HELP!!!

My Child Is In Middle School!!!!

- Presented by Michelle Catucci,
- School Counselor

Agenda

- Introduction
- Early Adolescent/Middle School Development
  - Physical
  - Cognitive
  - Self
  - Social
  - Emotional
- Organization
- Q & A

Introduction

- Michelle Catucci
  - School Counselor & NCC
- What is a School Counselor?
  - Here for ALL Students (& parents ☺)
  - Work in 3 main areas:
    - Academic
    - Personal/Social
    - Career

Physical Development

- Second most rapid stage of development
- Puberty begins
  - Effects physical growth & mood
  - Starts at different ages & progresses at different rates
- Self-consciousness, embarrassment, & anxiety are common
  - Want to be like everyone else; not "too early" or "too late"

Cognitive Development

- Jean Piaget - Leading theorist in cognitive development
- Piaget believed children moved through 4 stages:
  - Sensorimotor (ages birth-2 years)
  - Preoperational (2-7 years old)
  - **Concrete operational (7-11 years old)**
  - **Formal operational (11 & older)**

Students at Brown

Cognitive Development –Concrete Operational Stage

- Can understand concepts like reversibility, reciprocity, identity, classification, & conservation
  - Apply these principles to friendships, rules, games, sports, & academics
- Logical Thinking
  - Can better problem solve
    - However, cannot think abstractly or consider possibilities for "out-of-the-moment" situations

Cognitive Development – Formal Operational Stage

- Abstract reasoning
  - Can hypothesize and consider alternatives
- Use logic to predict consequences of behaviors/actions
- "Time warp"
  - Cannot always link events, feelings, & situations in their own lives
- Future thinking

Self Development – Middle Childhood

- Self-esteem building
  - Developing sense of worth (starting @ age 8)
  - Compare self to others
- Behave according to preconceived idea of self
- See themselves as having more complex personalities
  - "Nobody can understand me as well as I can"
- Internal locus of control
- Afraid to try new things

Self Development – Early Adolescence

- Trying to "define" self
- Push for autonomy, but are dependent on others because they lack life experience
- Imaginary Audience
  - "Everybody cares about me as much as I care about myself and sees EVERYTHING I'm doing!"
  - Self-esteem actually decreases

- Personal Fable
  - "I am special & unique"
  - "Bad things can happen to others, but not me"

Social Development

- Erik Erikson – Psychosocial theorist who believed we face "crises" at each stage of life
- Erikson's 8 Psychosocial Stages
  - Trust vs. Mistrust (0 – 1 year old)
  - Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt (1 – 3 years old)
  - Initiative vs. Guilt (3 – 6 years old)
  - **Industry vs. Inferiority (6 – 12 years old)**
  - **Identity vs. Role Confusion (12 – 18 years old)** **Students at Brown**
  - Intimacy vs. Isolation (18 – 35 years old)
  - Generativity vs. Stagnation (35 – 60 years old)
  - Integrity vs. Despair (60+ years old)

Social Development – Industry vs. Inferiority

- Task: To achieve a sense of industry by setting and attaining personal goals
    - Failure results in feelings of inferiority

- Through peer interaction, develop personal beliefs & values
- "Best friend" syndrome

- Encouragement & deserved praise from adults is essential to feelings of worth

Social Development – Identity vs. Role Confusion

- Task: To clarify self-identity, life goals, and life's meaning
  - Failure results in role confusion

- Peer relationships are extremely significant
  - However, still preoccupied with own needs
- "Cliques" emerge
  - Specific rules about how to dress, behave, etc.

- Responds well to adults who appreciate him/her as a unique and worthwhile individual

Emotional Development – Middle Childhood

- Begin to experience more complex emotions
  - Guilt
  - Shame
  - Pride
- Aware that people can experience more than one emotion at a time and feelings can change
- Hide own emotions to protect feelings of others
- Anxiety about school performance and peer inclusion increases

Emotional Development – Early Adolescence

- A roller coaster ride!
- Moodiness and outbursts are common
- Negative emotions can feel overwhelming (which may result in more of that feeling)
  - Anxiety
  - Shame
  - Depression
  - Guilt
  - Anger
- Leads to more frequent conflicts with adults
- Adults need to educate them on what they're feeling

How does all of this impact my child's organization?

- During these developmental stages, students are only just LEARNING basic school and organizational skills
  - Dealing with a lot of changes at once...

- As adults, we need to help foster these skills so the student sees success and can gain independence

School Strategies

- Planner
- FinalSite
- Encouraged Binder/Folder Use
- Study Guides
- Study Hall/Core Study
- S.A.I.L.
- Team initiated organizational strategies

What else can we try?

- Parent Portal for FinalSite
- Separate Homework Folder
- After School Time Management Sheet
- At-Home Homework Center
- Checklists (at school & at home)
- Academic Intramurals & Study Hall Sessions
- Team Meetings
- Meeting with the School Counselor

A Final Thought…

"Feelings of worth can flourish only in an atmosphere where individual differences are appreciated, mistakes are tolerated, communication is open, and rules are flexible - the kind of atmosphere that is found in a nurturing family"
~ Virginia Satir
(American Psychologist & Educator)

Handouts

- Pink
  - Top Ten Suggestions for Homework Without Tears
  - STAR Method to Test Taking
- Yellow
  - 9 Strategies to support "Time Blindness"
  - 15 Strategies that May Improve Organization & Memory
- Blue
  - Organizing for the School Day
- Orange
  - Get it Done! Prioritizing sheet
  - Monthly Project Calendar
- Green
  - How to set up a Home Study Center
  - Sample Homework Schedule
- Purple
  - Sample Reminder Checklist
  - Sample Organizational Plan

Wrap Up

Any Questions??

Thank you for joining me today!

All materials from today's presentation, including handouts, can be found on my website.

If you have any additional questions, email me at catuccim@madison.k12.ct.us