectations
• Increase parent-child communication
• Help focus attention
• Create a norm


Depending on Each Other

“In times of upheaval, families commonly lose structure, daily routines fall by the wayside, and established patterns become disorganized. . . . Members need to know what is expected of them and what they can expect of each other. Reliability is crucial: family members need assurance that they can depend on one another to follow through with the commitments they’ve made.”

—Froma Walsh

POLL

In which of the following areas is it hardest for your family (or families you work with) to set clear, appropriate expectations?

a. Education (current and future)
b. Health, fitness, and nutrition
c. Technology/screen use
d. Alcohol, tobacco, or other drug use
e. Other (write your thoughts in the chat box)

THE AMERICAN Family Assets STUDY

• 1,511 families
  – One parenting adult
  – One 10 – 15 year old

• Oversampled
  • African Americans
  • Latino/Latina
  • Asian Americans

• Weighed to U. S. Census

Key Findings from the Study

- 21 family strengths (Family Assets) identified
- Average family scores 47 out of 100 on an overall Family Assets Index
- Overall levels of family assets vary little, if at all, across different types of families
- Family assets are associated with a range of measures of youth and family well-being

OVERVIEW PRESENTATIONS
- www.parentfurther.com/webinars/family-assets
- disneydiscovertogether.com

Levels of Family Asset Categories

Notes. Each category ranges from 0 to 20.
Maintaining Expectations

- Openness, Tough Topics: 61%
- Fair Rules: 44%
- Defined Boundaries: 28%
- Clear Expectations: 84%
- Contributions to Family: 57%

Differences: Defined Boundaries
Parent(s) set limits for youth on... (strongly agree)

- What can do with friends: Youth 23%, Parents 36%
- Time texting, talking on phone: Youth 17%, Parents 24%
- Time watching TV, movies: Youth 17%, Parents 22%
Differences: Clear Expectations

How clear has your parent/have you made the following expectations to you/your child . . . (completely clear)

- Keeping parent informed about where is and who with: 77% Youth, 84% Parents
- How well should be doing in school: 80% Youth, 83% Parents
- What should and should not eat: 46% Youth, 35% Parents

Unpacking Expectations

How they work to influence development and achievement
Expectations: The Balancing Acts

Too low
(whatever)

Too high
(aspirations)

External only
Socially motivated

Internal only
Self-motivated

Two few

Too many

Wishful Thinking

1. Always be in a good mood.
2. Be perfect in school.
3. Never mess up.
4. Be grateful for what I’ve given you.
5. Ignore how we treat each other.
6. Don’t try to get away with anything.
7. Always forgive.
8. Do what I say, not what I do.

www.huffingtonpost.com/kimanzi-constable/8-unrealistic-expectations-parents-have-for-their-kids_b_5778104.html
Kids’ Views of Parental Expectations

- 78%: Parents expect too much of me
- 17%: Parents expectations are reasonable
- 2%: Parents don't expect much.
- 1%: Don't know; haven't told me
- 2%: Don't know; expectations keep changing

SOURCE: American Family Assets Study (Search Institute, 2012). N = 1,500 youth

Parents’ Views of Kids’ Expectations

- 46%: Do more for child than expects from me as parent
- 42%: Do what child expects me to do as a parent
- 5%: Do less that what child expects
- 2%: Don't know what child expects

SOURCE: American Family Assets Study (Search Institute, 2012). N = 1,500 youth
## Perfectionism: Where’s the Sweet Spot?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maladaptive Perfectionists (fixed mindset)</th>
<th>Strive for high standards—but feel worthless when goals aren’t met.</th>
<th>Lower self-esteem, emotional adjustment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive Perfectionists (growth mindset)</td>
<td>Strive for high standards—but maintain a positive outlook when they fail.</td>
<td>Higher self-regulation and sense of personal power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Perfectionists</td>
<td>Don’t strive for high standards</td>
<td>Lower levels of social competencies</td>
</tr>
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An Added Challenge: Stereotype Threat

Stereotypes or negative expectations based on being part of a stereotyped group (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, age, income, sexual orientation, religious minority)

[Image: http://xkcd.com/385/ (Creative Commons License)]

Expectations & Stereotype Threat

How stereotype threat (negative expectations) undermines performance

Induce stress, anxiety
Focus on controlling emotions
Create self-doubt, reduce effort
Create lower personal expectations

From: www.reducingstereotypethreat.org
Reducing Impact of Stereotype Threat

- Reframe the task so that it doesn’t focus on the threat
- Emphasize identities not associated with stereotype
- Self-affirmation of skills, abilities
- Emphasize high standards—and ability to meet
- Emphasize that ability is not fixed but can grow
- Externalize/explain the threat (it’s not about you)
- Provide role models

