

Self Esteem Helps Children Cope With Stress

NEWARK, Del. — Stress is our body's reaction to any situation or event that frustrates, endangers, excites or confuses us. And being young is no guarantee against stress, says Roxane Whittaker, University of Delaware extension home economist in Kent County.

Whittaker says any experience can cause stress if it changes one's life and requires more than routine adjustment. And stress can accumulate. For example, a

teenager may adjust adequately to a family move, but when several other changes occur within the same period, the cumulative effect is a high level of stress.

Each child is unique and may react to stressful situations in a variety of ways. Symptoms of stress may be any of the following in various combinations: sleeplessness, grinding of teeth, poor concentration, fidgeting, irritability, nervous tics,

depression, withdrawal, crying, not eating, overeating, high blood pressure, smoking and the use of drugs and alcohol.

The key to reducing stress in a child's life is to limit and manage change when possible, says Whittaker. For example, if a major stressful event occurs, such as divorce or death, try to avoid other major changes in the child's life during the same year.

The key to coping with stress is

self esteem and feeling in control of one's life. Parents and teachers intent on creating self esteem in children tend to preach a general gospel of "wonderful," says Sally Foulke, the university's extension home economist in Sussex County. Exaggerating the quality of a child's efforts is an easy road for adults, but it doesn't lead to self esteem for the child.

Self esteem builds only when it is earned. Foulke notes that an eight-year study of 3- to 11-year-olds showed that children develop real self esteem only when they are able to solve problems and hurdle obstacles.

"Parents shouldn't make life too easy for their children," says

Foulke. "Children need to learn to rely on their own resources. Parents should then approve signs of progress."

Whittaker suggests that parents should help their children learn to set and achieve positive goals so that they feel more control over their lives.

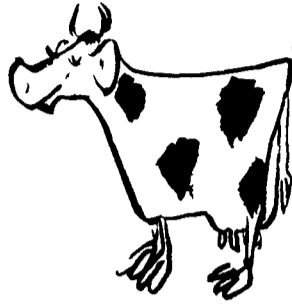
After children decide on goals, parents should help them plan several ways to reach their goals, and have them write down a projected accomplishment date.

Stressful events will always occur. But they are usually less traumatic for children who know that many areas of their lives are indeed controllable.

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F.W.S.

Calendar

Saturday, August 2

Lancaster Society 1 meets for a "Nutrition After 55" program by extension home economist Doris Thomas.

Friday, August 8

Lancaster Society 25 meets at 1:30 p.m. at Kunzler and Co., Inc. for a tour and refreshments.

Tuesday, August 5

Lancaster County picnic, Quarryville Hoffman Building. Lancaster Society 35 meets at 7:30 p.m. for a business meeting.

Saturday, August 9

Lancaster Society 6 meets at 2 p.m. at Parlor Church of the Brethren for music by Lorraine and Sylvia Royer.

Thursday, August 7

Lancaster Society 20 meets at Huffnagle Park, Quarryville, at 6:30 p.m. for a picnic. Lancaster Society 17 meets for an auction.

Lancaster Society 2 meets for an annual picnic at 5:30 p.m.

Lancaster Society 19 meets at 1:30 p.m. for a program by naturalist Carl Nolt.

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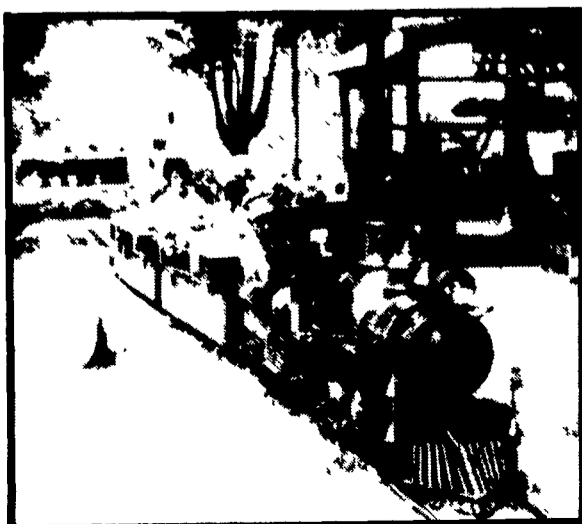
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The reunion will feature a museum building filled with early industrial steam engines - most of them running, and a front display of early farm and home implements such as butchering equipment, sausage stuffers, wooden washing machines, butter churns, seeders, corn shellers and early farm carpentry tools.

You can find anything running there from very early "hit-n-miss" gas engines once used to pump water, shell field corn, wash clothes, or power a small mill, to large gas-powered tractors.

— EVENING PROGRAMS —

WEDNESDAY: A threshing demonstration and fiddlin' (with everyone welcome to join in the fiddlin'.)

THURSDAY: Warren Mercer will play for square dancing, so bring and swing your partner.

FRIDAY: Steam and gas games and competition. This is a don't-miss evening with contests the like of which you have never seen before, like the "How slow can you go?" (without stalling) event and precision handling of tons of powered iron.

— SPECIAL FEATURE —

A special feature of this year's reunion will be a chronological display of many pieces of machinery made by the Hart-Parr/Oliver-White farm machinery company. If this name sounds strange, please remember that modern companies hold no exclusive title to company mergers. A bit of history of these company names and how and when they merged, will be included in the demonstration narrative.