

TUNING IN TO TEENS

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TINT's Philosophy

- Emotions are central for **communication** and **connection**
- Behavior problems **decrease** when parents/caregivers understand the teen's emotional world and respond to their emotions
- Approaches and strategies are offered to **increase connection** between parent and teen
- Emotional awareness, understanding and regulation are key skills taught
- One size does not fit all – parents can **choose** what works for their family
- A model based on emotional intelligence and emotion coaching

What is Emotional Intelligence

The ability to **identify** and **manage** your own emotions

- Emotional awareness (rather than concealing or denying)
- Respond not react (managing strong feelings)
- Help parents to teach and support their teen to understand and express emotions in appropriate ways

What is Emotion Coaching

All parents have the capacity to Emotion Coach

- Listening
- Being supportive
- Empathizing
- Validating
- Helping teen to solve problems
- Over time, this parenting style helped to **reduce** the child's risk for social and behavioral problems

From Child to Teen

- Dealing with new experiences with greater intensity
- Learn to mask emotions
- Struggle to regulate their emotions
- Peer relationships take center stage

If teens can understand, communicate and regulate their emotions they could respond to stressful events in a resilient way.

Adoption/Kinship Issues

- Although TINT is not specific to adoptive/kinship families, it is designed for any parent
- We recognize that adoption adds another layer of complexity to adolescence:
 - Gaining autonomy after a history of loss
 - A heightened fear of rejection and abandonment
 - Connections and loyalty to birth family
 - Behaviors relating to trauma
 - A sense of being different

Participants Reported:

- Greater acceptance of their own emotions
- The importance of managing their own anger
- Being less reactive and more empathetic with their teen's emotional expression
- Listening openly with acceptance
- Teens talking more about issues in their lives
- Calmer homes
- Less conflict
- Improved relationships
- Increased connection

TINT Groups

Offer:

- Understanding of adolescent (emotional) development
- Small group sizes (no more than 12 parents)
- Comfortable, warm and accepting environment
- Other adoptive and kinship parents
- Experienced, trained group leaders
- Free, interactive and fun
- Learning, sharing and discussion over 7 sessions
- Dinner, child care and mileage reimbursement
- The chance to be part of something ground breaking

Why You Should Know About TINT

- Your staff might be facilitating parent groups
- Your families might be talking about it
 - Remember NOT all families will be invited, this is a research project in which families will be randomly chosen.
- You may be asked questions about this initiative
- Sustainability! We hope this will continue after this project is complete (2019)

Resources

- Questions?
- Comments?
- Please contact Betty Berzin with any questions
- Contact me any time:
 - RGalleseQICAG@gmail.com

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The University of Melbourne, Dr. Sophie Havighurst and Ann Harley 2012