From: www.reducingstereotypethreat.org
SET EXPECTATIONS THAT ARE

1. Shared in a Mutual Relationship

- Built on recognized mutual care, concern, trust
- Negotiated and shaped together
- Grounded in accurate beliefs about . . .
  - Interests and sparks
  - Goals and priorities
  - Skills and capabilities
- Responsive to . .
  - Growth and change
  - The realities in the world, context

SET EXPECTATIONS THAT

2. Don’t Confuse Expectations & Aspirations

**Aspiration:** A hope or ambition of achieving something

**Expectation:** A belief that someone will or should achieve something.
SET EXPECTATIONS THAT ARE 

3. **In the Zone** (of Proximal Development)

- Too Challenging
- Too Easy
- Zone of Proximal Development


4. **Scaffold for Success**

IN MEETING EXPECTATIONS

5. Tap Family & Personal Strengths
TO SUPPORT MEETING EXPECTATIONS

Mediators between parental expectations and students’ academic outcomes


Family Dynamics (Strengths) that Matter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adaptive Perfectionism</th>
<th>Maladaptive Perfectionism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family cohesion, warmth</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional openness</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy, growth</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes, routines</td>
<td>Flexible, adaptive</td>
<td>Rigid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance, affirmation</td>
<td>Unconditional</td>
<td>Conditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement recognition</td>
<td>Improvement, growth</td>
<td>All or nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations, standards</td>
<td>Clear, consistent, reasonable</td>
<td>Excessively high, unclear, inconsistent, or missing</td>
</tr>
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## SET EXPECTATIONS THAT . . .

### 6. Are Adaptive and Growth Oriented

<table>
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<tr>
<th>FIXED MINDSET SELF-TALK</th>
<th>GROWTH MINDSET SELF-TALK</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Are you sure you can do it? Maybe you don’t have the talent.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I’m not sure I can do it now, but I think I can learn to with time and effort.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;What if you fail. You’ll be a failure.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Most successful people had failures along the way.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;It’s not my fault. It was something or someone else’s fault.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;If I don’t take responsibility, I can’t fix it. Let me listen and learn whatever I can.&quot;</td>
</tr>
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Questions from Carol Dweck: [http://mindsetonline.com](http://mindsetonline.com)

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## 7. Emphasize Growth through Failure

**WHEN EXPECTATIONS ARE NOT MET**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CONSISTENT WITH FIXED MINDSET</th>
<th>CONSISTENT WITH GROWTH MINDSET</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Denying that it happened</td>
<td>Trying to see the situation in a different, positive light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venting or expressing negative feelings</td>
<td>Focusing on what was achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving up on dealing with the situation</td>
<td>Actively working on addressing the situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distracting oneself by doing other things</td>
<td>Coming up with a plan or strategy for what to do next</td>
</tr>
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8. Reinforce Progress and Growth

In meeting expectations

Celebrate early “wins” and signs of progress

Adjust expectations to reflect growth, change

Don’t just “raise the bar” without marking milestones

How Have You Set Expectations?

In the chat box, describe one concrete way you have effectively set high expectations in your family (or helped families you work with do it)?

a. Ground in in a mutual relationship
b. Don’t confuse expectations and aspirations
c. In the “Zone”—Competence & challenge
d. Scaffold for success
e. Tap family and personal strengths
f. Keep them growth oriented and adaptive
g. Emphasize growth through failure
h. Reinforce progress and growth
For Parents and their Families

- Be explicit; talk about mutual expectations
- Watch for triggers to talk about expectations
  - Transitions
  - Local or national events
- Develop explicit, shared plans
- Adjust and try different things
For People who Work with Families

• Think through your expectations of families. In what ways do they reflect (or not reflect) these principles?
• Give families forums to share with each other:
  – What works for them?
  – Where are they struggling?
• Coach on principles for setting expectations
• Notice and reinforce progress

Questions?
Parenting Resources

Available at:
www.searchinstitutestore.org

Search Institute Workshops

Discovering Your Family’s Strengths
A workshop for parenting adults

Engaging the New American Family
Relationship-based strategies for nurturing families’ strengths

More Info on these and other workshops:
CALL: Mary Shrader: (800) 888-7828 ex. 526
VISIT: www.search-institute.org/presentations-workshops
Nurturing RELATIONSHIPS
Establishing ROUTINES
Maintaining EXPECTATIONS
Adapting to CHALLENGES
Connecting to COMMUNITY

* Archive: www.parentfurther.com/webinars/family-strengths
Info: www.search-institute.org/research/family-strengths

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