

## ***FOSTERING SOCIAL RESILIENCE: HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD SPEAK UP, GET ALONG, AND RESPOND TO CONFLICT*** *Dr. Ashley Vigil-Otero*

### **What is Social Resilience?**

- *An ability to “bounce back” from peer difficulties without loss of self-concept*
- *An ability to respond to peer conflict in assertive and healthy ways*
- *An ability to maintain positive friendships*

### **I. Responding to Peer Negative Comments: Teasing, Criticisms and Putdowns**

- **TOOL 1: ATTITUDE SHIFT:** Help your child change their perspective about mean behavior. The goal is to teach your child to use their minds during challenging peer situations.
  - *The putdown is really about the other guy, not you.*
  - *“Never act as small as the other guy feels.” -Jim Fay*
- **TOOL 2: TRANSLATE THE MESSAGE:** Help your child see beyond the surface message. Ensure that your child does not accept the putdown. They don’t have to buy into the comment.
  - *Self-talk: “He doesn’t seem like himself today. Wonder what’s up with him?”*
  - *Self-talk: “Looks like she’s not doing too well today.”*
  - *Self-talk: “Who knows what’s up with him? I’m just going to blow this off.”*
  - *“What’s important is not what others say to you, but what you say to yourself about it.” -Sally Northway Ogden*
- **TOOLS TO SPEAK UP** (but **NOT** to be used with anger or sarcasm): **PRACTICE AND PICK A FAVORITE PHRASE TO HAVE ON HAND;** Teach your child to use one technique at a time.
- **TOOL 3: THE MIGHTY MIGHT:** Acknowledging something might be true; use it when you want to end teasing by giving the teaser nothing to say. Take the fun out of teasing.
  - You are skinny. *“You might be right.”*
  - You can’t spell. *“Maybe not today.”*
- **TOOL 4: THE COMEBACK KID:** A strong way to respond to teasing, often a smart or funny response with humor.
  - I don’t like your hair. *“I love it this way.”*
  - Four Eyes! *“Wow, you’ve never seen anybody with glasses before. That’s strange.”*
  - You’re ugly. *“I can’t hear you.”* I said you’re ugly. *“I can’t hear you, perhaps we can talk tomorrow” or “I can’t hear. I hope you were saying something nice.”*
- **TOOL 5: GO NEUTRAL:** Utilize a neutral response; your telling the person they were heard, but not agreeing or disagreeing.

- *Thanks for telling me; I'll remember that; I'll keep that in mind*
- *I'm sorry you see it that way; Thanks for your input; Interesting perspective*
- **TOOL 6: THE SHRUG:** Use the shrug when you want to show that teasing doesn't bother you. Shrug it off; show you don't care about their words.
  - Can add a "so what" or "whatever"
  - Nonverbal message: those words really don't matter to me
- **TOOL 7: THE POWER I:** Use a strong "I" sentence to tell others you do not like their teasing; use strong body language and nonverbals
  - Stand tall, hold head up, shoulders back, strong tone of voice; be polite and firm
  - *I want you to stop doing that; I don't like that; I don't agree with that*
  - *Please stop; Quit it; Knock it off*
- **TOOL 8: THE WILD CARD:** An out of context remark; a bizarre and fun statement. You are saying you are not going to engage in the discussion. (Use with caution)
  - You look fat. *I hate it when that happens.*
  - *No, thanks. I just had a banana.*
  - *Tomorrow is another day*
  - *I think it is going to rain*
  - *Well I am not as young as I used to be.*
- **TOOL 9: VISUALIZATION:** Visualize the mean comment bouncing off you as if you have a shield protecting you.

### Additional Reading

[Speak Up and Get Along!: Learn the Mighty Might, Thought Chop, and More Tools to Make Friends, Stop Teasing, and Feel Good About Yourself](#) **Cooper**

[Words Will Never Hurt Me: Helping Kids Handle Teasing, Bullying and Putdowns](#) **Ogden**

[Cliques, Phonies, & Other Baloney \(Laugh And Learn\)](#) **Romain**

[Queen Bees and Wannabes, 3rd Edition: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boys, and the New Realities of Girl World Paperback](#) – **Wiseman**

*It isn't the world that makes you unhappy, or the way people are in the world.  
It's how you process the people and events of our world. –DR. WAYNE DYER*

*An eye for an eye leaves everyone blind.- GANDHI*

*Name-calling is the last resort of those who have no good argument for their position.*